

Stakeholder Input Report for



submitted by

MCPHERSON *MJ* JACOBSON, LLC

7905 L St., Suite 310
Phone: 888-375-4814/402-991-7031
Email: mail@macnjake.com

Omaha, Nebraska 68127
Fax: 402-991-7168
Website: www.macnjake.com

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MCPHERSON & JACOBSON, LLC

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

7905 L STREET, SUITE 310 ♦ OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68127 ♦ 402-991-7031/888-375-4814
FAX: 402-991-7168 ♦ EMAIL: MAIL@MACNJAKE.COM ♦ WEBSITE: WWW.MACNJAKE.COM

**Omaha Public Schools
Omaha, Nebraska**

District Stakeholder Input

Executive Summary

During the week of January 9, 2017, McPherson & Jacobson's consultants Dr. Thomas Jacobson, Ms. Jane McDaniel, Ms. Loe Dunn, Mr. Wayne Gibson, and Dr. Richard Sundblad conducted 40 plus meetings with district stakeholders representing numerous internal and external groups associated with the Omaha Public Schools. The consultants received input from approximately 500 plus individuals in these various groups. Input was gathered regarding the community, the schools, desired characteristics of the new superintendent, and the most significant issues the new superintendent would face after taking over the leadership of the Omaha Public Schools.

Outlined on the next three pages is an Executive Summary of the major themes expressed by the participants at these sessions. Following the Executive Summary is a compilation of all the input received from these groups and individuals in response to the four questions asked of each group and participant. The final section of the report will consist of responses by individuals who completed the online survey and responded to the final two questions of the input sessions.

Omaha Public Schools Summary of Stakeholder Input

Name of Group/Individual: Summary Document

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - A friendly and welcoming community
 - Has a world class zoo
 - Wonderful restaurants
 - Easy to navigate
 - A big city with a small-town feel
 - Many philanthropic organizations and individuals
 - A caring community and safe
 - A great place to raise a family
 - Located in the heartland of the United States
 - A wide variety of attractions and entertainment for a family
 - Excellent medical services and two medical schools
 - Excellent medical research hospitals
 - A variety of religions and faith communities
 - Culturally diverse community
 - Police and firemen are excellent—great first responders
 - Low unemployment
 - Affordable housing
 - Moderate cost of living
 - One can experience the four seasons
 - Excellent higher education institutions
 - College world series, Olympic swim trials, regional events
 - The city provides many fine arts experiences
 - Omaha continues to grow and flourish evidenced by revitalization of many areas within the city
 - Excellent clean airport

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Multitude of opportunities for educational advancement according to students interests and needs
 - Continued improvement of student achievement as evidenced by closing the achievement gap and higher graduation rates
 - Hard working dedicated educators
 - Magnet schools
 - Stem program
 - Dual enrollment
 - Vast number of extracurricular opportunities
 - Early childhood program
 - OPS embraces diversity
 - A strong immigrant and refugee program
 - Successful bond issue which has allowed for facility upgrades

- Strategic plan in place that involved community input
 - Improved cooperation between neighboring schools
 - OPS values the fine arts and music programs
 - Philanthropic organizations have enhanced the learning experience for children
 - Strong community support
 - Building administrators provide excellent support for students
 - High schools have career centers available to students
 - School based health care centers
3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
- Personable, approachable and a relationship builder
 - Experience in an urban district with similar demographics as Omaha
 - A unifier—the ability to pull together a board viewed by almost all groups as divided and thus being dysfunctional
 - An effective leader who has demonstrated the ability to work well with a board
 - Collaborator—can bring people together around a common cause
 - Thick skinned—has survived after making tough decision and can make difficult decisions
 - Is a visionary—can determine the educational future of a district and bring people along
 - Has a strong work ethic
 - Good listener
 - Excellent communicator
 - A person who could hold themselves and staff accountable
 - A relationship builder
 - Someone who has good relations with local and state leaders and legislators
 - Honest and a person of integrity
 - Someone who can inspire and is a good public speaker
 - A person who understands school finance and can navigate a district with a large budget
 - An African-American—person of color
 - A person well qualified and is certified—preferably has a Ph.D./Ed.D
 - Someone who wants to be here
 - A superintendent that will recognize and understand diverse cultural backgrounds of the district
 - A courageous leader that can and will make difficult decisions
 - Someone who is visible in the schools and the community
 - A sense of humor
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- A board that has been divided and contentious amongst themselves
 - The relationship between the board and superintendent has been contentious
 - A young inexperienced board
 - The behavior of the board significantly impacts staff moral
 - Address the leadership relationship with OEA

- Negative image of the board from the public
- A diverse community and student population
- Will need to continue the momentum of increasing student achievement and closing the achievement gap
- Media relations need to be addressed
- Lack of trust in the district
- Lack of transparency in the district
- Staff makeup needs to mirror the student population
- Discipline is a significant issue. Needs to be reviewed and administered consistently—also truancy
- A district with significant high poverty
- Need for a future bond issue
- Inconsistent grading system
- Inequities between buildings
- Inequality of resource allocations around poverty and race
- Transportation issues
- Extended school day and year
- Student assignment—where they go to school based on where they live
- Reevaluate the need for an alternative school
- There is a perception of disconnect between TAC staff and building staff and the community
- Hire so district staff look more like the student population they teach

Stakeholder Input
Reported as received from each Stakeholder Group

Section No. 1

**In this section, all of the input from
various community and parent groups will be listed.**

Name of Group/Individual: Community Forum South High School

Number: 5

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Omaha is small town with a big city feel—a lot of things to do
 - Financially healthy community and a great place to raise a family
 - The city has a positive momentum...attractive place
 - Very unique opportunities to educate—universities work together with colleges to educate students
 - Low unemployment rate
 - Excellent health care system and health care research
 - Public school system
 - Fortune 500 companies; locating look at the city
 - Centrally located –ideal geographically by providing easy access to

