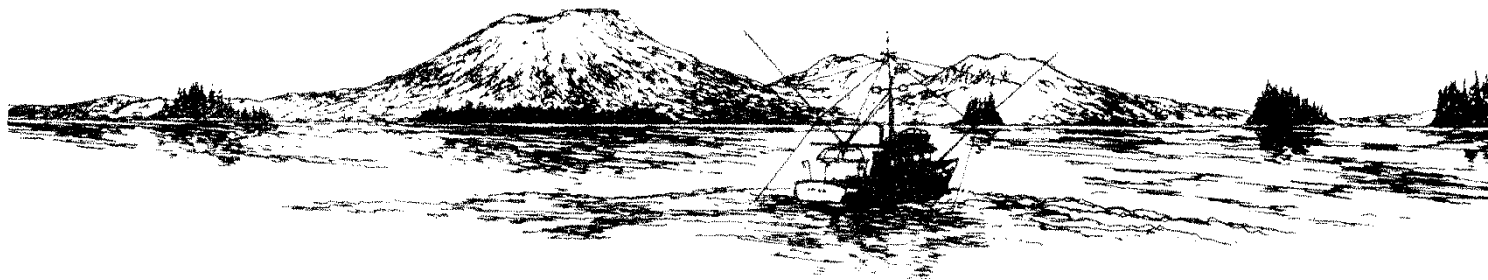


# SITKA SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.sitkaschools.org

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January 22, 2014

Dear Mr. Poulson,

Thank you for your letter of concern yesterday regarding the process the Sitka School Board has embarked upon to hire the next superintendent of schools. Yes, we agree this is a very serious and extremely important decision for the board to make and as such we want to make sure we have every chance available to us to consider the best possible candidates for the job. The Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) was hired to facilitate this search which has been open nation-wide. After further investigation and consultation with AASB and our school district attorney, the board agrees to provide the names and resumes of all candidates who still wish to apply. We will be provided those names and resumes tomorrow when they are available. Originally when candidates submitted their applications and resumes to AASB they may have done so with the understanding that they were held in confidence until which time they might be selected as a finalist for a superintendent position. Obviously this is no longer the case. Unfortunately, the pool of highly qualified, highly effective candidates is quite small, especially those with Alaska experience. As you might surmise, most of the best potential applicants are likely to be currently employed in another district and may not apply or may wish to withdraw their application for the position if not held in confidence until the finalists are chosen by the board.

Let me speak to the process of choosing the finalists. This all began back in October when the board met in public with staff and the community to determine the desired qualifications and qualities we would be looking for in the next superintendent. I am including a copy of the document that outlines those characteristics. We have solicited participation by a wide cross-section of the community to serve on an ad-hoc committee that will review, comment on and recommend or not-recommend each applicants resume. Each committee member will do this individually and those results will come to the board to be used in our deliberation for final candidate selections. The committee consists of parents, business persons, community members, teachers, classified staff, administrators and local Alaska native representatives. Let me make this very clear, AASB will in no way be involved in the selection process. Any person who has applied for the position, whether qualified or not, will be forwarded to the committee and the board for consideration. Only the Sitka School Board has the authority and responsibility to select the finalist candidates and eventually hire the next superintendent.

Once the committee has finished their review of all the candidates, the school board will then meet in executive session to compare and contrast the potential finalists for the position. The board will have at their disposal other confidential information for each applicant including background checks, references, and letters of recommendations and any other information that may pertain to the

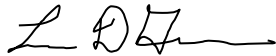
**“Educating our children to realize their potential and contribute in a connected global society.”**

applicant's qualifications. Once the board has had this comparative discussion in executive session, the vote on which applicants will be finalists will be conducted in public.

The finalists for the superintendent position will be brought to Sitka on February 12 & 13 to meet with the community, visit the schools and be interviewed. The school board will hold those interviews in public as we believe that is the best, most forthright process for our community. Upon completion of the interviews, the board will again meet first in executive session to compare and contrast the candidates but will then make the actual selection to hire the next superintendent in public.

It is my hope that I have been able to clarify the process for you. The board truly appreciates the Daily Sitka Sentinel and KCAW Radio's concern that the public remain as informed as possible about such an important event. It is the board's desire to also remain as transparent as possible while also providing us with the greatest likelihood of being able to choose from the best candidates available. We certainly owe that to our kids and that is what this is all about.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L D Garrison", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Lon D. Garrison  
President, Sitka School Board

Cc: Rob Wolsey, KCAW Radio