

EDGEMONT UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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January 29, 2010

Dear Parents and Guardians in the Greenville School Community:

January has been another busy month. Thank you for the many messages that you have sent me in response to my January 4th letter informing you of Marc Heller's decision to retire and also of my recommendation to the Board of Education of the appointment of Jennifer Allen as Interim Principal of Greenville School. I am happy that I was able to get to know more members of the Greenville School community.

At the end of February I will hold Open Forums to listen to the qualities that you believe to be essential as I search to find a new Principal for Greenville School. I invite all interested members of the Greenville School community to attend one or more of these Forums. On the following dates and times I will be available to listen to your comments and to respond to any questions that you have related to the transition in Greenville's administrative leadership:

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 at 2 PM

Thursday, February 25, 2010 at 8:45 AM

Thursday, February 25, 2010 at 7:30 PM

All meetings will be held in the Cafeteria at Greenville School. Although my sense is that weekends are even busier than weekdays for Edgemont families, I am willing to meet with parents and guardians on a weekend day if there is sufficient interest in my doing so. Please let me know if you would like me to schedule a weekend meeting, and please tell me the best day and time of day for such a meeting. I will also be happy to receive written comments and suggestions from you. (I have enclosed a summary of comments that I have already received, which you may find helpful to review.)


In keeping with the Edgemont tradition, I will welcome the participation of a limited number of parents in interviewing each of the candidates who appear to have the qualities we desire for the Principal of Greenville School. I anticipate that parent volunteers will join with faculty representatives to serve on an advisory committee and to assist me by interviewing up to four semi-finalist candidates for the Principalship of Greenville School during the month of April. Meetings to screen semi-finalist candidates will be held after school and/or in the evening. If you are interested in serving as a member of this Advisory Committee, please send me your name and the reasons why you believe that you can add something to the search process. Once a finalist has been identified, I may invite a subset of the Advisory Committee to join me in making a site visit to the finalist's current place of work. This visit is likely to occur early in the month of May.

I expect to be able to ask members of the Edgemont Board of Education to interview the candidate(s)-of-choice in May and to be able to make a recommendation for the successful candidate's appointment at a public Board meeting later in the month. This will provide the candidate with an opportunity to inform his/her current employer and it will also provide adequate transition time for the new Principal to begin his/her new role on July 1, 2010. (Of course, if an adjustment in this timeline is needed in order to attract the best candidate, I am willing to make such an adjustment.)

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the process that I have outlined in this letter. I look forward to seeing you at one of the Open Forums or, if you are not able to attend, to receiving information from you in written form.

Since the beginning of the new calendar year, my administrative colleagues and I have been talking with Liz Silverstein and Kelly Ivanoski as PTA Co-Presidents. Together we have been investigating the possibility of improving our system of communicating with parents and guardians using e-mail. We are looking into the expansion of the current system so that we would have a more efficient and effective means of communicating with you in the future should there be an important and time-sensitive announcement to send to you. At this time, the PTA supports eChalk accounts for parents and guardians of fifth-grade and sixth-grade students. We are looking at three options: expanding eChalk to all grades, opening the "Parent Portal" in our student management system, and/or purchasing an independent system called *Constant Contact*. We hope to be able to make a decision about this before the end of February.

Sincerely,



Nancy L. Taddiken

Enclosure

Essential Characteristics for the Principal of Greenville School

The following characteristics, which are not listed in any particular order and which may not be all inclusive, have been suggested as being critical to the success of an individual who is selected to serve as the next Principal of Greenville School in the Edgemont School District:

- (1) Be an educational leader, not just an administrator. While we all are appreciative of the procedure and paper attendant to any managerial-school role, the main focus of the job should be teaching and leading the teachers.

- (2) Have an educational philosophy and vision. The candidate should be able to articulate his/her vision and show how he/she would effect that vision at Greenville. He/she should be able to give concrete examples of what he/she has done in the past that demonstrates his/her skillset.

- (3) Raise the bar for teaching at the school, while maintaining cordial relationship(s) with the teaching professionals. Be able to demonstrate instances where he/she has been able to do so and explain how. Do more than "support" the teachers; challenge them to be the best they can be. The best compliment a boss can get is that he/she is "fair."

- (4) Have a firm grasp on elementary curricula, current schools of thought on curricula, and best practices from around the country.

- (5) Expect to spend a large amount of his/her day (on average) in the classroom - observing the teachers, analyzing the most successful approaches and then, employing those throughout the school. Data mine. Figure out which teachers are well-regarded by their peers and why. Often, teachers are thrilled to get children who have had "Mr./Ms. so-and-so" - there is usually a reason.

- (6) Be able to recognize, motivate and develop the professional teaching staff. The candidate should be able to give examples of how/where he/she was able to do so in an effective manner.

- (7) Effect change (where needed), and not just talk about it.

- (8) Possess valid New York State certification as a School Building Leader or as a School Administrator and Supervisor.

January 2010