



New England School Development Council

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Concord School District, SAU #8 Successful Candidate Profile

February 2020

INTRODUCTION

From January 27 through February 10, 2020 the Concord School Board, with the assistance of the New England School Development Council (NESDEC), conducted a Community Needs Assessment through a series of focus groups, interviews and an online survey. Over 500 community members participated in the process.

Focus group participants provided their insights and views in response to two prompts:

- What are the qualities, characteristics, skills, knowledge and experience you desire in a new superintendent of schools?
- What do you see as the pressing tasks and challenges ahead for him or her during the first six months to a year?

The Concord School Board subsequently reviewed and analyzed the community's input and then added its own perspective to create this *Successful Candidate Profile*. The *Successful Candidate Profile* is designed to guide the Board as it considers candidates for the position of superintendent of schools.

The Board wishes to thank and commend all those who took the time to participate in the community needs assessment process. The Board appreciates the valuable insights gained through this process.

Respectfully submitted,

The Concord School Board

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Concord community and the Concord School Board expect a high level of competence across all aspects of the position of Superintendent. To ensure the selected Superintendent is a match for *Concord's unique needs and goals*, the School Board reached out for input from the community through a series of focus groups, interviews and an online survey. The Board used the valuable information gathered through this outreach process to inform its decisions in creating the following Concord *Successful Candidate Profile*.

Preference will be given to the **Education Leader** who demonstrates a significant depth of skill and knowledge in the following two key areas:

- ❖ *Ensuring a successful and inclusive system*
- ❖ *Providing effective and efficient system leadership*

To the Concord community, a depth of experience and knowledge in the above two areas is demonstrated by:

Ensuring a successful and inclusive system

A Superintendent who:

- **creates a positive climate and culture:** possesses excellent listening and interpersonal skills and an equal measure of emotional and academic intelligence; is courageous and approachable, professional, respectful, thoughtful, empathetic, fair, open, honest, a trustworthy person of integrity; someone calm under stress and with whom *all* community members feel comfortable
- **fosters and values relationships; a bridge builder:** is known in the community; is able to build bridges among/between groups and can lead all constituents to see themselves as part of a whole; is in the schools and the community; knows and is known by students, staff, parents and community members; is friendly and outgoing; engages people in conversations; sees him or herself as full member of the district and wider community; demonstrates through actions that s/he has heard and understood
- **has excellent team building skills:** is comfortable in the role of Superintendent/team and district leader; sets a tone of respect; expects, listens and seeks to understand multiple perspectives and opinions; has excellent conflict management skills and is fair and equitable with all parties; provides well thought out, researched and timely responses; follows up and follows through; uses data and information to inform decisions; remains calm and respectful; brings divergent groups together for the continuous improvement of the district; celebrates successes and collaborates to improve areas of need; fosters a district-wide culture of positive, collaborative and informed decision making
- **is skilled at evaluating and implementing programs to support the needs of a large and diverse student body:** is up-to-date on educational trends, programs and practices that enable staff to effectively support students with diverse cultural, social,

emotional and academic needs and backgrounds to thrive and to master the curriculum; is experienced in supporting students who have experienced trauma; knows and understands special education programs, practices, laws and regulations; able to provide for both the college- and non-college-bound students

- **communicates well and often:** has excellent written and oral communication and public relations skills; uses multiple modes of communication including social media to seek and share information; listens and learns; responds and communicates in a timely manner; ensures that everyone has the information s/he needs to participate in the system and to express ideas; emphasizes transparency
- **values and leverages a diverse community:** experienced working successfully in a diverse community; understands Concord's demographics and can articulate how/why this is a strength; believes in the power of bringing in many voices and collaborates with community members and groups, and with staff, students and parents to share ideas and resources for the benefit of students
- **is a strategic thinker and change agent:** able to assess our current programs and to collaboratively develop programs and plans to move us forward; able to create a common set of expectations, goals and action plans PK-12; skilled at pacing change and at including stakeholders and building consensus; active participant in the larger educational community

Providing effective and efficient system leadership

- **models – and holds self and staff accountable for meeting – District expectations:** has excellent supervision, mentoring and evaluation skills; ensures that District policies, goals, expectations and standards are communicated, understood by, and practiced by all staff members; provides professional development and supports administrators and staff in implementing practices that are in line with District policies and State, Federal and local laws and regulations including special education and Title IX; builds common practices PK- 12; able to make difficult personnel decisions
- **develops and mentors leaders:** can build a leadership team that sees itself as an integral part of the whole PK-12 system; builds leaders throughout the district by enabling staff to create and take risks; believes in delegation, empowerment and accountability; collaboratively creates common practices and expectations PK-12
- **makes students' safety and security a priority:** collaboratively develops district-wide practices and protocols designed to protect the safety and security of students; including creation of a culture in which students and staff feel safe; enforces behavioral expectations throughout the district for the safety and security of students and staff; works with Police Chief and the community to ensure the schools are prepared to respond to crisis or emergency situations
- **has excellent organizational management skills:** delegates while maintaining oversight; can assess areas in need of leadership and (re)delegate areas of responsibility to ensure oversight of all areas; able to prioritize and manage time; create areas of focus; schedules to ensure s/he is out in the district and community and in the classrooms while still ensuring district is well-managed/led

- **develops, implements and oversees a fiscally sound budget:** understands the ramifications of an autonomous budget process and can work with the School Board, administrators, staff and community to develop a fiscally sound budget that supports needed district programs and practices; understands the RFP process and monitors the effectiveness of contractors and contracted programs; identifies opportunities to collaborate and obtain outside resources
- **works effectively with the School Board and community leaders:** demonstrated ability to ensure that the School Board has the knowledge and information it needs to make informed decisions; knows the roles and responsibilities of both the Superintendent and School Board and acts accordingly; meets with City leaders (Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Police and Fire Chiefs, etc.) on both a scheduled and an as-needed basis; believes in shared resources and ensures the district is positioned to respond to the needs of its students

TASKS and CHALLENGES UPON WHICH THE COMMUNITY WISHES THE NEW SUPERINTENDENT TO FOCUS IN FIRST YEAR

- Stabilize the district. Build bridges and relationships. Build a culture of trust between the district and the community. Rebuild trust by demonstrating that you understand and follow policies, laws and regulations. Ensure people feel comfortable coming forward with concerns. Do not make changes before fully researching the situation.
- Listen and learn. Learn the history of this city. Study its diversity and learn about the community. Learn the system/district, know its different departments. Get to know staff, students and parents. Study the curriculum and programs, meet with staff. Prepare to collaboratively develop a plan of action.
- Celebrate all the good things that are going on in the District.
- Ensure that student safety and security remain top priorities for the district. Collaborate with Police Chief, the School Board, Administrators and Staff to develop programs and practices to ensure the district is prepared for emergency situations. Take the time necessary to establish behavioral expectations for students and staff district-wide in order to create a positive and safe school culture in each school.
- Develop an awareness of the community's views around competency-based grading, particularly at the High School. Educate the community, talk with parents and students.
- Review and analyze the District's special education programs, practices and staffing levels to ensure adequate resources are provided to meet students' needs.
- Lead the efforts for the Middle School rebuild. Ensure you can knowledgeably discuss the many ways this will impact the Concord community.