

# Recruitment Plan: School Leader and Staff Pike Creek Charter Middle School

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## Part 1: Search Process for a School Leader

In June 2013 after Pike Creek Charter is approved to open in Fall 2014 a search the Pike Creek Charter Middle School Board of Directors will put a process design committee together. Members of the search committee will consist of three members of the board , a parent representative, a faculty representative, and a community representative.

The board of directors of the school will approve and appoint Michael Smith, Board President as Chair of the search committee and Robyn Sheehan, as Vice Chair of the search committee.

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\*If this process is not successful in securing a School Leader from among finalists then the Board of Directors will set aside the search proves and seek to hire an Interim School Leader directly.

## **1) Introduction and Overview**

In January 2013 Pike Creek Charter Middle School submitted its charter application for approval naming the proposed school leader as Melissa Whitehead. In April 2013 the Charter Accountability committee advised board President Michael Smith that the choice for school leader was not strong enough, lacking experience and background for the task. The board subsequently put together the following search process to obtain an experienced school leader for Pike Creek Charter Middle School. This plan was devised to find a school leader that has the experience, education, background, and knowledge to open a new school as well as a charter school, while staying in the line of the mission and vision of Pike Creek Charter Middle School. During that time the Board of Directors began talks with Glen Moore, as a candidate of interest to fill the position of Head of School. (Please see Glen Moore's resume attached).

The search process is based on the premise that the school will not engage a third party search firm. The Board however, will use best practices from other charter school search processes as well as the use of the University of Delaware resources.

There will be

- \*Stakeholder input- community view process and leadership
- \*Process & Timeline- description and milestone dates
- \*Search Committee- size and members
- \*Advisory Committee- size and guidelines
- \*Advertising- strategy and specific guidelines
- \*Budget- for the search process only
- \*Communications- general guidelines
- \*Position Profile- a school profile and job description ( see PCCMS Application)

The search plan includes key milestones:

Board approval for plan by June 30, 2013

Advertising of positions by July 30, 2013

Screening interviews of applicants by August 30, 2013

Advisory interviews from stakeholder groups by Sept 30, 2013

Interviews of Finalists and Visits to the building by October 30, 2013  
Successful Hire of School Leader by November 30, 2013

\*\*\*Please note that school leader hiring has unique seasonality. Assuming a start date of July 1, 2013. Most candidates interview in the fall and commit by January. According to the National Association of Independent Schools, The NAIS Head Search Handbook; 2006, an ideal fully designed search process should start two years early. When this is not possible which is the case with Pike Creek Charter Middle School, then an abbreviated process is necessary. The process is brisk, inclusive, and abbreviated that will result in a successful search within 5 to 6 months focusing on outreach, consensus-building and use of the “80/20” rule in decisions and discussions in order to meet critical milestones.

The board recommends a Search Committee and an advisory committee that consist of stakeholder groups as well as founding board members.

### **Stakeholder Input**

In June 2013 Pike Creek Charter Middle School will use several outlets to organize forums and gather stakeholder input regarding the search process. Using the already created Facebook, school website, email contacts of interested staff and families, and a public forum will be held to obtain feedback on leadership characteristics and desirable qualities that school leader should possess. A summary of the input received through the above processes will be posted to the school website and will be available by request. Additionally the help of parent groups, The Charter School Network, The Vision Network, and The Department of Education will be used to help get the word out.

