

# L-B superintendent search underway

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District hopes to hire replacement for Jim Kanable by next February

**By KATHRYNE RUBRIGHT**

STAFF WRITER

Search consultants laid out their timeline for hiring a new Liberty-Benton superintendent by Feb. 20 during a community forum Wednesday night. The district is looking for a replacement for Jim Kanable, who originally planned to retire in July 2017, but told the school board in October that he wanted to move the date up to Dec. 31. The board will decide whether to accept that request at its Nov. 21 meeting.

Kanable said earlier this week that after a meeting to go over his retirement options, it became apparent it would be more beneficial for him to retire at the end of 2016.

Deb Campbell and Kathy Lowery, former superintendents and consultants with K-12 Business Consulting, are holding a series of discussions with teachers, students, boosters and other stakeholders to put together a “superintendent search profile.”

That document will be made available online Nov. 22 and will include lists of the school district’s strengths and its issues, characteristics the community would like to see in a superintendent, and a ranked list of 10 traits the consulting firm finds essential.

Campbell and Lowery have talked with 20 or more potential candidates so far about the position, but have advised them that waiting for the profile will be important.

Candidates are “going to look at it to see what’s going on in Liberty-Benton, and they’re going to look at it to see if their skills might match what Liberty-Benton is looking for,” Lowery said.

They’ll have time to do that before the job is posted on Dec. 5. The deadline for applications will be Jan. 13. Campbell and Lowery will recommend candidates to the school board, after which six to eight people will be interviewed on Jan. 24 and 25.

In addition to board interviews, 30 community members will meet the candidates and rank them.

The board will invite two to four candidates back for final interviews on Feb. 1. “We want them to have a tough time choosing,” Lowery said. “We want to bring the best people possible to the table on that evening.”

The board could vote to hire at its Feb. 20 meeting, unless it chooses to hold a special meeting earlier.

The superintendent’s contract will begin July 1, with an interim superintendent working until then. The contract would include some earlier days to help the transition, such as graduation day.

One issue facing the next superintendent is the effort to build a new kindergarten through eighth-grade building. The district has asked the community for money to build a new building four different times, and all have failed.

"It's a need, not a want," parent Brian Hendricks said Wednesday.

Modular classrooms supplement the elementary building, which was built in 1921.

The district has put a "tremendous amount" of money into the modular space, a new boiler system and making temperature controls more efficient in the old building, Kanable said.

"I'm anxious to see what the next person coming in will be able to accomplish there," he said. Hendricks also mentioned a desire for a superintendent who would push back against state and federal tests and regulations, and who would be a "people person" rather than a "numbers person."

Another community forum will be held at 7 p.m. Monday in the Liberty-Benton High School cafetorium. A questionnaire is available at [www.liberty-benton.org](http://www.liberty-benton.org). Rubright: 419-427-8410 [kathrynerubright@thecourier.com](mailto:kathrynerubright@thecourier.com) Twitter: [@kerubright](https://twitter.com/kerubright)