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Very diverse population
 - Strong educational program
 - Hardworking teachers and administrative staff who cares and are passionate about their work
 - Highly qualified faculty and administrative staff
 - Schools support parental needs
 - District seeks community input district tries to support families which yields a better education
 - Communication is strong---podcast, website,
 - Business community and school partnerships are excellent
 - A strong sense of support and growth in staff
 - Transparency
 - Excellent curriculum improvements and updates

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Good work ethic
 - An experienced person in a similar setting
 - Willingness to listen to all—not a select few
 - A visionary
 - Personable and approachable
 - Willing to work with others even when there is a difference of opinion

- An individual with integrity
 - Understands what it means to be a superintendent and leader of a large district.
 - Has the skill set for being the superintendent and be knowledgeable regarding all programs in the district
 - A great sense of humor
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Dealing with a diverse population base
 - Adequately serving and staffing the early childhood education program
 - The challenge of providing excellent education in a very diverse community setting
 - Recruiting and retaining high level talent
 - Transportation issues
 - Growth of the private schools in the district
 - Issues associated with unions in the district
 - Unifying a dysfunctional school board
 - Being able to address budget issues when finances are tight
 - Continue the momentum of increasing student achievement

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Stable economy
 - Low cost of living
 - Smaller community, connections easily made
 - Good place to raise kids
 - Low crime rate
 - Good community/law enforcement relations
 - Urban and metropolitan community
 - Diverse city

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Recent successful bond issue
 - Student achievement
 - Strategic plan in place
 - Needs assessment identified weaknesses and a good plan in place to address weaknesses
 - Community involvement
 - Student enrollment/small class sizes

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Individual who supports public education
 - Understanding of education and instructional leadership
 - Good manager of personnel and fiscal restraints
 - Individual should be able to advocate for public education
 - Good relationships with business leaders and philanthropic supporters
 - Experience in an urban district
 - Individual needs strong independent skill set, yet balancing business and community within their beliefs
 - Minority candidates
 - High energy
 - Good relationship with elected officials

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Relationship between the administration and OEA
 - Strategic plan calls for better communication
 - Community outreach needs to be addressed
 - Addressing the achievement gap
 - Embracing school improvement as set forth in the strategic plan
 - Consensus building needed within the board of education
 - Inexperience of some board members
 - Creative ways to keep graduates in our district

- Pathway for current administrators to advance within our district
- Behavioral issues, youth at risk
- Greater emphasis on career readiness
- Cultural competency of staff

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Diversity is a positive
 - Healthcare Facilities
 - Affordable living --- especially housing
 - Public schools
 - World class zoo
 - Lots of professionals - great job opportunities
 - Many fortune 500 companies
 - Generous community that gives time and resources
 - Strong culture of philanthropy
 - Great locally owned restaurants
 - Strong neighborhood identity
 - Vibrant and constantly growing community
 - Not too big and not too small
 - Community is easy to navigate
 - Excellent golf courses
 - Many recreational opportunities
 - Many cultural and arts opportunities

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Dual language program
 - Excellent teachers and staff
 - Great magnet school program
 - Numerous community partnerships with the schools
 - Principals have autonomy in leadership and decision making
 - A very diverse school district serving more than 120 different languages
 - Strong ELL program
 - Strong after school programs run by community partners
 - Strong and active PTA and PTO programs
 - Excellent early childhood program

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Great communicator
 - A person who can work in the community with all levels of socioeconomic members of the community
 - A people person
 - A relationship builder
 - One who is an advocate for all entities in the community that are associated with OPS
 - Fiscally responsible
 - Someone with a thick skin—can accept criticism
 - Successful experience in closing achievement gaps

- Someone who can inspire and motivate all stakeholder (employees, families, children)
 - A person who is a good advocate
 - One who has experience working in a diverse inner city community with an awareness of their unique needs
 - Open to community collaborations
 - A person who has the ability to work with the school board and deal with all of the issues that come up in the school setting
 - Someone who can address discipline consistently throughout the district
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Explore start time for high school and middle school
 - Transportation issues in general and that would be compounded by change of start times
 - Address the rapport between superintendent and staff
 - Ensure college readiness of students
 - Address discipline consistently throughout the district and give school staff authority to deal with issues
 - Support district staff who report discipline issues and so in a timely fashion
 - Develop a clear process for community partners to engage with OPS students
 - Narrowing the achievement gap
 - Need for updated technology in schools
 - Diversity awareness
 - Examine teacher to student ratios across the district and make more equitable
 - Gender identity issues
 - Need to encourage greater parental involvement
 - Truancy

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Rich diversity—celebrate cultures
 - Growing and youthful community with significant potential
 - Eleven colleges and universities/two medical schools/two national research hospitals/transplant centers/Children’s hospital/Excellent medical services
 - A number of fortune 500 companies
 - Major airlines—cleanest airport
 - Strong arts program
 - Excellent Zoo
 - Affordable cost of living
 - Low crime rate compared to other cities
 - Wonderful restaurants
 - High education for kids (93 percentile)
 - Close to rural and urban
 - Friendly people—welcoming
 - Many opportunities for entertainment for a family—playhouse, college world series
 - Close to other urban areas
 - Symphonies
 - Low unemployment rate
 - Considerable redevelopment
 - Historical district
 - Affordable housing
 - All the amenities of a much larger city
 - Hunting and fishing opportunities

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Support of the Sherwood Foundation
 - Omaha School Foundations is excellent
 - Philanthropic support
 - Opportunities for higher learning while in high school (dual enrollment)
 - Strong early childhood programs
 - Predominately pleased with teachers in the system
 - Quality of education in Omaha is excellent
 - Many opportunities for student to get involved in a variety of activities
 - Excellent programs for all students
 - Strong ESL program at OPS
 - A number of Magnet Schools
 - Dual language program
 - International Baccalaureate program
 - Zoo education program
 - Academies

