

To: Portsmouth Town Council
From: Linda Ujjifusa
Date: 9/22/2020
Re: School Committee appointment process

Portsmouth School Committee (PSC) vacancies must be filled in accordance with Section 703 of the Town Charter, which states:

§703. Vacancies. Any vacancy in the membership of the School Committee shall be filled by the Town Council until the next regular State or Town election when the office shall be filled for the unexpired term thereof. (Adopted November 7, 1972; eff. date July 1, 1973.)

There are currently three (3) candidates for PSC on the ballot for the next regular election. It is not possible to add names to the 2020 ballot because nomination papers were due by July 10, 2020. The Town Council, therefore, must appoint a candidate or wait until the November 2022 election to fill the open seat. In addition, PSC members should attend an educational program at Bryant University for newly elected local officials usually held in early January.

To ensure that the PSC vacancies are filled in a timely, open, democratic and transparent manner, I propose the following selection process:

1. The Town Clerk shall solicit applications by advertising the opening on the school committee position and inviting qualified electors of the town to apply by noon November 13, 2020.
2. The written applications shall include:
 - A. a resume;
 - B. a cover letter that addresses:
 - i. Why do you want to serve on the PSC?
 - ii. What are your major goals as a PSC member?
 - iii. Why would you be a good PSC member?
 - C. a statement that they are willing and able to carry out the PSC responsibilities outlined in the Superintendent's memo. See attached.

At the November 23, 2020 Town Council meeting, the applicants shall make a short personal statement and answer questions from the Town Council via Zoom or in-person and the Town Council shall then select a candidate to fill the School Committee vacancy.