

March 16 Superintendent Criteria Agenda

Purpose: to solicit input from the CSD stakeholders on the criteria that should be used in describing the Superintendent position and the selection process.

Attendees:

Fred Polaski – Board member

Claire O’Neal – Board member

Mary Schorse -- FOCS

Mark Holodick – DASL @ UD, wants to support CSD

Alva Mobley- Public Information Officer

Kerry McGinnis – CSD Board Secretary

Karen Elmagrisi – 3rd grade teacher @ Bayard

Naveed Baqir – FOCS

Karen Eller – CSD teacher (disconnected during the meeting)

JKEY – did not provide name or contribute

Fred introduced the meeting and reviewed some protocols for conference calls. Everyone was identified when they spoke because their name and / or picture was displayed. The agenda was added to the ZOOM meeting after the start of the meeting. Each of the sections of the agenda were reviewed and comments are as noted.

Fred discussed that he saw the discussion in two parts. The first is the regulatory requirements for the Superintendent position. The second is the “soft side” of the position, such as management style, communications skills, etc.

Required Qualifications and Certifications:

- Possess, or qualify for, State of Delaware *School Leader II Certification* as a Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent (See <http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/1500/1593.shtml#TopOfPage>)
- Relevant Master’s Degree (as required by certification); an earned doctorate preferred
- Successful completion of the Praxis I (only for those candidates not already certified)

- Minimum of eight years *full-time* combined public education experience that must include *at least five years teaching experience* and *at least three years* building-level administration and/or district-level administration

Comments - None

Desired Experience:

- Working knowledge of Delaware’s public education system laws, regulation and practices *required*

Comment: may want to change “required” to “desired”

- Documented success as an instructional leader with a proven record for improving student achievement at every level; advocate for teacher/staff professional development

Comments:

1. This applies to both urban and suburban schools.
 2. Should be a question during interviews with candidate to provide examples of student achievement over time. Must show student growth and also equity.
 3. Should be for an entire district, not just selected schools.
 4. The Board will have to fact check the information with some “granular digging”.
- Demonstrated knowledge of curriculum development, instructional practices and program evaluation in meeting the needs of a diverse student population
 - Knowledge and experience in innovative program design and evaluation

Comments:

1. The Superintendent does not have to design innovative programs but has to be innovative in their thinking.
 2. The Superintendent has to make sure the whole process works from start through completion, working with the Board.
 3. The Superintendent must be willing to engage with innovation.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to work collaboratively within diverse stakeholder groups; District advocate with all relevant constituencies, elected officials and the larger community.

Comments:

1. Superintendent must be willing to work both inside and outside the district.

2. Must communicate with teachers such that the teachers feel the Superintendent is accessible.
 3. Superintendent must come across as caring for employees, students, parents.
 4. Noted that the skill set for interpersonal skills during an interview are different than the skill sets to communicate with employees, groups of people, and with those outside the district.
 5. Communication and interpersonal skills are critical for internal morale building, as well as external morale building.
 6. Must be an effective public speaker, including question and answer sessions, and effective in the hallway meetings after the public session.
 7. Need a balance between Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents, Senior Directors, etc. to pass information down through the district.
- Referendum (added during the meeting)
Comment: Proved success at passing a referendum should be considered

Performance Responsibilities:

- Serve as Chief Executive Officer of the Christina School District and Executive Secretary of the Board of Education; responsible for the daily administration of the District; provide leadership in dealing with parents and/or all relevant constituencies within or outside the District
- Formulate vision and provide strategic direction for all District administrative and instructional activities; supervise directly or through delegation, all activities of the school system in an ethical manner and in accordance with the policies of the Board

Comments:

1. The vision and strategies should be driven by the Strategic Plan (SP)
 2. The SP should be fluid, relevant, and timely.
 3. High performing districts use the SP actively
 4. The Superintendent performance evaluation is tied to the SP.
 5. The Superintendent must have the ability to work within the administrations executive team because the Superintendent works the least directly with the SP as a member of the executive team. The other members of the executive team are actually implementing the SP. (E.g. Curriculum and Instruction, Facilities)
 6. The Superintendent must be able to manage the executive team (8 to 12) and hold them accountable for deliverables.
 7. The SP should connect the Superintendent and the Board together “at the hip”
- Develop educational goals and objectives for the District

- Prepare and deliver written and oral presentations to the Board of Education, district personnel, parents and community groups; prepare relevant statutory reports and recommendations
- Work with District administration to define performance expectations and evaluate the performance of principals