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Ability to focus—big complicated district— focus on student achievement and the achievement gap
 - Someone who understands what is working now and lets keep working on that
 - A humble person
 - Transportation issues
 - Someone who comes from a diverse district similar to OPS
 - Someone with a Ph.D. or Ed.D.
 - Strong commitment to working with teachers and listening to teachers
 - Be responsive to the community and meaningfully engaging the community
 - Be visible in the classroom to better understand the nature of being a teacher
 - Strong understanding of technology and how it can enhance education
 - A person who can lead the district forward
 - Willing to develop a Strategic plan which guides the direction and vision of the district
 - A person willing to review the grading system—
 - Strong commitment to PTA and PTO
 - Be visible
 - Active in legislative issues
 - Someone who can admit when something has not gone well
 - Taking responsibility for both successes and failures
 - Someone who is willing to lead the leaders of the district and support the other administrators. Visible and supportive
 - Seeks input and communicates with the teachers
 - Someone not overly influenced by philanthropists
 - One willing to be the face of the district

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected Person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Grading policy of the district
 - Making sure that OPS is putting out the very best product they can
 - Transportation issues need to be resolved including special education students
 - Public image of OPS—some say that some should not attend OPS—promote the strengths of the district
 - Not doing things consistently in all buildings in the district—all schools should be promoted equally
 - Examine the relationship with the community college and look for ways to enhance that relationship
 - Discipline policy—need to review and make people be accountable
 - Alternative education needs to be studied
 - Explore the need for programs for students not college bound
 - High poverty is an issue
 - Study the resources used in maintaining the TAC building—reevaluate the chain of command
 - Transition program—a facility for the program
 - The need for a future bond issue
 - Completing the requirements of the first bond issue
 - Students opting out of OPS--Keeping students in the district

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Arts are important
 - Night life
 - Dining options
 - Neighborhoods create community feeling—smaller pockets—small town feel
 - People are friendly
 - Hard working people
 - Nice airport—accessible
 - Great options for kids—options for schools
 - Openness and warmth of people
 - Collaborative community efforts around change
 - Affordable cost of living—affordable housing
 - Positives of a small town feel but still has amenities of a larger city
 - Easy to navigate

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Dedicated people working in the school district—children at the center of what they are doing
 - More culturally relevant teaching is occurring but more could take place
 - Commitment by the people to invest in the infrastructure based on the passage of the bond issue
 - Administrative strength—several caring principals—working to support staff and students
 - Equity and diversity department is doing great things
 - Many partnerships with community organizations and with higher education
 - Willingness of the community to support education
 - Private and philanthropic support for the schools
 - Service learning projects
 - Strong arts program—very strong

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - A person from the Omaha area or invested in this community for several years
 - Black or Latino
 - A person reflective of the student population
 - A person who has spent a majority of their experience in an urban environment
 - Someone who takes the initiative to communicate effectively with parents—will do whatever it takes to solve a problem
 - Someone who will value the idea to have para's on all buses and someone to manage discipline on the buses
 - Someone who has expertise in alternative education and will keep staff safe
 - Someone who has experience working with special education and the discipline associated in that area

- Alternative programming has not received the attention that it needs—funding and the administrative attention
 - Willing to address racism and have a plan of action for solutions
 - Have mandatory cultural empathy and diversity training for all OPS staff and accountability for that
 - Experience in engaging in tough conversations regarding race and not shy away from those issues
 - Willing to reorganize administration and dismiss when necessary
 - Someone who will try innovative things
 - Someone not afraid of failure
 - Curriculum priority to include brown skin heroes and sheroes and make it mandatory in all content areas
 - Someone who has ideas on how to increase parental engagement and community centered around the schools
 - Parental buy in and stakeholder buy in
 - Plan of action to access the talented educators from within
 - More customization for the students needs—leading to non traditional course work
 - Required student centered activities and curriculum generated by student interest
 - Vision regarding discipline procedures and how to approach from a positive manner
 - Plan of action with the administrators and police officers creating a protocol for discipline that ends the prison pipeline
 - Trauma informed care—having sufficiently trained staff to provide therapy and counseling. Professional staff of color. Real counseling resources adequately staffed in every building—teachers also trained in the trauma informed care for kids
 - An effort to hire people of color in teaching and administrative roles
 - Someone with integrity who can work with the board and help them help the students
 - Appropriately credentialed to be a superintendent. Ph.D. or Ed.D preferred
 - Financial support for the things that need to be done in the areas of equity and diversity
 - Someone who has a strong sense of transparency.
 - Someone who can manage the donors who give to the district
 - Someone who understands white privilege
 - Commitment to public records and open meetings laws
 - Someone who has a strong commitment towards free public education without outsourcing for all children
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Transgender policies and comprehensive sex education
 - Respecting conservative values and appreciating diversity
 - Willingness to discuss the influence of philanthropic individuals in the district
 - Undermining democratic values in public education by a disproportionate influence by donors
 - Huge issue of acknowledging and needing to address white institutional racism
 - Superintendent will need to have a strong influence on staff regarding race issues

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Nice People and welcoming to strangers
 - Beautiful quiet city and organized
 - Not crowded
 - People have respect for other religions
 - Good family values
 - Diversity
 - Peaceful community
 - Bob Kerry Bridge
 - Good schools
 - Employment opportunities
 - Affordable housing
 - Repairing roads
 - Good Programs for students
 - Like everything about Omaha
 - Peaceful and calm
 - Good care
 - Good social services
 - Good care for elderly
 - Good people in Omaha

