

September 26, 2024

Blog – Superintendent Search Firm and Process

Fall is certainly upon us. As I drive to and from work, I can see the leaves starting to change colors and the temperatures starting to cool down. As you know, if you have been reading my weekly blogs over the past year, it is my goal to keep you informed about what is going on in the District. One major item the Board of Education is currently working on is the hiring process for your next superintendent.

In early September, the Board of Education contacted several superintendent search firms and asked them to send proposals for the Board to review. The Board received proposals from the following firms:

- 1) The Wisconsin School Board Associations
- 2) Ray & Associates
- 3) Hazard, Young and Attea (HYA)

After reviewing each of the proposals, the Board decided to interview the firms of Ray & Associates and HYA. These interviews were held on Tuesday, September 10. After the interviews, the Board discussed the pros and cons of each firm. On Monday, September 16, the Board of Education decided to enter into negotiations with HYA to help them find your next superintendent.

Hazard, Young and Attea (HYA) provided the following general timeline for the superintendent search process:

In September, representatives from HYA will meet with the Board of Education to determine the process that will be followed to find the next superintendent and to finalize a realistic timeline for the search.

In October, representatives from HYA will hold individual meetings with each of the Board members to determine what qualities and traits each of them would like to see in the next superintendent. After these meetings, HYA representatives will hold a series of focus groups with administrators, staff, parents, community members and students. During the month of October, HYA will also send out a survey to all stakeholders about the traits and qualities they would like to see the Board look for in the next superintendent. At the beginning of last year, I sent out a similar survey to the staff, parents and community members. I will be providing the results of these surveys to HYA for their use.

In late October – early November, the superintendent position will be posted on multiple job boards. HYA will not only open up the position to all interested applicants, they will also contact prospective individuals through their network of affiliates. They felt that the Board should expect to receive approximately fifteen (15) to twenty (20) applicants for the position. These applicants will be sorted into three groups:

- 1) First round candidates who HYA feels best meets the needs and qualifications set forth by the Board of Education.

- 2) Second round candidates who may meet several of the needs and qualifications set forth by the Board of Education and
- 3) Third round candidates. These are candidates that HYA does not feel are qualified or have issues in their background or job history that would not make them good candidates for the position.

Board members will have access to all of the application materials sent in by each applicant. The Board also has the final say in which individuals they would like to interview for the position.

In November, HYA will present a District Leadership Profile to the Board of Education. This profile will be a compilation of what was learned through the various focus teams and survey results. Its purpose is to create a document that demonstrates what stakeholders want the Board to look for in their next superintendent.

In December, the Board of Education will review the slate of candidates that HYA feels are worthy of an interview. HYA will have a workshop with Board members to review each of the candidates on the slate provided by HYA and the interview process. As I stated earlier, the Board has the final say on which candidates they would like to interview for the position. Prior to the winter break, HYA will work with the Board of Education and prospective candidates to set up the first round of interviews. After the first round of interviews are completed, the Board of Education will work with representatives from HYA to identify the semi-finalists for the position.

In January, each of the semi-finalists will be given a day-long tour of the District. The Board of Education will then hold its final interviews with each of the semi-finalists. If they find the right candidate, representatives from HYA will do third-party background checks on the final candidate or candidates. By the end of January, the Board will select its finalist and start working with the candidate to establish a contract that is acceptable to both parties. Once the contract has been established, the Board will announce the new superintendent to the District.

The new superintendent will then take over on July 1, 2025.

I hope you can see that even though it may seem very early in the school year to start these discussions, it actually is the best time because it gives the Board plenty of time to get input into this very important decision. As an interim superintendent, I will work with the Board and representatives from HYA to help the District find its next educational leader. I am confident that the Board will find the right candidate to lead you in the future. Thank you again for everything that you do!