

August 23, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: Director, Human Resources

FROM: Director, Strategic Planning and Implementation

RE: State Transformation Specialist Position Recommendations

The *Office of Implementation* will be adding two new positions in the role of State Transformation Specialist. These new roles will be supporting the implementation of the Top 10 in 10 through a focus on system implementation efforts within the Department, as well as throughout the statewide education infrastructure.

These positions came about through a rigorous selection process. Following the initial posting for the position, 55 applicants were screened used on both application criteria, as well as a subsequent review for experience in educational program implementation at multiple levels within the education system. This left 11 applicants, who were screened through a brief phone interview process consisting of three questions. These are provided in the attached selection criteria and interview protocols, and this screening was completed by Ross Fort, Norma Jean Sass, and myself. This resulted in five candidates, who were then interviewed by a standard interview panel around the questions identified in the attached protocol by myself, Norma Jean Sass, and Susan Broman. Finally, these candidates all completed two performance tasks – a simulated meeting facilitation and the analysis of data resulting in a written memo. The facilitation occurred with the interview panel, as well as with Caryn Ward, from a federal technical assistance center, participating via phone. I have attached the full protocol, as well as the written selections created by the applicants. Based upon the outcomes of these efforts, we strongly recommend STS 1 and STS 2 for these positions.

The established selection criteria for these positions were the following:

- Exhibits Perseverance
- Positive and Passionate
- Exhibits Adaptive Skills – can determine when flexibility is needed
- Effective Consensus Building Skills
- Effective Facilitation Skills
- Values Diverse Perspectives
- Exhibits Familiarity with State Government Processes and Functions
- Exhibits Instructional Skills for Teaching and Coaching Teams (and the ability to hold individuals and teams accountable)
- Effective Diagnostic Skills
- Exhibits Strong Communication and Data Analysis Skills

STS 1 was selected for her strengths in all of these areas. Her experiences in her past administrative work in charter schools, as well as her work in the Public School unit in the Office of Education have demonstrated a range of these skills, as well as a thoughtful problem solving approach to identifying implementation issues in instruction and system building in schools. In particular, her ability to seek multiple data sources to identify root cause challenges to improvement in schools, combined

with her ability to work with individuals to foster a collaborative solution and ensure progress monitoring throughout the effort were identified as significant strengths that will support the unique work of this position. STS 1 has also been a leader in the department in the development of the Charter School Planning Grant with the U.S. Department of Education, and she is well versed in state policy and processes.

STS 2 was also selected for her strengths in these areas. Her experience as an educator, literacy coach, and consultant in the Office of Education make her a wonderful choice for this position. STS 2 exhibited a range of the selection criteria skills through her interview responses, and her ability to facilitate a discussion as evidenced in the performance task demonstrated the ability to adapt to new circumstances, and to effectively facilitate and communicate challenging concepts in a limited timeframe. STS 2 has also been in leadership roles for MDE in work on addressing achievement gaps, the development of the statewide literacy plan, and early literacy programming.

I recommend both STS1 and STS2 be offered the positions of State Transformation Specialist. Please proceed with making this offer, and let me know if any information or steps are required to complete this process.