July 3, 2013

To the members of the search committee:

I would like to submit my name to you for consideration as the next Superintendent of Public instruction for Nevada. Governor Sandoval needs someone who both understands school reform and can work in an intensely political environment. I believe that I am that person.

I have over ten years experience working as the education policy aide to two governors in Massachusetts, William Weld and Paul Cellucci. I have worked on the local, state and federal levels and am quite familiar with working effectively in a very partisan context.

You may not be familiar with the Massachusetts story on education reform. The plan, the implementation was written in the 1990s. It came to realization in the following decade. School reform in Massachusetts was a topic of conversation in the last presidential election. As Governor Mitt Romney said in September 2012:

As a matter of fact, I was pleased that while I was serving as governor, the NAEP exam which, as you know, tests our kids every two years, fourth graders, eight graders, in English and math, the results came back. Our fourth graders came out number one in the nation in English and also number one in math.

And our eighth graders came out number one in English and number one in math. So in all four of the federal measures that evaluate the effectiveness of schools, our kids were number one. That had never happened before. And I looked back to understand why our schools had become so successful.

And I think it goes back to 1993 when my predecessors, Governor Weld, and the leaders of the Democratic House and Senate came together to reform education and they made a number of changes that I think are what helped drive our schools to be so successful.

Governor Romney was speaking of my work. I wrote the education plan for Governor Weld in 1991. I authored the comprehensive legislative proposal in 1992 that eventually became the landmark legislation signed by Governor Weld in 1993. I worked on the implementation of that law until I left state service in late 2001.

This effort to improve student achievement has proven to be remarkably successful. Given its long history in education, one might expect that Massachusetts was always one of the nation's leaders. It was not. In fact, when the reform effort began in the early 1990s, the state was virtually tied was such states as Utah and Wyoming in math as measured by NAEP.

As Governor Romney noted, Massachusetts was the first state to finish ahead of all other states in mathematics and reading on the NAEP assessments. It has continued to lead the nation ever since. A quick comparison might help understand the depth of change:

NAEP	Math – 4 th grade		Growth	Math – 8th grade		Growth
	1996	2011		2000	2011	Ciouiii
Nevada	218	237	+19	265	278	+13
Massachusetts	229	253	+24	279	299	+20
Nation	222	240	+18	272	283	+11
NV v MA	-11	-16		-14	-21	

A 1-point difference is roughly equivalent to a month of schooling. 9-10 points is equivalent to an academic year.

In 2006, Massachusetts reached for a new international measure: the Trends in International Math & Science study (TIMMS). For the first time in 2007, states could participate in this international assessment and be ranked against foreign countries. The results were as follows:

Grade	Subject	Scaled Score Rank	World Statistical Rank	
4	Mathematics	4 th	3rd	
	Science	2 nd	2nd	
8	Mathematics	6 th	6 th	
	Science	3rd	1 st	

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

Massachusetts was slightly behind only Hong Kong, Singapore and Chinese Taipei – and ahead of Japan – in 4th grade math. A more recent TIMMS assessment confirmed Massachusetts' standing internationally placing the state ahead of Finland in the company of the aforementioned educationally advanced countries.

I can bring the lessons of this success to Nevada.

I should address some other aspects of the job reuirements:

- I have experience working with large state budgets, having overseen expenditures in higher education, K-12, early childhood and workforce development amounting to billions of dollars annually.
- The student population in Massachusetts is quite diverse with well more than a hundred languages spoken in public schools. While there are certainly achievement gaps to be addressed, the Hispanic students in Massachusetts score near the top in the country on NAEP.
- After graduating from college, I have spent some time in a classroom as a student-teacher in a federally-funded program in Waltham, Massachusetts. However, I chose law school

- over an education administration program. I later worked on a local level as school committee chairman for half of the decade in the 1980s.
- The "Job Posting" suggested a discussion of salary requirements. I would expect the salary to be commensurate with the challenges facing a state superintendent trying to raise the level of achievement of nearly half million students.

