

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES: Monday February 2, 2026
Jon Zon Community Center, 35 Pleasant St. Greenfield, MA 01301**

I. Call to Order Meeting called to order at 6:31pm.

II. Roll Call: If members appear online, roll call voting must be used.

Present: Stacey Sexton (SS); Elizabeth Deneeve (ED); Melodie Goodwin (MG); Ann Childs (AC); Mayor Ginny DeSorgher (GD); Melissa Mckenzie Webb (MW); Jeffrey Diteman (JD).

Also in attendance: Greenfield Education Association, Teacher's Union guests for the interview portion of the meeting: Judy Benet (JB); Tara Cloutier (TC).

III. Public Comment: None

IV. Superintendent Candidate Interview: Sharon M. Cournoyer

Opening Statement: Thank you all for having me back. I have 36 years in education as a teacher and administrator. Very excited to bring that experience to Greenfield. Had a wonderful day today and thank you to those who showed me around Greenfield and showed me what they were proud of and what they were looking for in leadership. What was impressive was the continuity and commonality in themes across the district.

1. Why you for Greenfield and why Greenfield for you? How would you apply your experiences in the context of the Greenfield Public School district?

My experience over 36 years has prepared me well for community like Greenfield. I am currently a superintendent in CT, in a district very similar to Greenfield. Large regional High School serving 13 different towns with a complex budgeting system. Have learned many ins and outs in the profession. That experience has been very helpful. I come with pre k-12 experience and working with a complicated budgeting system and complex interactions with stakeholders from different towns, creating relationships; having to work with a variety of different needs and backgrounds. Windsor Locks is similar, but am very eager to get back to that kind of experience. Getting into the Pre-K and intermediate schools working on progression for final destination of High School and working together as a team. Building upon different standards to reach those goals. 13 years on commission serving different roles. Working on the vision of the graduate beginning at Pre-K. Starting to build there all the way up to High School. How I would apply is going back to what I love. Getting back in to classrooms, building upon the leadership teams already in place. The progress has already been started. My knowledge of Pre-K continuum can build on that. Using those skills to meet the leaders where they are. What I took away from great conversations from today; you have really strong leaders who know what they are doing, where they are going, and need a leader who will listen and lift up and help them grow. I would like to make it a part of my practice to having 1-1 meetings in their building to discuss goals and aspirations. It was great to see them where the magic happens and continue to build on their leadership capacity, together.

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- 2. Walk us through how you prepare a budget. We are interested not only in your methodology, but also your philosophy.**

Department heads and staff; what their needs and wants are, helping to create the budget. What is the budget climate going into the season? For the past few years we have had tight budgets. I've had to go to department heads and have them ask staff what they need, but to stay within perimeters. Declining enrollment means challenges to maintaining an environment for our kids. Here it would be having a conversation with leaderships, have them work with their staff and bring that back to me. I meet with every department head going into the winter holiday so we are on the same page. We have had difficult conversations about staff reductions. I know what is palatable to the community. When we have 3 specific member towns that serve 13 surrounding towns that are supporting us financially, that has a huge impact on our budget. We go back to the table to see where we can make reductions when needed depending on enrollment from surrounding towns; impacting the quality of education. I like to be inclusive, I like folks to know where they stand. Even if it's potential for positions being reduced. Then we go through different iterations of the budget.

- 3. It is important that schools work closely with other city departments and city boards. Could you tell us how you have successfully worked in these environments and what you will do here to develop those linkages?** Because we have the 3 member towns, we have select people from different boards. There are varying degrees in interactions, and have become increasingly more important that we work closely together. As well as with our state reps. Couple times a year we have municipal meetings inviting state reps to present when we go into budget season. So they know how their money is being spent. If there is no back and forth to know where people are struggling it becomes very one sided and relationships can deteriorate quickly. Those listening sessions become very important. We have been talking about a rolling average because of drastic enrollment changes. It becomes very challenging on budget preparation. An average over 5 years would allow us to be more planful and not have staff stressed about employment. We share and meet monthly and work collaboratively. We have to agree on what our goals are. I don't have control over their investment. Communications have been very important.

