APPROVED

Enumclaw School District

Minutes

Board Special Meeting

Date and Time
Monday February 23, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Location
District Office, Nancy A. Merrell Boardroom

Directors Present
Ben Stouffer, Paul Fisher, Tara Cochran

Directors Absent
Scott Mason, Tyson Gamblin

Guests Present
Jill Burnes, Stacey Whitten

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Paul Fisher called a meeting of the board of directors of Enumclaw School District to order on Monday Feb 23, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

B. Roll Call

Board Vice President Paul Fisher shared that the Board of Directors received three proposals from Executive Search Firms. All three firms were invited to tonight's meeting to present their proposal in person and to give time for the Board to ask clarifying

questions. Two firms accepted the invitation to attend the meeting and one firm's representatives were not available so they declined the invitation.

II. Superintendent Search Firms Presentations

A. Ray & Associates

Dr. Steven Chestnut and Ms. Libra Forde introduced themselves to the Board of Directors. They shared with the Board their prior work experiences and their present work experiences with Ray & Associates. Dr. Chestnut and Ms. Forde presented their firm's process for a Superintendent Search and asked the Board of Directors if they had any questions.

A summary of the question and answer period is as follows:

- **Board Question:** *What do you think of the District's timeline?*
- **Ray & Associates Answer:** *It's ambitious, but it has been done before. There are a lot of good candidates out there. We are confident in our process. This is a great place to live and work and there will be many qualified candidates interested in this position.*
- **Board Question:** *What does it look like to poll stakeholders?*
- **Ray & Associates Answer:** *We will ask the Board of Directors who we should be listening to, surveys will be given online, and meetings with stakeholders can be set up virtually or in person.*
- **Board Question:** *What are your thoughts on candidates with a non-traditional background?*
- **Ray & Associates Answer:** *We will ask the Board their preferences and the job description will indicate if a non-traditional background is something the Board is open to.*
- **Board Question:** *How does the firm check candidate backgrounds?*
- **Ray & Associates Answer:** *All candidates will be vetted before coming to the district for interviews. Finalists will go through an extremely thorough background check.*
- **Board Question:** *In your experiences, what hasn't gone well in Superintendent Searches?*
- **Ray & Associates Answer:** *Not giving people a voice is a stumbling block in searches. People want to be able to share their constituency viewpoints.*

The Board of Directors thanked Dr. Chestnut and Ms. Forde for their time.

B. Northwest Leadership Associates

Dr. Wayne Robertson and Ms. Laurel Browning introduced themselves to the Board of Directors. They shared with the Board their prior work experiences and their present work experiences with Northwest Leadership Associates (NWLA). Dr. Robertson and Ms.

Browning presented their firm's process for a Superintendent Search and asked the Board of Directors if they had any questions.

A summary of the question and answer period is as follows:

Board Question: *How do you feel about the schedule we are on?*
NWLA Answer: *The district will be fine with this schedule. There is typically a first round of openings for Superintendent positions in September. Spring is the second round and there is plenty of time.*

Board Question: *Are the background checks done through a third party? If so, is the price included in the fee?*
NWLA Answer: *Yes, background checks are done through a third party and the price is included in the fee. We also check references that candidates list and also check in with people in communities who have worked with the candidates.*

Board Question: *Tell us how you get stakeholder feedback and engage the public for input?*
NWLA Answer: *We will supply online surveys in English and Spanish. When candidates are brought forward we will provide rating scales for each person and summaries will be provided to the Board.*

Board Question: *What is the success rate of a non-traditional candidate?*
NWLA Answer: *There are not as many non-traditional candidates who apply for these positions. We will bring them forward for the Board to review. Non-traditional candidates who have been successful are typically in larger districts with bigger teams supporting areas such as Teaching and Learning. Most staff will want someone with a background similar to theirs.*

The Board of Directors thanked Dr. Robertson and Ms. Browning for their time.

Board President Fisher stated the Board would move into Executive Session to discuss the proposals at 7:27 p.m. and would reconvene the Special Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

III. Executive Session

A. Superintendent Search Firm Discussion

The Board of Directors discussed the Superintendent Search Firm proposals.

IV. Reconvene Special Meeting

A. Superintendent Search Firm Action

The Board reconvened into the Special Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Ben Stouffer made a motion to approve Northwest Leadership Associates to conduct the Superintendent Search for the District.
Tara Cochran seconded the motion.
There was no further discussion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stacey Whitten