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - School support
 - Good teachers
 - Good teaching services
 - Easy and accessible education
 - Transportation provided
 - ESL and free and reduced lunches
 - Festival and school supplies provided
 - Migrant education program
 - Buffett scholarships
 - Parents given opportunity to learn English
 - School lets them know resources available
 - OPS provides educational opportunities for parents
 - Teachers are helpful
 - Schools respect children
 - Staff is very helpful
 - Style instruction/review before starting new material
 - Opportunities provided for early childhood education
 - Yates truly valued for numerous recourses
 - Good activities for students
 - Students treated fairly
 - Excellent teaching methods

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Needs to continue with current strategic plan
 - Someone who is friendly
 - Someone very upbeat
 - Someone who knows how to treat all people with respect
 - Someone who understands the situation of the refugees
 - Well qualified
 - Very responsible
 - Speaks more than one language
 - Is visible in all schools to be aware of needs of each school
 - Evening educational opportunities
 - Treats all family's equally
 - Someone with a clear vision
 - Effective communicator
 - Flexible
 - Cultural diversity
 - Diplomatic
 - Keep Yates the same

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Transportation!!!! For everyone who needs it
 - All students and parents are treated equally
 - Strong ESL program
 - More childhood education
 - Drug issues
 - More family recourse center space
 - Population growth
 - Political changes
 - High school student parking fees
 - Adult high school

Name of Group/Individual: Community Forum at Yates # 2

Number:

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Employment opportunities
 - Four seasons
 - Teaching methods
 - Good roads
 - Habitat for humanity housing projects
 - Organized educational opportunities
 - Safe place to live
 - Good lights
 - Hopeful... educational opportunities, welcoming
 - Transportation
 - Good Medical facilities

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Schools do not discriminate, all children are treated equally
 - Schools show respect for all students and parents
 - Good teachers
 - Individualized learning plans for different learners
 - Tutoring available/support students and parents at all learning levels
 - Attentive and mindful staff
 - OPS provides supports special services and recourses as needed
 - Migrant program
 - Supportive parents to support their children

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Smart
 - Responsible
 - Honest
 - Follow the law
 - Patient
 - Supportive/helpful
 - Experience and understanding of immigrants and refugees
 - Leader
 - Management skills
 - Respectful
 - Kind

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Transportation
 - More personnel support
 - More school choice
 - Discipline

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Omaha a very caring city
 - Philanthropic
 - Community based
 - Very industrious city
 - Good work ethic
 - Many jobs—low unemployment
 - Affordable living
 - Size—Big city but small town feel
 - One of the best places to live—sells itself
 - High standards for excellence—civic, education
 - Extended education opportunities—higher ed
 - Collaboration—business and schools
 - Lots of cultural activities
 - Four seasons
 - Many events on the international and national platform
 - Huge sporting community
 - Family friendly
 - Wide variety of industries
 - Fortune 500 companies
 - Great diversity—120 languages
 - Health care systems
 - Lot of volunteer options
 - Great trails—biking
 - Easy to navigate
 - Accessibility to the arts
 - Cost of living is very reasonable

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Students want to learn
 - Diversity
 - Collaboration with community partners—non-profits
 - Qualified and passionate teachers
 - Availability of quality magnet schools
 - Enrichment activities for students
 - Commitment to early childhood education
 - High education standards
 - Career and technical opportunities
 - Athletic programs
 - Dedicated and involved families
 - Willing to collaborate with local colleges and universities
 - Resources for families that are struggling
 - Openness to trying new things
 - Integration of school based health centers

- OPS recognizing the accomplishments of student, staff, and green buildings
 - Effective use data in the buildings
 - For the most part great facilities and improving facilities
 - Food support for teachers through instructional coaching
 - A growing district
 - Resources for the special education children
 - Wilson focus school open to new and innovative practices
 - Dual language programs
 - Support for refuge families
3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
- Great collaborator
 - Interested in educational resources—partnerships
 - Supportive of afterschool programs
 - Not afraid to make changes
 - Someone who can make hard decisions
 - Excellent leadership qualities—good listener
 - Understand the need to share data
 - Addressing issues in a timely manner
 - Able to speak to diversity needs
 - Someone who is inspiring and can bring the community together
 - A unifier
 - Someone who represents the diversity of OPS and has experience with diversity
 - Understand that this is a can-do city—embrace that mentality
 - Needs to work well with the surrounding districts
 - Someone who leads by example
 - Believes in the impact of mentoring
 - A passion for all kids
 - A people person
 - Urban education experience
 - Someone who makes career exploration a priority
 - A visionary—
 - Someone who is accessible—visible, approachable
 - Someone who reaches out to people internally and externally
 - Someone with a thick skin
 - Concern to the school to prison pipeline
 - Good communicator with the media
 - Sees the child as a part of whole family--holistic
 - Views their schools as a community center
 - Works well with the school board
 - Recruits great talent to his/her team
 - Support for the teachers in the classroom
 - Innovative problem solver
 - Surrounds self with great people
 - Focus on student achievement and success
 - And being politically savvy

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Divided school board
 - Segregated city
 - Celebrate the positives
 - Manage the growth of the district
 - Classroom student size
 - Some space issues in schools
 - Perception of high property taxes
 - Transportation
 - Understanding the demographics of the district
 - More mental health workers and facilities
 - Not enough meeting the parents where they are—each zip code brings its own challenges
 - Language barriers
 - Growing availability of language services
 - Integration of nonconventional learning systems
 - Some divisiveness in the sex education and human health
 - Updating of curriculum—outdated curriculum
 - Available funding for education from the state
 - Coordinating philanthropic giving
 - Overcrowded schools
 - Not enough diverse educators recruited
 - Educating the whole child—mental and physical health
 - Need to make calls on alternative schools
 - Closing the achievement gap
 - Need for expansion of early childhood
 - Dealing with students that cannot keep up with expected standards—non-readers
 - Adequate summer programs
 - Address educational needs of high poverty regions
 - Meeting basic needs of students—feeding, clothing
 - Working with the family and community on absenteeism
 - Unifying the social media strategies
 - Consider getting the master teachers in the lower performing schools and providing support
 - More cultural competency
 - More open to outside resources at all schools
 - Equity in spreading resources appropriately
 - Standard afterschool care for students
 - Expectation that principals to utilize outside resources