- 4. What is the most valuable lesson you have learned? We are especially interested in an example of a time when something didn't go as planned, and how you responded:**

There are so many. One of the most valuable lessons that I still talk about today; when we are asking folks for input, we have to mean it. We can't just ask people for their input if the decisions are already made. That deteriorates trust. It has been a practice to have a decision and then ask for a survey. We have to be open to putting those ideas into practice. The decisions should not already have been made. I try to put this into practice. The challenge is to get people to trust that. To build that trust is to practice putting their input into the outcome of the decisions that are being made.

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Not as planned: We did a great job of coming out of Covid- Covid forced a broken mindset, a different approach to learning, perspective to be more understanding, we took some of the guardrails off and got lose around a lot of things. We were all put into this situation. We had mass shared trauma. With that there had to be changes. As we came out of Covid we tried to reel it back in. We had to look at what we keep and what we change. Where was reassessment part of the process. We discussed with teachers/parents, tried it, what did we learn, met again and re-evaluated. The timing wasn't as early as we would have liked it to have been rolled out to board in April or May. In June for the pilot to the staff wasn't good timing. We thought things were going great but after doing focus groups where we thought we were all on the same page, we actually were not. The communication was not great. It didn't land. The response was that myself and the principle had open office hours listening to kids and parents and teachers discussing policy and preparing lessons and reassessment. It was really helpful and they are still ongoing. We continue to survey. More teachers come to the meetings now. That was probably the most best example of how we thought we had something planned out perfectly and it really didn't land. There has been a lot of reflection on our part.

5. Tell us how you made effective district-wide change in your time as a leader- how did you decide on a change, and how did you measure the results?

Also the decisions about Covid. I came in July, 2020 those decisions that had to be made around safety, were all change. Historically you don't make changes in your first year. I entered in a time where the reentry plan was in the works. We went hybrid 1000 kids in the building. The following year was not going completely back. We went 4 days normal and delayed Wednesdays (wellness Wednesdays) the teachers had professional learning in the morning and they needed time to work together. We had to do a lot of explaining. Kids loved it or didn't. Teachers appreciated it but wanted more control to prepare for the kids, that they needed. That was effective district wide change the following year, decision was made by a committee students, parents, and teachers needed that continuity.

6. From GEA: Requesting feedback is often described as one of the most impactful practices of effective leadership, even when feedback may be critical of district decisions or working conditions. Please give an example of a time when you actively sought out and responded to feedback from teachers and IAs and how you validated and followed up on the responses.

Grading policy is one where we put out invitations to all staff. We survey a lot. Sometimes that gets lost in translation. It was very personal and we didn't want to do a survey. I wanted to talk in person with folks about what was really the challenge. Some of those conversations went over an hour. That is an example of where extensive information was sought out. The CT teachers union will do a blitz interview with staff and meet with executive council. Its not a survey but they have conversation and bring back information. It's nice executive council, representatives

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from the union will meet with their colleagues and find out what is the priority. Those are really helpful. My office is open. Folks pop in- open door policy has been really helpful. My assistant is driven crazy but if my door is open I am here to have a conversation. Sometimes asking for feedback can feel contrived. We don't get balanced feedback. With a blitz we got balanced feedback. Sometimes info is conflicting and creates interesting dialogue. Open door policy works really well for me.

7. Do you have any questions for us? Are there any questions we didn't ask you, that you would like us to know?

- a.** *I feel like I got a nice feel for the district today. What a great experience. How valued your staff is and inspired leadership, it's great. What are the obstacles that you see that might be preventing progress with the district.*

ED: Every year there has been disquiet around budget transparency. We would be served by a new way to look at the budget. Its not digestible for City Council. Again and again, we can't do any more education on it. I would like to see how we present it, changed.