While notable, the performance of Massachusetts has been flat since 2007. The story of its success was the story of the last decade. The success story for this decade has yet to be written. Nevada could be that story. It is clear from the table on NAEP scores that the state has made progress. However, it has far to go to beat among the educationally elite states and nations.

I am not an academic. I am a public policy professional in education. My work is published in laws and regulations. My reviews have been published as NAEP scores, in the reports from the Education Trust that show the rigor of the Massachusetts teacher test and the progressivity of the Massachusetts funding formula. The charter schools that opened under my watch are among the most successful in the state and are closing the achievement gap. With this experience, I can move Nevada more quickly to success.

Governor Sandoval is a gifted public servant. He has identified education as a priority. His agenda needs someone with both the experience and knowledge about how to move the public education system. I would be honored to serve as the next Superintendent of Public Instruction and make Nevada a national model for school change.

I would be happy to speak with you or anyone else about my background and what I can serve the Governor and the people of Nevada.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Sentance

Attachments

MICHAEL SENTANCE

· Concord, MA 01742

E-mail:

QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

Highly accomplished education advocate with more than 30 years experience and success leading change and driving the development of innovative education programs and initiatives in Massachusetts and throughout New England. Record of success at the local, state, and Federal levels complements an impressive knowledge of education policy and issues, and record of proven success at the highest levels of government.

SELECTED CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Tribal Group

As the U.S. President of Education Reform Strategies for a UK-based international consultancy ...

• Assisted the development of reform strategies including a significant contract with the Metro Nashville (TN) school district.

United States Department of Education

• Established the regional office as a significant advocate for school change in New England.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

As Senior Education Advisor to the Governor...

- Chaired the state's Education Management Audit Board and assisted in developing the protocols for auditing schools and districts.
- Co-authored a school safety report for communities and school districts after the Columbine event.
- Assisted in developing the state's teacher test as well as the standards for English, mathematics and science. Massachusetts was the first state to include engineering in its science standards.

As Secretary of Education...

- Established a statewide business/education coalition, *Keep the Promise*, in order to foster public engagement on education reform. Made more than 40 presentations to business and civic groups across the Commonwealth.
- Led several successful efforts to improve education throughout Massachusetts, including a school-towork initiative and as well as programs for gifted and talented students.
- Assisted in increasing admission standards for the public colleges and universities. Supported new
 articulation agreements between UMass and the community colleges to foster improved pathways for
 community college students to access four-year degrees.
- Created a book sharing program, Spread the Word, with business, civic and education partners. The program brought 50,000 books in five months to children in poverty and was later recognized by the Council of State Governments as one of the most innovative programs in the country.
- Developed a statewide character education program with Boston University.
- Chaired numerous state commissions.

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As Undersecretary of Education, Policy & Planning...

• Authored school improvement legislation for Governor William Weld that served as the basis for Massachusetts' *Education Reform Act*, and resulted in sweeping reforms in the areas of student learning, teacher training, and the measurement of overall progress.

- Established the *Parent Information Center*, to provide parents with information on school districts within Massachusetts. Created the state's first school and district profiles.
- Helped develop a commission report on the future of state and community colleges advocating more specific mission definitions for each campus.
- Helped develop training programs for trustee appointments for state colleges and community colleges.
- Assisted on developing one of the first School-to-Work grant programs in the nation.
- Served as Chairman and Commissioner of a number of key commissions, including Chairman, Foundation Budget Review Commission; Chairman, Regulatory Relief Commission; and Commissioner, Education Commission of the States.

As Director of the Governor's Legislative Office...

Authored legislation for the Board of Regents that established the unified University of
Massachusetts system, codified a merit-based process for nominating talented people to state
education posts into law, and successfully worked to elevate the Department of Education to cabinet
rank status by establishing the position of Secretary of Education.