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Diversity of the city
 - Welcoming community
 - Growing community
 - Active philanthropic community
 - Fortune 500 companies
 - Quality of life
 - Attractive to people that are looking for a place to live
 - Arts, sports—family activities

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Pride in OPS
 - Diversity of student population
 - Increasing graduation rate
 - Excellent staff overall
 - Positive change has occurred in recent years—moving in the right direction
 - Competitive teacher salaries
 - Moved hiring date forward
 - Positive use of social media—word out about district
 - District has become more transparent
 - People are more in the know
 - Bond issue was very positive and the improved facilities
 - Invest in schools has been very good—facilities
 - Achievement has improved
 - Expanding early child program
 - Dual language program
 - Willing to take on the biggest challenges in the state
 - District mission is critical to the city and the state

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Strong communicator
 - Someone who can bring people together for common good—collaborator
 - Someone who seeks to be equitable to all sub-districts in the district
 - Very strong leader
 - Strong backbone
 - A vision—keep what is going well, but a vision for the future

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Lack of communication with the superintendent—increase that communication with teachers, staff, community
 - Be a strong advocate for public schools with the legislature

- Negative perceptions of the district come from the board
- Need to have the interest of all students—not personable political agenda
- Board is going to be very difficult to deal with
- Transportation and the student assignment plan
- Part of the district that is tangent to other school districts and the students that leave to those districts—explore ways to keep students here
- Student discipline problems across the district—movement of 6th graders to middle school
- Closing of alternative middle schools and the resulting issues
- Fact that people who move to Omaha tend to buy homes outside the district—need to create a positive image of OPS to attract people to OPS
- Continuation of the current strategic plan

Section No. 2

In this section, all of the input from various Teacher and Staff groups will be listed.

Name of Group and Location: South High School: Teachers & Staff

Number: 11

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Affordable place to live
 - Good quality of life
 - Multicultural experience and the arts
 - Numerous colleges offering higher education opportunities—options when it comes education
 - Medical field and excellent medical care
 - Good start up place for businesses
 - Lots of concentrated wealth and considerable poverty
 - Community is willing to address issues
 - Number of fortune 500 companies
 - Good restaurants
 - Good schools
 - Healthy religious community
 - Strong social conscience of working with people of needs
 - International airport
 - Military presence
 - Convenient travel—can travel anywhere—easy access
 - Amateur college sports area

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Very dedicated teaching staff
 - Programs that are inclusive for all students (special education, English language, migrant refugee, IBA)
 - Development of instructional handbook of teaching practices
 - Great instructional action plan
 - Community has invested in buildings and facilities
 - Community support for maintaining buildings
 - Strong community, parent, and alumni support
 - Highly educated staff
 - Great students –very talented
 - Two students awarded the Gates millennium scholarship

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Someone who will provide some longevity to the district (stay at least 5 years)
 - Someone who honors OPS vision and does not promote his/her own agenda
 - Respecting and honoring the history of the district ---take time to learn what is here

- Someone who is willing to respect and takes care of the principals
 - Understands the mental health issues of the district
 - Respects and supports that students are the heart of the district
 - Strong instructional background and one who is in the buildings and in the classrooms
 - A strong advocate for public education
 - Someone who understands urban issues and has worked in districts with high poverty
 - Has respect for all staff and will listen and gather staff input
 - Someone who is approachable
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- There needs to be more transparency
 - Two-way communication with all stakeholders
 - Divided and dysfunctional school board
 - Bussing and overcrowded schools
 - Aggressively recruit more teachers and administrators of color
 - Encourage various district departments to work together—
 - Empowerment of staff to grow and build and develop internal promotional programs
 - Someone who understands special education and specialized programs

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Family friendly
 - Strong arts community
 - Home of the college world series and Olympic swim tryouts
 - Omaha has a very low unemployment rate
 - Many arts programs are provided by the community
 - Omaha is easy to navigate
 - A choice of housing options
 - Philanthropic community
 - Strategic Air Command facility
 - A very diverse community
 - Numerous recreational opportunities for individuals and families
 - Affordable housing
 - Four distinct seasons
 - Easy access to other parts of the country with the intersection of two major freeways and the airport
 - A major airport with easy access

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - A very involved and dedicated staff
 - A very diverse school district
 - Have staff that are passionate and very committed to helping children learn
 - Growing district
 - Opportunities to choose specialty school options
 - Abundance of resources to support schools and families
 - Closure of the achievement gap
 - Passing bond issues which resulted in improved facilities
 - Alternative options for students with special needs
 - Largest school district in the state

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Finding ways to create relationships in the community, chamber, benefactors—a very good relationship builder and communicator
 - A person with a vision and able to articulate that vision
 - Someone who supports academic achievement
 - A person who is fiscally responsible
 - Someone who is committed to Omaha
 - A unifier
 - Someone who is focused and knowledgeable of best practices
 - A person who honors the successful work of the district in the past and is willing to build on that success
 - Someone who has the ability to do succession planning

- Very inclusive in the decision making process
 - Transparent
 - Can proactively address legislative issues
 - A person who encourages and supports the arts
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Unifying an inexperienced board
 - Creating a positive impression and image of the Omaha Public Schools
 - Must work to continue the development of collaboration with other metro school districts
 - Working to effectively meet the many needs of a diverse population
 - Students and staff need to be embrace and have a feeling they are cared for
 - Provide equitable support in the district for all educational stakeholders
 - Create long term plans for alternative programs
 - Garner support for a new bond issue