MG: Declining enrollment. We have dropped from almost 2K to 1300. We have an amazing staff, but also change in staff. A lot of new staff after Covid, retirement. Turnover in principles -that's hard for teachers and families. We are a city of poverty. We are trying to build relationships with business, GCC...

AC: Similar to my colleagues: budget transparency and communication; where you can just pick it up and look at it, understand it. State aid isn't what it should be. With the economy, declining enrollment makes it tricky. Staff turnover- IAs are key but is a hard job and attracting people who will stay in them with what we can pay.

GD: Incredible staff and support you get from families. Filling vacancies is one, and the ability for children to read has kept the schools as a whole from progressing. Learning to read and reading to learn.

JD: Following up: relatively low income district with high needs with IEPs and 504s. This makes it really challenging and that the district is always strapped. Chapter 70 funding is in discussion. Property tax rate is high and property values are under state average. It calls for innovation and creative solutions.

SS: Our obstacle can be self perception. Our staff are amazing. We need to do a better job to know that we are amazing, pretty cool, and we need to remember that while we are naming these challenges as well.

- b.** *Self promote is challenging, especially when you don't have resources – how do we know that those great things are for everyone to know. How would you describe your relationships between city and school officials?*

SS: We are working on it. They are not as bad as they could be. They are improving and lines of communication are open. I think the point of having

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accessible budget docs are one example of ways that we could improve communication. We are not fighting but there could be more regular communication that happens.

ED: I think that we have turned a new era recently and have high hopes for change. City Council interested in budget and wanting to work with us. If we step up to the plate as a committee they will do the same and I look forward to meetings with complimentary subcommittee. We are on the path to positive, but we have not done that work yet.

- c. From earlier today at the meet and greet, I was asked, ‘How do you put forward growth mindset among staff?’ I thought about that all day. It was a little different in each district. Starting with professional development component, research and share. Whats really hard to measure is ‘do we believe that all kids can learn at high levels and teach ALL kids?’ If we do how do we go about doing that. What are the supports and structure we need to have in place? Honest conversations with staff: Where are you starting from? What do you need to make that happen. What are systems and structures that would make that happen? It’s a different process to relearn what formative assessment process look like. A validation along the way and we built that into policy. The reality is now that teaching and learning have changed. “It’s my job that you learn.” There are different ways to get there collaboratively with teachers. Has to be done with. Where do we stand on the growth mindset and develop the structures to support that. We want to see kids successful.

V. Superintendent Candidate Interview: Carol M. Kruser

Opening Statement: I am Carol Kruser. Thank you for a great day and ordering the sunshine. Wonderful to see the energy of your schools. Spent time at library- wonderful place, vibrant community. I hope through my resume, recommendations, and conversations that you got a sense of who I am. That I am collaborative, empathetic, and inspirational leader. I am steady, dedicated, and that my values align with Greenfield. It’s very similar to where I come from. I am really ready to be of service to Greenfield. It will take energy and enthusiasm; I have that. It will take time, and I am a stable leader that can help. I would like to enhance all the great things you have going on here. I would like to work with the School Committee and the teachers and staff on what you would like to improve going forward. I want to make sure I am focusing on strong academic inclusive teams that will guide instructional excellence and help with continuous improvement. I am an advocate for mentoring and supporting staff to feel empowered and ready to handle complexities. They need to be able to deliver strong academics and to help with all non-academics and social-emotional supports. I would come here with an open mind and a lot of thoughtful questions. Examine the systems and structures how they are working and helping improve student experience, how they are helping staff help student experience. I want Greenfield Public Schools to continue to be and strive to be a place where every student and staff feels respected and valued, and understand for the

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students what they would like to see in their future. I am really excited about this opportunity and hope you will see that I can be the best fit for superintendent.

1. MG: Why you for Greenfield and why Greenfield for you? How would you apply your experiences in the context of the Greenfield Public School district?

