

North Syracuse Stakeholder Survey Summary on the Superintendent Search

The stakeholder survey ran on-line from January 7-18, 2019. What follows is a summary of the responses received.

A total of 797 individuals completed the survey broken down as follows:

- 162 (20%) instructional staff members in the district
- 509 (64%) parents of a child or children in the district
- 24 (3%) students in the district
- 55 (7%) non-instructional staff members in the district
- 47 (6%) community members

The top five (most first) desired attributes of the next Superintendent by all respondents were:

- 1-Can inspire and motivate faculty, staff and students
- 2-Understands current curriculum issues in New York
- 3-Exhibits a great deal of integrity
- 4-Has demonstrated leadership skills on the job
- 5-Can explain educational issues in plain language without talking down to people

The bottom, or least desired attributes (least first), were:

- 1-Has published articles and/or books on education
- 2-Has an earned doctorate
- 3-Is professionally active at the local, state and national levels
- 4-Has been a central office administrator (such as a Director of Special Education)
- 5-Has experience with capital construction projects

The following table breaks down respondents by group and shows each group's top five desired attributes:

Attribute	Instructional Staff	Parents	Students	Non-Instr. Staff	Community
Can inspire and motivate faculty, staff and students	1	1	1	1	2
Exhibits a great deal of integrity	2	3			1
Understands current curriculum issues in N.Y.	3-4	2	3		
Has demonstrated leadership skills on the job	3-4	4			4
Can explain educational issues in plain language without talking down to people	5		2	4	5
Is visible and accessible			4	2	3
Makes other people feel at ease when talking to him/her				3	
Willing to make a long-term commitment to our district (at least five years)		5		5	
Knows New York State School law			5		

Some general observations on the other items include:

- 77% of respondents feel it is very important or essential that the person "has experience in a district similar to ours"
- 47% think it is very important or essential that the individual "has been a practicing superintendent" while 58% believe it is "very important or essential that the person "has been a principal" and 83% believe "teaching experience is very important or essential"
- 92% responded that it is very important or essential that the person be "visible and accessible"
- 81% rated "understands and has experience with special education issues" and 81% said "has experience with school finance and budget in New York" as either very important or essential
- 61% rated "is willing to reside in our district" as very important or essential while just 52% felt likewise about "is familiar with our district"

The following is an "unscientific" analysis of the comments identifying some themes that seem to have emerged and other items I believe are important for the search process:

- There are some comments that encourage the Board to look internally for the candidate while a few others ask that an outside person be hired.
- A number of respondents want an individual that can improve the special education program.
- Many emphasized a need to have someone that puts students first.
- Visibility and accessibility were mentioned in a number of comments
- Diversity (knowledge of and seeking diverse candidates) was mentioned several times.
- Bringing innovative ideas and "thinking outside the box" were attributes noted by some.
- An individual that can improve communication also appeared in a number of comments.
- Integrity and honesty are personal attributes quite a few people commented upon.
- Several responses asked that the person know the district and reside in the district.