MCLEAN COUNTY UNIT DISTRICT # 5

New Superintendent Profile Report

October 30, 2019

CONSULTANTS: Ms. Diane Robertson and Dr. Jill Hawk
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
HOW PROFILE REPORT WILL BE USED

- The Board and Consultants will use the *New Superintendent Profile* as they screen, develop questions and conduct interviews with 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.
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 during his or her first year?

What are the most important characteristics and skills the new superintendent needs to possess to be successful in this District?
SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION

- **Focus Groups/Forums:** 208 Attendees  
  (15 Focus Groups and 2 Open Forums)

- **Online Survey:** 1134 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
FOCUS GROUPS/OPEN FORUMS

15 Focus Groups (149 Attendees)
Parents, Community Members, Students, Certified and Non-Certified Staff, Building and District Administrators and the Board of Education

2 Open Forums (59 Attendees)
District Staff Members and Community Members
DISTRICT/COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

- Vibrant, thriving community; lots of amenities and opportunities for kids and families
- Dedicated, excellent teachers and staff
- Great location with proximity to 3 larger urban areas
- Diverse, yet close-knit community; “big small town”
- Affordable cost of living, safe and welcoming, great place to raise a family
- Partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, colleges and universities; “benevolent community’
- ISU, Heartland, Wesleyan and Lincoln
DISTRICT/COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

- Wide variety of program offerings; academic and co-curricular, educating the “whole child”; Social Emotional Learning
- Strong parent and community engagement and support
- Innovative, progressive programs
- High academic performance and high graduation rates
- Do more with less
- Special education services
- Park system
- Live the mission of serving “each student”
DISTRICT CHALLENGES

- Transportation
- Financial structural deficit of 10 million dollars +
- No clear vision
- Need for staff that more closely mirrors the racial makeup of the student population
- Ineffective communication
- Inequities in academic achievement and discipline
- Lack of clear processes to implement new programs
- Size of district; miles and students
DISTRICT CHALLENGES

- Low staff morale
- Silos develop due to lack of unifying vision and clear role definition
- Standards-based grading
- Clear, timely, effective decision-making processes
- Leadership team that is balanced by gender and race
- Inclusiveness of stakeholders in decisions
- Responsiveness from unit office to the buildings
- Variance in demographics of building populations, sizes
FOCUS AREAS IN FIRST YEAR

- Fix transportation
- Develop a strategy for financial health
- Develop authentic relationships within the district and community; learn the culture
- Develop a district vision and direction in collaboration with stakeholders
- Develop strategy for recruiting minorities
- Conduct an audit of the administrative structure and effectiveness
DESIRED SKILLS/CHARACTERISTICS

- Highly visible in the schools and community; approachable
- Visionary and strategic
- Relationship builder
- Effective communicator, active listener; can explain complicated issues clearly
- Proactive and decisive
- Understands the culture of the Unit 5 district and communities
- Has a track record of working effectively with diverse communities
- Holds others accountable
- Is reliable; follows through with commitments and promises
- Understanding of a PreK-12 school district
- Passionate
- Knows school finance, best practices and how to lead change
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EDUCATIONAL STRENGTHS

- Quality of Teaching Staff: 69%
- Use of Technology for Learning: 43%
- School Learning Environment: 34%
- Challenging, Quality Curriculum: 28%
- Opportunities for Students Outside the Classroom: 26%
NEEDED EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Vision for the Direction of the School District 36%
- Quality of Administrators 31%
- Preparing Students to be Productive Citizens 31%
- Tailoring Instruction to Individual Student Needs 28%
- Instructional Methods that Engage Students 28%
ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGERIAL STRENGTHS

- Clean and Attractive Schools 50%
- Student Safety 44%
- Communication with Parents and Community 34%
- Community Support of Education 31%
NEEDED ORGANIZATION AND MANAGERIAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Staff Morale 48%
- Stewardship of Financial Resources 40%
- Student Conduct and Discipline 38%
- Communication with Parents and Community 36%
PRIORITIES FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENT

- Student Well Being (Emotionally Safe/Confident) 54%
- 21st Century Skills 46%
- Student Growth and Achievement for All 45%
- Financial Issues 39%
CHARACTERISTICS/SKILLS NEEDED FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENT

- Clear vision for leading; inspires others 55%
- Deep knowledge of curriculum and learning 54%
- Builds good teams; brings out best in others 48%
- Is child-centered 44%
- Holds others accountable 43%
- Collaborative; includes others in decision-making 42%
- Warm people skills; approachable 40%
- Understands finance and business side of District 40%
EMERGENT THEMES

- Trust
- Communication
- Transportation
- Program Design, Implementation and Evaluation
- Finance
- Diversity
- Visibility and Relationships
- Equity
EMERGENT THEMES

- Continuity and Consistency
- Accountability
- Visionary Leadership
- Instructional Knowledge PreK-12
- Whole Child Focus
NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Fosters an environment relentlessly focused on students, based on trust and dedicated to excellence.
- In partnership with stakeholders, creates a compelling vision and leads the District toward implementation.
- Is dedicated to and involved with the communities that comprise Unit 5; is visible and engaged.
NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

■ Has experience and demonstrated understanding of cultural diversity and works to engage all students, parents and stakeholders in the educational process.

■ Is a proactive problem-solver who clearly delineates roles and responsibilities in order to effectively and efficiently address problems and issues within Unit 5.

■ Hires well, delegates effectively, provides targeted professional development and ensures accountability in order to develop and sustain an effective, diverse and excellent Unit 5 staff.
NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Is dedicated to the education of the whole child yet seeks the success of “each child”; ensures students are safe and secure.
- Is knowledgeable about Illinois school finance and strategically targets limited resources toward district priorities.
- Has experience and demonstrated success in leading innovation and change including knowing when to stop initiatives.
NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Has warm people skills; is approachable and genuine. Demonstrates a sincere interest in the ideas and opinions of others.

- Is an effective communicator who can convey complex information in a manner that is clear to a variety of audiences.

- Models high standards and holds others accountable in a fair, consistent manner.
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, 2020