I think me for Greenfield and Greenfield is the perfect place to show what I would like to be and to celebrate what you already have. My experience with districts that need help with accountability scores working with DESE, working to build ILTs, datawise cycles, empowering teachers to know how data is used across the district. My experience is looking at horizontal alignment. We [Chicopee district] have similar demographics, aspirations, and goals for giving a strong instructional core for high quality materials. Now in my 3rd year in Central Office doing vertical alignment with systems and structures. I am assistant superintendent for support services in Chicopee; about 7000 students, 15 schools. We do Pre-K all the way to 12th grade. I oversee anything that is not directly curriculum; any emotional supports, counseling, nursing, behavior, food service, athletics, discipline, transportation etc. I work closely with the superintendent and assistant superintendent for instruction. I also work with summer school and I am the Title 1 coordinator, putting structures and safety features in place. As a Title 9 coordinator, I work with civil rights and deal with reporting swiftly. I have put a lot of procedures in place to make sure all the reporting of any issues is dealt with swiftly and that there are procedures and policies in place. I have worked with discipline and behavior expectations and put guidelines in place to help teachers manage expectations. I also believe I have been a great support to administrators and principles on how to deal with some of those in the classroom. Between being a health teacher and being a strong social emotional support and being a vice principal then principal for a school of about 1000 for 6-7 years, I saw a lot of the instruction and what needed to be done. Being at Central Office was vital to understand budgeting, politics, and what everyone is going through at all ages and grade levels and being able to attack different problems with teams in order to make sure that schools and students had the best education, that we are looking at the whole child, what the community can do to help with wraparound services. I have a lot of experience in different areas. I am laser focused on helping all students get what they need and seeing gaps and doing what is needed. Making sure that everyone is comfortable with the direction and vision with the greater community in Greenfield.

2. Walk us through how you prepare a budget. We are interested not only in your methodology, but also your philosophy.

Preparation: It has been interesting to adjust from about 100k to budget for 15 schools. You have to see the vision of the community and the school committee. You have to look at the strategic plan of the committee, you want to turn that into reality. My philosophy is that there are a lot of things to consider and voices you need to hear from. How can I use the budget in the best way to move student achievement and goals. That has to be in the forefront. You have to understand realities of the world;

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facilities, Special Education, and out of district expenses, transportation, heat, supplies etc. What is essential and what is nice to have but we can do without that for the moment? We have to look at what is happening in the city, state, and federal government. You have to know that some of those can change by the day. What you have for a foundation budget and grants and is there anything out there depending on what your priorities. "What is in the best interest of students".

Methodology: You need to start early and with a budget calendar. What are the needs and start early. Get the players in the same room; school committee, city council, feedback from community. Spend time with assistant superintendent of instruction and learning, business manager, the director of people's services, Special Education is huge. Get into the buildings and sit with principals and their teams. What is going to move curriculum. Can't just look at what is good for tomorrow or next year. Need 1, 3, 5, 10 year plans. Buildings need to be fixed, things need to be replaced etc. I would come back over and over. Another method: no surprises. You can't predict everything but you can 'what if' plan for plans A, B, and C. Be sure schools, unions, teachers, committee, city council, know those plans. It's a lot about communication and transparency. We have to work as a team and hear a lot of voices. When the tough decisions have to be made, I put that out to the school committee to see which way you would like me to go.

- 3. MW: It is important that schools work closely with other city departments and city boards. Could you tell us how you have successfully worked in these environments and what you will do here to develop those linkages?**

One of the biggest positives is I have been there a long time and developed a lot of relationships over the years. They are unbelievably important and that they believe in your integrity and trust you. I would want to have that here. By going to the meetings, working closely with City Council, fire, police, other city departments, and outside agencies. I did professional development with police training all staff on fire/safety/lock down procedures and added signs of suicide and mental health. It was important for me to do the professional development myself so the people I work with know I understand I know how important it is and that I believed what I was saying. We hired an outside agency to do safety audit with all 15 schools and worked with them to look at everything and the procedures for safety. I have a very good relationship with the mayor. I am very capable to understand the complexities with running a city and that everyone wants what is best. We have to be a team as a city. To recap: I want to start right out from the gate getting to know people. The trust will build, they will know that I follow through and spend the time.

