
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**
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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.
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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?**
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QUESTIONS, CONTINUED

- **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?**
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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
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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
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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”
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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**
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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
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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**
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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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SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

1134 TOTAL RESPONSES

• Parent	569	50%
• Staff Member	380	33%
• Student	146	13%
• Community/Business	31	3%
• Other	8	1%

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%**
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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%**
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ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGERIAL STRENGTHS

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

- Staff Morale 48%
 - Stewardship of Financial Resources 40%
 - Student Conduct and Discipline 38%
 - Communication with Parents and Community 36%
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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%**
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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%
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EMERGENT THEMES

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

- **Continuity and Consistency**
 - **Accountability**
 - **Visionary Leadership**
 - **Instructional Knowledge PreK-12**
 - **Whole Child Focus**
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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.**
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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.**
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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.**
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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.**
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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, 2020
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