## **Process**

The search process will in specific stages:

- \*The Search Committee will select six semifinalists
- \*The Advisory Committees will interview the semifinalists and recommend three preferred semifinalists
- \*The Search Committee will then select three semifinalists
- \*The Board will then select a school leader

A more detailed understanding of this process is as follows:

- 1) The Search Committee will advertise the position and collect all applications and resumes. A review of these materials will be done in order to select candidates who meet the required qualifications.
- 2) The Search Committee will then screen the applicants through interviews and ask for supplemental information or clarification. If an applicant is from out of the area, videoconference or telephone interview will be utilized.
- 3) The Search Committee will then select six semifinalists among the screened applicants. Please note that significant consideration will be given to preferred qualifications and personal leadership characteristics. All six semifinalists will be invited to an offsite location for two second round interviews. One with the Search Committee and one with the Advisory Committee.
- 4) The Advisory Committee will conduct a single session per candidate (6 in all) with its members. In advance, each member will be provided a set of prepared questions that can be tailored individually but must have the necessary information to be relevant to the position. All questions will be approved prior to the interview to be in compliance with state laws and such. (i.e. we would not want a committee member to ask an applicant if they are married or how old they are). Questions can be asked from the floor in an unstructured manner but will be written down on index cards to screen in the event of inappropriate questions. This process will ensure minimal repeats and HR-Appropriateness.

- 5) Following each semifinalist (there will be 6 in all) each member of the Advisory Committee will rate the candidate based on predetermined criteria. After all 6 semifinalists are interviewed the Advisory Committee will tally the ratings and recommend 3 overall finalists. No ranking will be accepted. Each finalist must be acceptable as the Head of School.
- 6) The Search Committee will consider these recommendations and then arrive at 3 finalists. Again all 3 finalists must be acceptable as the Head of School.
- 7) After the 3 finalists are determined each will be invited back for additional interviewing with board members and other stakeholder groups that may not have been a part of the process already.
- 8) There will be further communication via social media and the school website for input on the 3 finalists.
- 9) After all the above steps have been taken the search committee will meet with the Board to present an objective summary of each finalist and an overview of the process. Any supplemental information or clarification will be provided. The final decision among the three finalists belongs to PCCMS' Board of Directors. The chosen finalist will be offered the position as Head of School. Once the candidate has formally accepted the position of Head of School, the announcement will be made public by the Board .

**\*\*It is important to note that for everyone to accept the Head of School, a collective drive toward consensus is essential among the community at large and at each committee/board stage. A solid effort to collect and consider many points of view will be made through this structured process. Trust in the process and confidence in the individual participation across stakeholder groups is essential to having the perfect fit as the Head of School.**

### **Timeline**

Beginning when Pike Creek Charter Middle School is approved in June 2013 the process will begin to find a Head of School. It is important to engage all stakeholder groups in the process staying mindful that summer is a time that many people are on vacation. Time is of the essence in starting and advancing the process. A successful search will be completed by January 2014.

## **Search Committee**

Mission- To serve the school community by conducting a search for a new Head of School that heeds the counsel of all stakeholder groups, provides opportunities for community dialogue, and administers due diligence.

Deliverable- Recommend three individual who can serve as the school leader of Pike Creek Charter Middle School

Composition- The Search Committee will consist of 8 to 10 individuals from the following stakeholder groups: 3 board members, a parent of potential students that may attend the school, a potential faculty member, 2 community members, an elected official, a member of the Charter School Network, a charter school leader, a school board member from a local school district, a chief financial officer of a current successful charter school and a member of the Department of Education.

Duties- 1) Provide Advisory Committee with their mission and deliverables.

2) Collaborate with the Advisory Committee to form interview questions.

3) Advertise the position in external publications and websites

4) Post the opening and position profile on Pike Creek Charter Middle School website.

5) Collect and review submitted applications

6) Establish a rubric to evaluate candidates

7) Narrow the candidate pool to six semifinalists

8) Communicate progress to school community and stakeholder groups as well as the Department of Education

9) Establish interview questions and procedures

10) Conduct background checks on the 3 finalists.

11) Deliver 3 solid finalists to the Pike Creek Charter Board

## **Advisory Committee**

Mission- to provide the Search Committee with essential advice on semifinalist candidates.

Deliverables-Each member of the Advisory Committee will separately recommend to the Search Committee 3 finalists that could be the school leader

Composition- representatives from the community, the parents, and the staff

Melissa Whitehead will chair this committee.