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - The number one zoo in the world
 - Family friendly environment
 - Small big town—easy to navigate
 - Friendly people—welcoming
 - Diverse community
 - Strong philanthropic emphasis in the community—especially in early childhood
 - Diverse entertainment opportunities that is affordable—college world series, Holland Center, Olympic swimming tryouts, regional NCAA games, etc.
 - Summer recreational opportunities for children of all ages
 - Excellent medical team—Creighton Med, Specialty health programs, two medical schools, eye institute, etc.
 - Affordable cost of living
 - Fantastic restaurants
 - Public pools program
 - Plethora of job opportunities

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Early childhood program is one of the best in the nation
 - Increased test scores for the last six years
 - Achievement gap is narrowing
 - District looks to honor diversity at every level
 - Opportunities for teacher advancement (paraprofessional programs) career advancement opportunities
 - High degree of Master degree teachers (approx. 50%)
 - Excellent teaching staff—
 - Teachers, staff, and administrators are passionate about their work and excel in what they do
 - Handbook on the best instructional practices for OPS (research based instruction that works for children—what is best)—this is a living document that can change as new things come into place
 - Academic action plan has been in place for five years—best practices, instructional coaching
 - Great job keeping up with the virtual world—digital school and being digitally certified
 - MTSS-B
 - No excuses university—based on going to college
 - High schools have a good baccalaureate program

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Personable—getting to know district, community and staff
 - Someone who values early childhood and the value it brings to the education environment

- Open communication—transparent to public and staff
 - Strong education background
 - Someone who values safety
 - A person who is willing to work with community government
 - A person who has experience working in an urban diverse district
 - One who has experience in passing a bond issue
 - One who honors what is currently happening in the district prior to making changes they think should occur
 - Experience in developing community relationships
 - Being known in the community and visible
 - Continued support of programs
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Communication issues (internal which can cause communication issues with the public)
 - Ensure that current direction of the district is honored
 - Because of its success
 - Knowledgeable of the existing grants and philanthropic support
 - Knowledgeable regarding school finances and advocate for the district with the state legislature
 - Working with a divided board of education—needs to work to unite the board
 - Support ongoing programs
 - Staff retention
 - Para pay and substitute pay needs to be examined
 - Transgender policy implementation

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Something for everyone
 - We host several events
 - We have a strong performing arts community
 - Several restaurants
 - Opportunities for family involvement
 - Big enough and small enough at the same time
 - Nice community

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Urban district – diverse
 - Recognized in the 90’s as one of the top districts in the nation...strong in curriculum, tools provided to teachers for student success
 - OPS works hard to toward student achievement. Teachers hold themselves accountable for student success
 - OPS uses dollars wisely
 - OPS has done a good job in shifting staff to support building needs
 - OPS takes pride in athletics
 - OPS provides lots of opportunities for parent involvement
 - So many resources for family support
 - Programs in place for students that are high achievers
 - Numerous ways for students to excel
 - Teachers are committed to student success
 - Opportunities for Special Ed students
 - Because of the size of our district, our staff has the opportunity for advancement within our district
 - District has done a great job in providing translators
 - OPS is great at accommodating student interests

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - We are seen very negatively in the press, we are in need of a very charismatic leader
 - Grand chief – HR, Technology, Curriculum
 - Strong communication
 - Relationship builder
 - Someone who is visible in buildings
 - Someone who exudes excitement and wants to be here

4. What are the most significant district, community, state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Large school district
 - Large budget

- Continuing support for technology, curriculum, staff
- New students daily – challenge we need to continue to support
- Testing results
- Professional development
- Strategic plan – knowledge of the plan to continue with the current successes
- Questions regarding programs in place...will new assistant superintendent continue
- Need for bond issue support
- Community by in

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Shorter commutes, slower pace
 - Opportunities for family events
 - Music and art opportunities
 - Some elements of a larger city, yet small city feel
 - Very friendly place
 - A lot of diversity
 - Always something to do

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Excellent staff
 - Diversity
 - Team work throughout the district, consistency between buildings
 - Resources available to students
 - Collaboration amongst staff
 - Numerous opportunities for student success
 - Excellent support services
 - OPS does a good job balancing student achievement and test scores

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Relationship skills
 - Visibility
 - Great communication skills
 - Eloquent speaker able to adjust to audience
 - Working relationship with the OEA
 - Good listener and considers information in decision making
 - Someone who supports staff with both parents and school board
 - Transparent in decision making process
 - Good conflict management
 - Positive, excited, passion
 - Good moral booster
 - Someone who has experience with diversity issues
 - Someone who has classroom experience

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - District wide communication breakdown between school board and teachers
 - Lack of trust
 - With the diversity comes wealthy schools as well as poverty schools, the new superintendent needs to be able to recognize the difference and balance per each school's needs
 - Handle community concerns, community members have demands of the board and superintendent
 - Discipline issues and changes to student code of conduct

Name of Group/Individual: Bryan Middle School Forum: Teachers & Staff #1 **Number:** 4

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Community oriented
 - Always changing
 - Cultural events
 - Omaha is expanding to keep families together and busy – family oriented
 - Omaha is very supportive of the fine arts
 - Affordable cost of living
 - People take pride in Omaha
 - Four seasons
 - Accepting of diversity
 - Large LGBD community
 - College world series/zoo

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Professional development is a priority to OPS
 - Dedicated staff – very prideful
 - High standards for students
 - Newly passed bond issue
 - Diversity
 - Arts and athletics are fully supported
 - Emphasis on student success
 - Activities which engage all student interests outside the student day
 - OPS embraces diversity

