

Good evening, I hope your family is safe and healthy. As noted in a prior communication, I indicated that work continues in a variety of ways even though we are not “in” school. Therefore, I want to take this chance to share some special news. I am very happy to announce that my recommendation for Memorial School Principal is the unanimous choice by both of the district committees assembled for the purposes of vetting and interviewing the candidates. The next Principal of Memorial School recommended to the BOE is Mr. Michael Halligan.

The process was extensive and lasted for close to two months. The posting and advertising of the position yielded over 80 applicants. These 80 resumes and corresponding cover letters were reviewed by multiple staff members who were selected to be a part of two distinct principal search committees. The committees consisted of regular education classroom teachers, special education classroom teachers, child study team members, basic skills teachers, guidance counselors from both buildings, the director of buildings and grounds, special services supervisor, business administrator, assistant principal and myself.

The pool was narrowed to a field of 16 candidates. Experience, primary teaching experience, roles within their respective districts and recommendations were taken into consideration. Five candidates were unanimously selected following the first round of interviews. The second round of interviews consisted of the top 5 candidates and these interviews were conducted virtually using GoogleMeet.

The second round interviews consisted of pre-planned scenario/case study related questions. The candidates were also asked to complete a writing task that asked them to provide an

outline and PowerPoint presentation for their introductory parent meeting announcing them as the candidate of choice. Following the second round, the top 3 candidates were unanimously chosen and the final candidate of choice was also unanimously chosen in rank order, all anonymously and independently.

The District was very fortunate to identify a fine candidate pool. The District committees felt strongly that Mr. Halligan separated himself in the interview process but that the final candidates all would have been quality choices. This is not a reflection on them as much as it is a reflection on the quality of Mr. Halligan's interviews and body of work for the last eleven years in Maywood. We thank all of the candidates for their time and professionalism.

Mr. Halligan was the unanimous choice for a wide array of reasons as outlined below.

Mr. Halligan has a stellar record as a tenured, 11-year member of the teaching staff at Memorial. The District identified his leadership potential years ago and requested he consider pursuing his administrative certificates and masters in educational leadership for potential future leadership roles. Mr. Halligan at that time had already started his graduate work with the same set of goals in mind. Mr. Halligan is the "principal" by default at Memorial School as second in command when Mr. Bauer is not in the building and he has had critical involvement in the areas of master scheduling, I&RS, discipline, and general building management while doing his administrative mentorship in district as well. In the recent past, Mr. Halligan has taken the lead in a number of district wide initiatives including school security, curriculum development and the creation of a new schedule at Memorial School. He has worked tremendously well and exceeded expectations with District

administration in all of the aforementioned critical areas. Mr. Halligan has a unique position at Memorial School, as within his position for the last eleven years, he is one of a very few staff members who has a role and relationship with every single child and all staff at Memorial. Mr. Halligan has embraced the school community and is in attendance at many school events both at Memorial and MAS. Most recently, Mr. Halligan has stepped in as an educational leader at Memorial School during this school closure. He wasn't asked to do so, instead he rose to the occasion intrinsically as a member of the overall team. It has been mentioned consistently by Memorial staff that he has embraced his leadership role, regardless of title, and has been a resource in all of the intricacies of the current closure. This has been done with no fanfare whatsoever, instead simply taking action when most needed.

Lastly and in many regards most importantly, Mr. Halligan has the respect and support of the Memorial School faculty and staff. He has stepped out of the comfort zone of his “classroom” on a consistent basis and has taken risks and faced challenges that he knew would not be the easiest path or the status quo. He has done this while working closely with teaching staff as well as district administration. Mr. Halligan is a young and eager leader with innovative ideas who works very well with the current district leadership team. Mr. Halligan will have the chance to immediately begin the process of interviewing and deciding upon the staff we will hire into the Memorial family, and now more than ever, Mr. Halligan will bring consistency and stability as we work through the closure and then begin a new chapter post-COVID 19.

Maywood values its staff and takes the hiring process with serious conviction. It is always exciting to promote from within because we feel we hire the right people in the first place who fit our District,

our kids and our community. Mr. Halligan is a good person. He is ethically focused, team-centered and will be an incredible addition to the leadership team.

Please join me in congratulating Mr. Halligan on this achievement!

*Michael Jordan*

Superintendent of Schools