Comments:

1. Performance evaluations of central office administrators should be shared with the Board
 2. Superintendent must make sure everyone is appropriately evaluated. The Superintendent is indirectly responsible for performance evaluations of everyone in CSD.
 3. Superintendent must work with the HR Director to make sure everyone is being equitably evaluated.
- Prepare and submit a recommended annual budget to the Board; Monitor and evaluate budgets and grants
 - Establish District instructional and financial priorities; Collaborate with district departments to utilize various funding sources to maximize learning opportunities for students
 - Represent the District in activities associated with the Reding Consortium
 - Work collaboratively with the Delaware Department of Education, elected officials at every level, and other education and business leaders on initiatives and development activities related to District vision and goals.

Preferred Management Style:

Comments:

1. Should be inclusive. Build teams
2. The CSD Board is confused about governance vs. hands-on maintenance
3. If the Board is heavy-handed or the Superintendent wants everything approved and rubber-stamped by the Board, both are not good. Should be a balance between the two.
4. The Superintendent and the Board must both know their roles and be able to work together.
5. If the Superintendent is charged with being a change agent and directed to “Change the District”, how does that work. One comment was the Board should provide the direction for the Superintendent to implement.
6. The Board can’t make decisions on educational process without knowledge of the area. The Board has to be aligned with the Superintendent on educational processes and changes.

7. The Superintendent must be able to pull all parts of the district together to implement changes. Include teachers, school leaders, central office, Board, others together so everyone can support the change.
8. The Superintendent should have an advisory board with input from all stakeholders, both inside and outside the district.
9. The Superintendent has to make all stakeholders aware of change and make sure all perspectives are available and valued.
10. The new Superintendent must be aware of the wide variety of perspectives and experiences within CSD. The Superintendent must also make all stakeholders aware of different perspectives for decision making.

Interface / Relationship with the Board:

Comments: See comments in previous section.

Decision Making Style:

Comments:

1. Must be collaborative
2. Must be decisive
3. Well explained and communicated well

Experience with Organizational Development:

Comments:

1. What experience does the candidate have with building a whole new team?
2. What experience with educating district employees on basic organization practices? E.g. how to run a meeting – note taker, action items, facilitator?
3. Problem solving and decision making.

Focus within the District vs. Outside the District

Comments:

1. What is the balance between time spent inside and outside? One response was 60% outside, 40% inside.
2. It is hard to put a number on this, but the Superintendent must be willing to reach outside the district, especially during a referendum year.
3. Must be comfortable working outside the district, especially in the next few years. The Superintendent needs a team that is focused inside with the Superintendent much more outside.

4. Must be comfortable in a classroom and also outside with Redding Consortium, DSAL, General Assembly, local governments, social organizations, business community. Charter schools, community committees and organizations.

Mark Holodick provided comments on the current experience with hiring a new Superintendent at Lake Forest District.

Lake Forest reached out directly to DASL (Jackie Wilson) – met with them and shared thoughts on process of helping them select their next superintendent. Lake Forest asked Mark to put together a draft timeline, a draft contract for DASL services to support them. LF are surveying their staff members. Once that closes (just before the position closes), it comes directly to Mark. Applicants will provide resumes, cover letters, writing samples (to provide evidence). Board will select first round of candidates to interview. 2nd round, round-robin to meet with board, stakeholders (community members) id'd by the board, and staff members. Finalist(s) will be determined, DASL will help negotiate final contract, supporting board. LF expressed interest in year-long onboarding/support for new superintendent.

Timeline for LR is to have a new superintendent in place by July 1. They started meetings 3 weeks ago, position went live last Thursday or Friday. Brandywine had a head start, but not much – about a week before Lake Forest's. Process you use affects this as well – ex: holding large community meetings, which takes time. Don't necessarily want time to determine your process. Should rethink inputs – what are you getting out of this by adding a step to the process? Is it going to give you what you want, or are you trying to placate people?

Other comments from Mark Holodick:

1. Super's who have not lasted long in district = miscommunication between board and super. Best way to avoid that = clear and effective communication, being forthright with expectations, regular check-ins between superintendent and board
2. At UD, previously searches handled by Biden School, but now by DASL. DASL is very interested in changing the *length* of superintendencies in public schools. Better for stability, better for healthy relationships.

Fred Polaski

March 17, 2020