

October 16, 2023

Blog – Superintendent Search Survey Results

We are now in the middle of October, the leaves are all starting to turn colors and the weather is starting to cool down. In a few weeks, the first quarter of the school year will have been completed and time marches on. This week, I would like to share the results of the superintendent search survey with you. First, I want to say “Thank You” to everyone who took the time to complete the survey – your responses will help the Board as they work through the process of finding just the right candidate to be your next superintendent.

The survey was taken by about 430 individuals: 81 staff members, 83 students and 266 parents/community members. The respondents came from all the various parts of our school district, but most of the respondents came from the village of Orfordville, the town of Newark and the town of Plymouth. Of the community members that completed the survey, almost half of the respondents were between the ages of 35 – 44 and had children attending the school district. In reviewing all of the responses, I think there were several that were shared by the majority of respondents:

- 1) When asked what type of prior job experience they would like the candidate to possess, most respondents wanted the individual to have experience as a teacher, principal and superintendent.
- 2) When asked how important it was that their next superintendent have prior experience as a superintendent, the most common response among all three groups was that experience was preferred, but not essential.
- 3) The majority of all three groups also would like the next superintendent to have a strategic leadership style, where the individual focuses on long-term planning and analyzes current school and classroom performance and sets goals to reach better results.
- 4) The most common comment about what traits they would like to see in the next superintendent was they wanted someone with good communication skills that will listen to the thoughts and opinions of others.
- 5) The respondents also want a leader who has a good moral compass who is honest, approachable and has integrity. The students want someone who is nice, kind and smart.
- 6) When asked what should be the superintendent’s highest priority, most respondents want the next superintendent to be able to lead and unite the different factions within the school district and help it to continue to move forward in providing the best education possible to our students.
- 7) Most feel the biggest challenge will be to pass the next referendums.
- 8) In addition, about 2/3 of the respondents felt that the District was doing a good to excellent job in the area of communication.

These results were shared with the Board of Education at our Monday, October 16 Board of Education meeting. So what next, the Board of Education will now use these results to help revise and finalize the Superintendent’s job description, which will let the candidates know what the District’s expectations are for them if they are fortunate enough to be selected as the next superintendent. This information will also be used to construct the different essay questions that are part of the application process.

The job will be posted during the month of November, just prior to our Thanksgiving Break. Applicants will have until the end of December to submit their applications for the

position. In January, the Board of Education will review all of the applicants and select those that they feel have the potential to be the District's next superintendent. The first round of interviews will then be scheduled for mid-January. It is my recommendation that the first round of interviews consist of three or possible four separate interview teams: one made up of staff members from throughout the District, one of administrative staff, one of parents and community members and the fourth of students. These groups will then pass on the final candidates to the Board of Education, who will probably hold the final interviews towards the end of January. Once a final candidate is selected, the Board will do a thorough background and reference check of the individual. If the information they receive is positive, then the Board will enter into contract negotiations with the individual and approve the contract at its February Board meeting. Finally, an announcement will go out to the students, staff and community about the new superintendent.

In closing, I again want to thank everyone for helping in this process. Your input and feedback will help the Board make the right decision and provide you with the educational leader that you deserve.