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Someone willing to utilize teachers and community for projects
 - Someone willing to engage community and promote community
 - Someone who is a collaborator, makes teachers feel appreciated and works with OEA and willing to listen
 - Honesty
 - Transparent
 - Integrity
 - Celebrates diversity
 - Someone willing to use current team and strategic plan to move forward
 - Build a media team that positively reinforces OPS accomplishments
 - PHD not necessary
 - Someone who understands the media and can build a relationship with them
 - Someone who lives within the OPS community
 - Someone who is visible in the schools and community
 - Someone who is seasoned with similar demographics and issues to OPS

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Media is tuff on OPS
 - OEA has rocky relationship with board and superintendent
 - District wide lack of Communication – two years ago staff found out that school day was being extended in the newspaper
 - Lack of trust
 - Lack of transparency
 - Current board issues

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Quality of life for the cost of living
 - Affordable housing
 - Midwest vibe
 - Big city but small town
 - Tremendous opportunities
 - Cultural activities
 - Employment opportunities
 - Medical resources
 - Community is supportive of activities
 - Concerts
 - Creighton University
 - Higher Educational opportunities

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Diversity
 - Size
 - Good employment opportunities
 - Urban school district
 - The school is the center of the community
 - Staff is dedicated and rise to meet student challenge
 - Student educational opportunities
 - Cultural language diversity
 - OPS offers tremendous professional growth opportunities
 - New teacher mentorship program
 - Administrators support staff and teachers
 - Immigrant program

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Knowledgeable
 - A goal oriented leader with a clear vision
 - Educated about OPS, realize the needs and know how to prioritize
 - Someone visible in the schools and community
 - Negotiator/facilitator
 - Good listener
 - Background in a diverse district
 - Likes kids
 - Someone who wants what is best for kids
 - PHD not necessary
 - Good communicator
 - Eloquent individual
 - Superintendent should reside within OPS district
 - Significant other not an issue

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Middle school issues – discipline
 - No funds for workshops
 - Cultural diversity

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Excellent school District
 - College world series, Olympic swim trials, regional tournaments
 - Highly rated family community
 - Welcoming and friendly
 - Community supports law enforcement
 - Supports public issues
 - Community pulls together when there are hardships
 - Excellent community leaders police and fire
 - Buffet has contributed so much to the city
 - Legislative support
 - The community loves their public schools
 - Great restaurants
 - Great Golf courses
 - Great Zoo
 - Very diverse
 - The MOEC
 - Great universities in the community

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Multiple school districts get along and work together
 - Raised student achievement
 - Increased graduation rates
 - Open enrollment
 - Academies and magnet programs
 - The district does a good job of meeting the students needs—do what is best for kids
 - Considerable diversity in the district and throughout the schools
 - Programs draws students to a variety of learning experiences
 - Supportive alumni
 - Sherwood Foundation—grants that are student centered
 - Teacher awards
 - Strong early childhood programs
 - Dual enrollment program and AP program which is support from the University and Metro college
 - Good relationship between K-12 and Higher ed
 - Mentor programs, urban league,
 - Community programs that help with students

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - The ability to work with the school board to let them know their role is
 - Strong leadership skills
 - Good communication and presentation skills

- Help coordinate the whole system to work together
 - Know what is going on in the district. Be present and visible. In the community and the schools
 - The ability to make changes if needed
 - With such a high poverty rate, a person needs to understand how to work within that setting
 - A person who has had experience and success working in a high poverty and diverse district
 - Possess a business acumen
 - Be bold and willing to change where needed
 - Public relation skills with the media
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Need a better alternative education program K-12 to meet the need of OPS
 - Need vocational education emphasis
 - Student mobility is a big challenge
 - Transportation
 - Grading system—standard based grading? Inconsistent
 - Diversity and integration
 - Recruiting staff that look like the student population
 - Streamlining the HR process—
 - Retaining good teachers
 - Having a plan as to how to positively impact the total district

Name of Group/Individual: Lewis & Clark Middle School Forum: Staff **Number:** 1

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Cost of living – affordable
 - Entertainment – arts/sports
 - Higher Education opportunities
 - Great Medical facilities
 - Culturally diverse
 - Refugee community makes Omaha rich in culture
 - Lots of parks and zoo
 - Omaha community play house
 - Live in the city and drive 20 minutes and you are in the country
 - Getting around the city is very easy to do
 - Close to Lincoln and the Huskers
 - Family friendly events driven
 - Safe community
 - Welcoming/friendly
 - Philanthropy

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Extremely diverse
 - Lots of educational opportunities for students
 - OPS values arts
 - Lots of sports opportunities for students
 - Higher academic expectations for student athletes
 - Philanthropy
 - Grants to provide opportunities for students
 - Opportunities for staff to learn from diverse cultures
 - Hard working teacher that care about what they do
 - Student success
 - ESL program
 - Teachers Union willing to work with new superintendent

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Collaborator
 - Good listener
 - Staff engagement
 - High expectations for teachers and students
 - Approachable/open
 - Fiscally responsible
 - PHD
 - Visible – in schools and community
 - Active in the community
 - Enthusiastic and wants to be here

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Extended school day – lack of communication to staff
 - Lack of communication – staff wants to find out things occurring in the district from the district not the newspaper
 - Rough relationship with the Omaha World Herald
 - Board member internal issues
 - Divided board, new members want change
 - Poor relationship between some members of the school board and OEA
 - Period of healing and rebuilding trust
 - Inequity in discipline across OPS
 - Nathan Hale situation not handled as a district, blamed on teachers
 - Achievement scores are moving target and continues to widen
 - Professional development not diverse

Section No. 3

Central Office Staff/Administrators and District Administrators

Name of Group/Individual: Executive Council

Number: 12

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Extraordinarily strong philanthropic community including financing (grants)
 - Willing to partner with the schools—community
 - Diversity—racial ethnic
 - Top 20 city for millennial
 - Low unemployment
 - Thriving alternative music scene
 - Sports city, college world series, Olympic trials, regional events
 - Strong cultural scene—symphony, playhouse
 - Performing art and visual arts
 - Omaha is easy to navigate
 - Safe clean friendly community
 - Best restaurants in the country
 - Recreationally friendly
 - Great college and university system
 - Strong school system
 - Multiple Medical facilities and hospitals
 - Revitalization of all parts of the city—make quality
 - 75 North project
 - World class zoo