- 4. What is the most valuable lesson you have learned? We are especially interested in an example of a time when something didn't go as planned, and how you responded.**

Going through the different jobs that I have had, you have to be as thorough as you can but also be willing to say 'this is wrong, we need to adjust'. When I was a principal, we had a difficult time in Special Education subgroup working to improve our time. Looked

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at our data, what was going on in our classrooms- we needed to be way more inclusive and get students into the classroom as much as possible. We worked with a national consultant coaching everyone on how to include students and do co-teaching. We really went full force. It was working and we were making some progress but then the pandemic happened. We struggled with keeping teachers. We continued to look at data- it was difficult to have a co-teaching model the way we planned it with the staff turnover that we had. Learned that we have to keep learning and we have to keep growing. You have to take the best parts of what you've learned and keep moving. What works, but change what doesn't work. Fitting in a huge amount of special education students and not the amount of staff to have a co-teaching the way we thought we would be able to have it. Now we are looking at the data, students, their goals, looking at their IEPs and making individual plans for each of them and how teachers, both the special education and general education teachers can help them. We focused on improving Tier 1 instruction and identifying the Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions that can help the students. The biggest lesson; keep looking at the data and be willing to adjust what the data is telling you, you need to adjust. Make sure you are willing to admit that you don't have all the answers, you need really good teams, to listen to everybody. You adjust, you take the best then you admit that things don't work and move forward.

5. Tell us how you made effective district-wide change in your time as a leader- how did you decide on a change, and how did you measure the results?

Coming in -this is my 3rd year at this level, the district wide change that I made was to get the 15 schools to row in the same direction around behavioral expectations and supports for behavior in the classrooms. We focused on teacher support in managing behavior in the classroom and involving administrators when needed, and how to distinguish between the two. Teachers really wanted transparency to make sure their voices were heard. Some of the behaviors have increased especially at the Pre-K and k level, that teachers were not used to and all the way up to 12th grade. As someone who is focused on and handles discipline and social emotional was to implement an electronic reporting system for teachers so that they could put in to their administration when they were having behaviors. They would put whether it was teacher managed; we did professional development on what they thought teachers should deal with and what administrators should deal with. We worked with our principals a lot on this. We implemented conduct forms on Google forms for teachers to record what happened, when they needed support, or recording outcomes. So administrators could see what was going on and what the response was; calling home or parent meeting or alternative for suspensions. Did not take place of other policy but worked in real time information. I get the reports every Monday. I'm not just looking at open architects to look at discipline data, which I do use, but I'm also seeing what the teachers are saying. I have been able to support teachers and principles this way. Using a lot of what we are learning to strengthen our MTSS structure in the 15 buildings. Some are different, but if the expectations are the same, everyone knows what to expect as they go through our system. I was able to dovetail

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that district change with the online reporting with improving the MTSS structure. I did with help of the director of counseling, the assistant superintendent of instruction and we also had a lot of professional development on that. We are still working in it. We have gone to some conferences and worked with MA blueprint. It's a work in progress but we are seeing behaviors reduce and teachers are feeling heard and it helps the conversations. I look forward how this develops.

