

# Help pick the new high school principal

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SALEM — Citizens wondering who will be Salem High School's next principal now have an option besides waiting — they can join the process.

The school administration will give them an opportunity to start with a parent focus group, scheduled to meet on Jan. 20, 2006. It's only the beginning of a long procedure, says Julie Doherty, director of personnel. It is designed to get input from five distinct groups, including parents, teachers, students, administrators and community leaders.

"It's really not just a gripe session," Doherty said. Instead, it will be an aid to the people who must narrow down the list of applicants and make the final selection. "We want to know what are the quali-

ties that you would like to see. It's just to get an idea."

The session will be conducted by professionals with experience at moderating focus groups. Officials want the input prior to receiving résumés from applicants.

"It's to determine what are our priorities," Doherty said. "It will generate an awful lot of data."

"The high school is the flagship of the district," School Committee member Jim Fleming said. "So the leader of the flagship should be a very competent captain."

All this comes on the heels of the resignation of Principal Ann Papiotas, whose tenure inspired fierce opposition from some teachers and some parents. She has decided to leave at the end of the school year.

Anyone interested in the parent focus group should provide their name, address and e-mail or phone number to Doherty at (978) 740-1126.