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

TRIBAL GROUP (USA)

President, Education Reform Strategies

January – August 2011

- Developed a strategic plan for the U.S. expansion of the London-based international consultancy.
- Increased the rigor of an alternative certification program that facilitated the credentialing of more than 300 teachers annually.
- Worked to improve the quality and rigor of a school inspection program in the United States.
- Assisted in winning a major contract with the Metro Nashville Public School District.

CONSULTANT ON EDUCATION POLICY & IMPROVEMENT

January 2009 - January 2011

 Worked with state, federal and local officials and candidates on strategies to improve public education.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Secretary's Regional Representative

October 2001 - January 2009

- Served as Region I (New England) Representative for Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings.
- Worked with State Governors, Commissioners of Education, higher education officials, state legislative leaders, local education policymakers, and business leaders to explain and gather support for the Secretary's priorities.
- Worked with leaders in Washington on initiatives designed to resolve a wide range of issues affecting education nationally.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

August 1980 – September 2001

Senior Education Advisor to the Governor (July 1996 - September 2001)

- Advised the governor on education policy with a focus on educational issues and the development of new policy proposals and worked to measure the progress of 1993 education reform legislation to determine its fiscal impact while analyzing the educational achievement of affected students.
- Developed a variety of reform proposals related to teacher quality, class size, workforce development, and early childhood education.

Secretary of Education (July 1995 - June 1996)

- Served as the Governor's chief education policy advisor with responsibility for the oversight of the state's \$3.1 billion-plus investment in education and workforce development programs.
- Appointed to and served effectively on numerous boards, committees, and commissions crucial to the ongoing management and development of the state's education system.

Undersecretary of Education, Policy & Planning (September 1991 - June 1995)

 Chaired and served on a diverse range of critical committees and councils tasked with overseeing Massachusetts' education reform, professional development planning, school and district performance, and new state assessment programs.

Director, Governor's Legislative Office (January 1991 - August 1991)

• Developed the legislative agenda for the Weld-Cellucci administration and authored several key educational initiatives for the Governor.

Assistant Attorney General (October 1988 - January 1990)

- Directed and developed legislative strategy for Attorney General James Shannon.
- Authored legislation in criminal, civil rights, and ethics law and worked with the legislature on budgetary matters.

Legal Counsel, Office of Lieutenant Governor (August 1980 - August 1981)

- Drafted legislative initiatives and served as legal advisor to Lt. Governor Thomas P. O'Neill, III.
- Ensured that the office and its subsidiary, the Office of Federal-State Relations, were in compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations.

EDUCATION

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Boston, MA Master of Laws (LL.M), 1982

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW, Pittsburgh, PA *Juris Doctor (J.D.)*, 1976

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, Washington, D.C. Bachelor of Arts (A.B.) in American Studies, 1973

CIVIC ACTIVITIES

- Co-chair, Thoreau School (Concord) Council, 1993 1994.
- Chairman, Green Meadow School (Maynard) Building Committee, 1984 1989.
- Member, Maynard School Committee, 1983 1989 (Chairman 1984 1989).

REFERENCES MICHAEL SENTANCE

Dr. David Driscoll

Stephen O'Neill
President,
American Energy Efficiency
Company

The Honorable Jane O'Hearn

Kristen Lepore Vice President Associated Industries of Massachusetts Boston, MA

Dr. Driscoll was the Massachusetts commissioner of education from 1999 to 2007. He currently advises state and national groups on school improvement and is active with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Stephen O'Neill was the chief of staff for Governor Paul Cellucci and also served as the chief secretary for Governor William Weld. He is the President of AEEC.

The Honorable Jane O'Hearn was a state senator in New Hampshire where she served as the chair of the Senate Education Committee. She was originally a teacher and most recently served as a special assistant in the Boston office of the U.S. Department of Education.

Kristen Lepore is a Vice President at the Associated Industries of Massachusetts. She had been the Director of Policy for the Baker for Governor effort in Massachusetts. Prior to that, she was my Deputy in the Boston Regional Office for the U.S. Department of Education and had been the Deputy Chief of Staff for Governor Cellucci.