- 6. From GEA: Requesting feedback is often described as one of the most impactful practices of effective leadership, even when feedback may be critical of district decisions or working conditions. Please give an example of a time when you actively sought out and responded to feedback from teachers and IAs and how you validated and followed up on the responses.**

There are a lot of ways. You cannot be an effective leader if you cannot hear the truth. I say what I mean and appreciate others who do the same. Some of the ways, as principal- we established a teacher lead principal advisory group met monthly and union reps too. They would bring up anything that they wanted to bring up. It wasn't the only time, but it felt a little more formal. What's brewing? Came with ideas and solutions. That really really worked. I didn't want it once per month. I went to classrooms in the mornings and stay later in the afternoons. I also asked different people. That was helpful as a principal. Listening to feedback from teachers after pandemic – it was rough. We had trouble getting everybody back. Teachers begged me to do something about cellphones. Re-engaging students was so hard. Students just watching movies on their phones- teachers were reengaging, wearing masks, distancing, but teachers couldn't engage with students on their phones. Middle schoolers were so behind. They were doing TikTok challenges etc. It was controversial, I asked for approval and the blessing of the school committee at the time and asked for permission to implement the YONDR pouches. High anxiety when parents wanted to access their kids at all times. It took a while but we did it. It was tough. The first couple of days, students were literally on the floor crying, hysterical that we had taken their phones away. This was an indicator that there really was a problem. That was a direct response to teachers. I got a lot of support from teachers. The feedback that I got was on behavior management, safety and security and that nothing is swept under the rug. I am the Title 9 coordinator. I have put policies and procedures in place. I investigate reports myself and work diligently with MA state law. Making sure no civil rights are violated. I have done a lot of professional development and worked closely with a lawyer going to all secondary buildings and now the elementary. We have done professional development on how to investigate when there are complaints and how to follow state law on discipline and alternatives to suspension, and also restorative practices. When we were trying to decrease our suspension rates we looked at restorative practices. We did two professional development trainings at 2 days each, hiring an outside trainer to come in, on the basics of restorative practices and they are using some of those ideas. If it is not a system or structure or rolled out in a manner there will continue to be pockets. Training the Trainer is happening now,

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on how to train others to create a 3-5 year plan for the district to make sure the structure is there. So whoever is there has the policies, procedures, and knowledge to implement restorative practices and gauge the effectiveness. That was all from staff from asking. I feel validated about listening to the teachers. I have really good relationships with them; I worked hard on that. Even when there is difficult feedback in either direction, I feel that is received well because I am willing to listen and receive feedback.

7. Do you have any questions for us? Are there any questions we didn't ask you, that you would like us to know?

I have a sense, I was on a strict schedule today, I was happy to meet the principals. As a school committee what is the first thing your new super should do coming into the district?

MG: Listening to and asking great questions. We have amazing staff.

ED: We have been trying to create in recent recent years, a system for creating goals for district and committee. We haven't had effective meetings about this yet. We would have a goal setting meeting that aligns with strategic plan. See a superintendent support a structured goal setting plan.

CK: We have worked diligently over the last few years on goal setting and strategic plans. We talked to community, went to games, community center, listened to principals, staff asking what is the vision, what are the goals/values/you hold dear? From that, a collective vision was set. 2028 will be here before you know it. Look at it now to see if any of you have changed your minds, if anything has changed or what has grown from that. What are your individual goals as a school committee then try to synthesize into committee goals. Moving on down to superintendent and their goals are with that district team. Then you go from there to the principals in each building etc. A lot of it has to do with transparency. "Where do you want to be?" Like when you do UDL in the classroom when you plan your goals with the ending in mind. In 20 years what would be the *perfect* educational experience for the students in Greenfield? You have to talk to a lot of students. They articulate it differently depending on their age, experiences, perspective. But they will tell you like it is. Look at it from all lenses: equity, AI, influences, DESE, curriculum. What is our vision, vision of a learner? You want to have that insight, but the nitty gritty is to talk about it, brainstorm, activities, research best practices. It is difficult, but I do believe you wouldn't be here if you didn't want what was best for the kids. That is the common ground that you work from. Goals have to be lofty but doable and reevaluate for needed changes along the way. You have to have action plans under those goals. They have to be measurable. Then you have to do the monitoring of them. There is a reason they put the strategic plan for 2026 by 2028 because you have to meet your goals and milestones on the way. I can help with goals and vision. I would start the way I started today. I got to hear from kids and what they would like to see. They don't want to sit too much. They want more project based learning. They want real life

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skills. They have passion. We need to inspire the kids and help them set goals and achieve them. You have to have systems and policy in place. It can be daunting, has to be monitored and breathe life. You have to be willing to have an open mind and keep asking questions. I would do everything in my power to see they get accomplished and that the larger community knows what the goals are and stand behind them.

