



Board of Public Education

BOARD MEMBERS

January 18, 2021

APPOINTED MEMBERS:

Darlene Schottle-Chair
Bigfork

Tammy Lacey-Vice Chair
Great Falls

Madalyn Quinlan
Helena

Sharon Carroll
Ekalaka

Mary Jo Bremner
Browning

Anne Keith
Bozeman

Jeremiah Lynch
Missoula

Paige Lepard, Student Rep.
Great Falls

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:

Clayton Christian
Commissioner of
Higher Education

Elsie Arntzen,
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Greg Gianforte, Governor

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

McCall Flynn

Staff of Montana School for the Deaf and Blind,

I hope this finds you all safe and looking forward to the new year with hope and anticipation. The year 2020 was certainly a challenging year for everyone and you, as the dedicated staff of MSDB, have had to address the needs of your students and colleagues in a number of areas due to the pandemic. Your acting superintendent, Mr. Paul Furthmyre, and the administrative team, have been keeping the MSDB Committee and the members of the Board of Public Education informed of your challenges and your successes. We at the BPE are most grateful for your dedication to your work and your support of the students that you serve.

At our recent Board of Public Education meeting, the board members voted to extend the term of Mr. Furthmyre's interim superintendent appointment for an additional year. We do not feel that this is an appropriate time to engage in a national search process to seek a permanent MSDB superintendent. The feedback that we have received indicates that Paul is providing a steady hand and strong professional guidance to the staff. We believe that it is in the best interest of the school, students, staff and community to continue under his leadership for an additional year.

The Board of Public Education wants to perform a comprehensive executive search in which we intend to engage you and the communities you serve as an integral part of the process and currently is not the best time and set of safe circumstances to enable us to do that. It is our intention to begin the process no later than September 2021 and we will keep you informed of the steps and when your input will be solicited.

Please join me in thanking Mr. Furthmyre for accepting the position of interim superintendent through June 30th of 2022. We all hope that we are back to as normal as possible prior to the end of this school year and certainly for 2021-2022.

Sincerely,

Darlene Schottle Ed.D.
Chairperson, Board of Public Education
mtdarlene@hotmail.com