
URBANA SCHOOL DISTRICT #116

New Superintendent Profile Report

March 12, 2019



CONSULTANTS: Ms. Diane Robertson - Dr. Kevin O'Mara - Dr. Timothy Shimp

THE BOARD REQUESTED THE CONSULTANTS TO:

- **Conduct Focus Groups with a wide variety of stakeholders**
 - **Conduct an On-line Survey to gather input from school staff, parents, students and community members**
 - **Create a *New Superintendent Profile* based on information gathered from these sources**
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HOW PROFILE REPORT WILL BE USED

- The Board and Consultants will use the *New Superintendent Profile* as they screen and conduct interviews with candidates.
 - The Profile Report may be used to develop interview questions for the candidates.
 - The Board of Education may use this Profile Report to find out more about the thinking of the District's constituents.
 - The candidates and the community may use this Profile Report to find out about the strengths and challenges of the District.
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SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION

- **Focus Groups/Forums: 187 Attendees**
(20 Focus Groups and 2 Open Forums)
 - **On-line Survey: 540 Responses**
 - Due to sampling methods, the resulting report is not a scientific study and provides only the perceptions of those who responded or participated
 - In the survey report, percentages are rounded
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FOCUS GROUP/SURVEY QUESTIONS

- **What are your District's greatest strengths and attributes? (Why would a new superintendent want to come to this District?)**
 - **What are your District's greatest challenges? (What should a new superintendent know before he/she accepts this responsibility?)**
 - **What should the priorities be for the new superintendent?**
 - **What are the most important characteristics and skills the new superintendent needs to possess to be successful in this District?**
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FOCUS GROUPS/OPEN FORUMS

20 Focus Groups (147 Attendees)

**Parents, Community Members, Students, Certified and Non-Certified Staff,
Building and District Administrators and the Board of Education**

2 Open Forums (40 Attendees)

District Staff Members and Community Members

DISTRICT STRENGTHS

- **Micro urban community; lots of amenities and opportunities for kids and families**
 - **Great location with proximity to larger urban cities**
 - **Diverse, yet close-knit school and community**
 - **Affordable cost of living, safe and welcoming, great place to raise a family**
 - **U of I; multi-cultural core, microcosm of the world**
 - **Great teachers**
 - **Neighborhood schools that feed into one MS and one HS**
 - **Wide variety of academic offerings**
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DISTRICT STRENGTHS

- **Emphasis on educating the whole child**
 - **Dual language, fine arts and acceleration programs**
 - **Partnerships with U of I, local businesses and governmental agencies**
 - **Parent and community involvement and support, volunteer programs**
 - **Historically had good relationships/collaboration throughout**
 - **School Health Center**
 - **Ahead of the curve with new initiatives and programming**
 - **Students feel safe most of the time**
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DISTRICT CHALLENGES

- **No clear vision, lack of clear expectations**
 - **Loss of trust, broken relationships, non-collaborative culture**
 - **Poor, inconsistent and vague communication**
 - **Changing student/family demographics, more low income**
 - **Diversity, racial divide, race/class silos, white flight**
 - **School safety issues, inconsistent discipline, lack of consequences, removal of Deans**
 - **Poor roll-out and implementation of restorative practices, but the program is good**
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DISTRICT CHALLENGES

- **Unqualified people in leadership positions, lack of professional development**
 - **Poor relationships between building administration and teachers**
 - **High staff turnover, loss of institutional and operational knowledge**
 - **Low staff morale**
 - **Voices go unheard, fear of retaliation for speaking out**
 - **Negative press coverage**
 - **Financial issues, tax caps, un-equitable allocation/spending**
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FOCUS AREAS IN FIRST YEAR

- **School safety, fix restorative practices program**
 - **Restore trust, build relationships**
 - **Properly qualified staff, principal mentoring program**
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DESIRED SKILLS/CHARACTERISTICS

- **Highly visible in the schools and community**
 - **Approachable**
 - **Visionary, forward thinker, creative**
 - **Collaborative, team builder**
 - **Relationship builder**
 - **Effective communicator, active listener**
 - **Transparent, open-minded**
 - **Building leadership experience**
 - **Proactive**
 - **Holds others accountable**
 - **Strong, confident**
 - **Mentor**
 - **Bilingual (a plus)**
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SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