VI. Public deliberation and vote by the School Committee

A. AC moves to add a second public comment period. ED seconds.

No discussion.

Vote: Motion passes unanimously.

VII. Public Comment:

A. Doug Selwyn: First, I really appreciate the process. Hard to see someone for 30-45 minutes and know who they are in a larger picture. The focus on who the children are and listening seems to be the at the top of the list that I hope you consider. Recognizing that Greenfield cant solve it issues alone and thinking about how the person you choose will be willing and able to reach out to work with other districts and others facing similar situations. A lot of the changes we need are what schools across the state need. So hoping that the larger picture is part of the equation.

B. Jan Maher: My instinctive gut level feelings at this point- can I be overtly in favor of someone? The second candidate tonight grew on me and her answers developed over the evening. As a retired educator myself, thinking about all the issues on the table, I felt like she was the one I would want to meet right away to start that conversation with. I can't tell you a logical set of whys, but it was just the feeling that I had. She often mentioned centering and listening to the students. She mentioned particular curriculum approaches. I liked her wide range of experience with the behavioral issues that grew out of Covid. It seems like she really learned a lot and got a handle on those. I trusted that she would be somebody that could really help that settling down continue to happen. If I were voting I would cast my vote for the second candidate.

C. Jennifer Vernon: I have been part of the district for 18 years as a parent. After watching both those interviews, the second person made me excited. She gave me hope. I have a little bit of knowledge of some of what she has done throughout her career and am excited about the possibility for her to join our team here and helping to do the best that we can for our community. Thank you so much for what you have done here. I really appreciate all of the hard work you have put into our community and our school system.

D. Andrea Michael: I went to most of the meet and greet today and some of the interviews. Both candidates are strong. I can see how they made it to the final round. I think the second candidate seemed to be a better fit for Greenfield. Again, both seem very capable and probably good at their jobs. The way the second candidate spoke and carried herself, and maybe her being from Chicopee and understanding some of Western Mass challenges made me feel like she was the stronger candidate for us as a community. The way she talked about centering on the student and would collaborate with the city as well as community spoke well for her.

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SS moves to postpone Roberts Rules of Order to create better conversation. Seconded by ED. Vote: Motion passes unanimous.

GD: Thank you for the public comment. Supports second candidate. I agree with some of the things our citizens have said. She is focused on the children, spoke about special needs, and about elementary schools. I also wanted to share, I got a call from Senator Jo Comerford who strongly recommended Carol. Her wife knew her personally and spoke about her work ethic, dedication, and her interest in being here, and many other glowing things that I can't remember all of which. I have made no mention of this until this time because I was being careful. I thought they are both wonderful and very qualified. I am for the second candidate.

AC: Candidate 1: I really like how she spoke about collaboration with other city departments and building a budget. I liked the stress she put on finding the pain points of things she is trying to fix especially the growth mindset.

Candidate 2: I like how specific she was in her answers. Her examples were very real, not theoretical and of course the student focus. I would be comfortable with either of these women as superintendent. They struck me as very knowledgeable, experienced, educated, good people. We are incredibly lucky that our choices are between awesome and awesome. I would be comfortable with either.