- Melissa will make certain that consideration is made for racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.
- Visibly “outgoing” people with respect for the vision and mission of the school
- Balance of experience with charter schools and school leader selection (ie a parent or teacher who has sat on a committee on his or her school district to select a principal or a superintendent).
- Parents should demonstrate community involvement and desire to see the school succeed (ie a parent who’s child will be applying for enrollment in the school). Parent must be of a middle school age student.

### Specific Duties-

- 1) Identify what is important to the Advisory Committee
- 2) Collaborate with all members to establish a uniform and effective list of final questions for interview sessions
- 3) Participate in all interviews for the 6 semifinalists
- 4) Create a written evaluation tool to assist in the committee’s communication about the semifinalists
- 5) Identify three candidates without ranking to recommend to the Search Committee as acceptable finalists.

## **Advertising**

The search process will focus on local and regional advertising: this strategy reflects the consensus of stakeholder inputs received. The position opportunity will be posted to external websites this will naturally incur a degree of national exposure as nationwide prospective candidates search the Internet for school leadership opportunities.

Three areas of focus recommended for advertising the position:

1) Websites

The position and opportunity for school leader of Pike Creek Charter will be posted on the school's website. [www.pikecreekcharter.org](http://www.pikecreekcharter.org)

The position will be posted on the Delaware Charter School Network Website [www.dcsn.org](http://www.dcsn.org)

2) Print Media

The opportunity will be advertised in the Delaware News Journal, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and The Baltimore Sun. Based on its wide circulation, The New York Times and Education Week are also recommended. Each media house has an online affiliation such that the position may also be reached through Internet search.

3) External Specialty Websites

There are many choices here however, to limit expense the recommendation is to limit these postings to a few and rely on Internet search engines to spread the word. Some may include: The National Association of Public Charter Schools and The Association of Secondary School Principals.

**\*\*\* Please see enclosed Exhibit A**

## **Budget**

The following times are recommended for approval for a search budget:

\$2000- Advertising/Website Posting Costs

\$1500-Candidate Travel/Lodging Expenses (for 3 finalists if need be)

\$300- Background Checks on all Finalists (\$100 each)

\$500- Contingencies.

A total of \$4300 (only if needed),

## **Communication**

Effective communication will keep all stakeholders informed of search progress. The Search Committee will maintain regular communication with parents/staff/board members/community members/DDOE through email and website updates all the process. A very transparent process is recommended.

Communication will focus on updates including:

- 1) Publication of the search process
- 2) Identification of Search Committee and Advisory Committee members via the school website
- 3) Updates to the Board of Directors
- 4) The date the semifinalist candidates are selected
- 5) The date and name when the finalists are selected
- 6) The date and final plans for the finalist
- 7) An official announcement of the school leader when selected with a start date

## **Position Profile**

The typical practice for a Head of School search appears to include a descriptive document which outlines the key features of the opportunity and the school. Additionally, it highlights the requirements, preferences, and qualities of a successful candidate. The profile will also include a list of submission requirements in order for the candidate to be considered.

The Key Elements for the School Leader for Pike Creek Charter Middle School's Position Profile will include:

- 1) Overview
- 2) Vision and Mission

- 3) The School's background, location, setting, and history
  - 4) The School's educational focus, methods, and philosophy
  - 5) Projected student, faculty, and parent base
  - 6) Governance
  - 7) Potential Challenges for Head of School
  - 8) Head of School position description
  - 9) Candidate Information :
    - Required Qualifications
    - Preferred Experience
    - Demonstrated Capabilities
    - Leadership Characteristics
- Submission Requirements will include:
- Letter of Interest
  - Resume
  - Statement of Educational Philosophy
  - Five References

A typical Position Profile can run from 15 to 20 pages in length.

**\*\*\*All submissions will be done online. Paper copies will only be submitted by request.**