540 TOTAL RESPONSES

■ Staff member	236	44%
■ Parent	222	41%
■ Student	47	9%
■ Community/Business	24	4%
■ Other	11	2%

EDUCATIONAL STRENGTHS

- **Quality of Teaching Staff** **57%**
 - **Opportunities for Students Outside Classroom** **38%**
 - **Understanding and Support of Diversity** **37%**
 - **Use of Technology for Learning** **31%**
 - **Emphasis on Educating the Whole Child** **30%**
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NEEDED EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

- **School Learning Environment** 64%
 - **Quality of Administrators** 62%
 - **Vision for Direction of School District** 41%
 - **Preparing Students to be Productive Students** 33%
 - **Challenging, Quality Curriculum** 29%
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ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGERIAL STRENGTHS

- **Community Support of Education** **36%**
 - **Clean and Attractive Schools** **34%**
 - **Racial Equity** **23%**
 - **Board Governance** **22%**
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NEEDED ORGANIZATION AND MANAGERIAL IMPROVEMENTS

- **Staff Morale** **70%**
 - **Student Conduct and Discipline** **63%**
 - **Student Safety** **58%**
 - **Image of the District** **46%**
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PRIORITIES FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENT

- **Student Well Being (Emotionally Safe/Confident) 67%**
 - **Relationships w/ Staff and Community Members 49%**
 - **Student Growth and Achievement 44%**
 - **Image of the District 32%**
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CHARACTERISTICS/SKILLS NEEDED FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENT

- Collaborative; includes others in decision-making 60%
 - Clear vision for leading; inspires others 58%
 - Builds good teams; brings out best in others 57%
 - Deep knowledge of curriculum and learning 54%
 - Visible in the school and community 48%
 - Holds others accountable 42%
 - Warm people skills, approachable 41%
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EMERGENT THEMES

- Trust
 - Communication
 - Program Design and Implementation
 - Finance
 - Mentorship
 - Visibility and Relationships
 - Collegiality
 - Diversity
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EMERGENT THEMES

- Continuity and Consistency
 - Accountability
 - Equity
 - Servant Leadership
 - Safety and Discipline
 - Healing, Student Focus and Image
 - Visionary Leadership
 - Instructional Knowledge
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- **Is genuine, personable, transparent, approachable, accessible and open-minded.**
 - **Is a visionary leader who is forward-thinking and can inspire and empower others; leads in the development of both short and long-range planning to maintain a high level of academic and operational success in the district.**
 - **Becomes vested in the Urbana community; develops authentic relationships and works to establish trust.**
 - **Is highly visible in the schools and community, interacting with people in a variety of venues.**
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- **Is collaborative, seeks the voice of others, listens actively and engages in shared decision-making when appropriate.**
 - **Hires well, delegates effectively, ensures accountability and provides targeted professional development and mentoring services where appropriate.**
 - **Understands school finance and makes wise, equitable decisions regarding the allocation of limited resources; is creative and thinks outside the box.**
 - **Has successful experience as a teacher and building level administrator.**
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- **Possesses a strong academic background; is knowledgeable about curriculum, instruction, assessment and how students learn; is dedicated to the education of the whole child.**
 - **Embraces diversity; leads in the research, development, training and implementation of programs and initiatives to break down racial, social, ethnic and class barriers and divides that hinder student learning and achievement.**
 - **Works to create an environment that is conducive to learning and where students and staff feel safe and secure.**
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- **Understands the unique microcosm Urbana is and the effects demographic shifts have on schools and academic environments.**
 - **Is an outstanding communicator who delivers school and district information in an accurate, timely and straightforward manner utilizing a variety of methods and venues; works to create a more positive District image.**
 - **Establishes and implements an organizational system of protocols and procedures to ensure both operational and programmatic fidelity at all levels.**
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NEXT STEPS

- **Consultants recruit, conduct interviews and make reference checks using the *New Superintendent Profile***
 - **Consultants recommend candidates to the Board; conduct interview workshop; prepare salary/benefits comparisons**
 - **Board conducts first interviews; chooses finalists**
 - **Board holds second interviews; hears candidate presentations; interview committees also interview candidates**
 - **Board makes selection of finalist; conducts reference checks, negotiates the contract**
 - **New Superintendent begins duties on July 1, 2019**
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