ED: Both are eminently qualified. We would be in good hands with either. I am team Carol. She did her homework. She knew about Greenfield. She knew about our particular struggles, she came prepared to discuss us and what we needed. She's watched City Council meetings and knew a little bit about us. I also talked to MASC and they put a little bug in my ear about Carol, so I was excited to hear from her. I feel like she will really click with the town and the citizens. I really appreciate that she always centered the students first and talked about concrete ways that we could improve their outcomes. I also think Sharon was great, but I think Carol has a certain Western Massachusetts quality that I think will endear her to us. I hope that we choose her.

MW: 1st Candidate: I really liked that she talked about setting up budget boundaries to support the climate if we want it. Listening sessions and being consistent with budgets, not having answers before asking questions. How she took the chance and started as a superintendent during Covid.

2nd Candidate: How she took the chance on the YONDR pouches. She is a stable leader, she did her homework. Comes from a district with 15 schools; a district rather than a regional school. Her longevity being in the same district working her way up the ladder, I value that.

MG: When I walked in here tonight I could have gone either way. I read hours about two amazing educators, looking at what they have done and where they have been. My concern came from my love for literacy. Then I looked at team Carol. She is a licensed superintendent and a licensed special educator which means she has literacy. They are both very strong science people. Carol has her undergrad degree in ELA. As an educator for 40 some-odd years, she impressed me off the charts. She knows what she is talking about. To walk in post Covid and do the pouches was a career breaker; a real risk, but she stood by the teachers, she listened to them. She made a choice to stand for the teachers and the children because she believed it was the right thing to do. Hands down I am team Carol.

JD: There is a great deal of agreement in the room. We are blessed with two very qualified candidates. Looking at their records of accomplishment there are a lot of things to admire about these candidates. Sharon has been working in a district with a rather high achieving school with a very good record of sending students to higher ed. This is a candidate who would be likely to bring a higher level of rigor to our schools. She has a great deal of other advantages that she would bring. When I think

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about who would be the best fit for Greenfield, I am also drawn to Carol. She did her homework, she seems to care about Greenfield and understand what a city like Greenfield is like. Because of her accomplishments, if you look at the numbers of what she was able to accomplish in decreasing suspensions for students with disabilities, the numbers are really impressive. In 2014 it was 24.5% and in 2021 it was 12.8%. The YONDR pouch move is another specific example of policy decisions that are courageous. They demonstrate a bold leader who is also capable of finding consensus. I think this is the candidate we need.

SS: Coming into this interview, I didn't think we could lose. Both of these candidates would do an admirable job and are perfectly qualified for the role. It was a matter of who is the best fit for our community. I was finding myself drawn toward Carol, primarily because of the way she discussed but also demonstrated clear open way of communicating. I do feel like this is someone who would tell me not just what we want to hear but what we need to hear. I think that is something that we need. I really appreciated the focus on creating lasting systems and structures and building something that she may not see the fruits of. That really matters to me. Also the way she spoke about restorative practices, getting our schools to row in the same direction. What I really enjoyed about our first candidate was building a budget across multiple towns and how complicated that is-We have talked about that on this committee and I feel that while that is a plus for Sharon, I feel like Carol could do that.

MW: Thank the interview committee and those who gave tours today. I am for Carol.

MG: This is the most transparent process we've ever seen our school committee ever use. Bravo. Involving the union, public comment, all of it; this is part of what our city needs to do across all avenues. Thank you for doing that.

AC: We have to thank Judy P who guided us and supported us through this process. She was wonderful with a lot of expertise and advice. We were very well supported in this process.

SS: Special shout out to our food service folks who made sure we had food and to our facilities folks who really made our schools look great and to everyone who made this all work. They make our schools go round. I am really thankful.

**ED Moves that we extend the offer of superintendency to Carol Kruser. MG Seconds.
Vote: Yes: ED, GD, JD, MG, SS, MW, AC. Motion passes unanimously.**

ED: Do we have a draft contract?

SS: My intention is to have for next meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

GD Moves to adjourn. MG Seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:27pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Nan Sibley

Administrative Assistant

Materials:

1. CV Sharon M. Cournoyer

2. CV Carol M. Kruser