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - School district Foundation
 - Great students—they are performing at top academic levels
 - Diversity
 - A committed staff
 - Philanthropy enhances programs
 - School choice
 - Intense work ethic and committed by staff
 - Norm of district is a 12-hour day—administrative
 - Use of technology
 - Clean and well maintained schools
 - Large number of internationals in the schools
 - Rising ESL pop and the
 - Dual Language programs
 - Non-teaching staff are here to enhance learning for 52000
 - Achievement gap is shrinking (conditions where more minority/immigrants and free and reduced lunches)
 - Overall achievement continues to improve
 - High graduation rate (Midwest council of regional cities #2)

- Evidenced based research has been a part of determining curriculum and instruction
 - Largest bond issue ever passed
 - Creating a welcoming culture
 - Communities supports our schools—enrollment continues to grow
 - Teaching staff have advanced degrees
 - Central office is here to support schools
 - Professional learning opportunities for educators—paraprofessionals, teachers
 - Many resources available to enhance educational experience
 - Transportation system works hard to safely transport students
 - District is extremely flexible to meet the needs of families
 - Schools are high functioning and orderly schools—School wide management system being put in place
3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
- Good communicator
 - Servant leader\
 - Strong sense of budget and finance
 - Solid understanding that board members are not administrators
 - Laser like focus on student achievement and supporting student success
 - Interpersonal skill
 - Continuous learner
 - Understanding that service departments are critical to student achievement
 - Understanding the strategic plan and continuing it
 - Strategic thinker
 - Well Organized
 - Willingness to address issues and have difficult conversation around the cultural issues that exist
 - Experience in being a superintendent
 - Humble—it's about the kids
 - Able to navigate through the politics
 - Very personable
 - Connector
 - Strong relationship with legislators, staff
 - Able to unify the staff
 - Needs of the students come first
 - Success with working with diverse populations
 - Urban background in their professional career
 - Able to conduct difficult conversations with the unions
 - Able to spearhead another bond issue
 - Someone who can get on board with the student assignment plan
 - Invested in the community—visible and active in community
 - Mentally and physically healthy
 - A champion for the cause—a cheerleader for the district
 - Ability to build a culture of appreciation

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Board of education—unifier of the board—
 - Helping the board to understand that micromanaging is not good
 - Board needs to be honest
 - Board significantly effects staff moral
 - Staff feel disrespected by the board
 - Board in buildings videotaping is inappropriate
 - Implementation of the new student assignment plan
 - Board behavior trickles down through the system
 - Know what should be public and what should be done in private
 - The teachers union
 - Support and momentum associated with diverse population
 - Funding challenges
 - Funding issues associated with the retirement system
 - Perception is that the board needs to be a true champion of the district

Omaha Stakeholders Principals' (100 plus in attendance)

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community?
 - Diversity
 - Hard working people
 - Growing Arts Community
 - Four Seasons
 - Henry Doorly Zoo
 - Philanthropy
 - College World Series
 - Family friendly
 - Sense of community
 - Easy to get around.
 - Go anywhere in 20 minutes
 - Good Schools

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools?
 - Cares about Kids
 - Institutional knowledge
 - Long history of tradition
 - Diversity
 - Forward Thinking
 - High Expectations for staff and students
 - Quality staff
 - Dual language program
 - Resilient staff
 - Good Community Resources
 - Community Service
 - Exceptional leaders
 - Dedicated Staff
 - Many educational options

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools?
 - Someone with integrity
 - Able to build relationships
 - Transparent
 - Clearer Communicator
 - Track record of success
 - Someone that can lead a board
 - Positive
 - Have experience as a building leader.
 - Someone that has worked with students
 - Experience in urban school district
 - Believes in public education

- Willing to listen
 - Courage
 - Willing to challenge with the norm with the right people
 - Knowledge of Best Practices of Assessment and Instruction
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in the order to be effective immediately?
- Working with the new school board
 - Understand historical growth in the district.
 - Build upon the successes
 - School Funding
 - Relationship between OPS and Greater Metro get along
 - Legislative challenges
 - Only Urban district in the state
 - Diversity – across city makes each school unique
 - English learners – mental health issues and other challenges
 - Challenges with local media
 - Space issues in buildings
 - Alternative education all levels – get funding
 - Passing of 2nd bond issues
 - New and divided board
 - Strength and early childhood
 - Lack of equality of support services
 - Support of Special Education Programs
 - Size of Special Ed
 - Transportation

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Strong philanthropic presence—contributed greatly to OPS
 - People are extremely welcoming and friendly
 - Family oriented community
 - A very diverse community
 - A fair representation of faiths
 - Cost of living and strength of public schools
 - School choice
 - Community support for the schools
 - Financial security in the community
 - Omaha is a growing community
 - Strong arts community
 - Excellent medical options
 - College world series, Olympic swim trials
 - Best zoo in the world
 - Low unemployment
 - Post-secondary education opportunities
 - Easy to navigate
 - Pride in the community
 - Considerable local support
 - Strong work ethic
 - Numerous fortune 500 companies
 - Safe compared to other large communities-excellent police fire support
 - Great sports for entertainment
 - Decent airport
 - In the middle of the country
 - Community supports first responders
 - Clean community
 - Great restaurants
 - Experience the four seasons

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Great teachers and administrators
 - Forefront of best instructional practices
 - Strong curricular focus
 - Longevity of staff
 - Diverse student population
 - Inclusive of all
 - Exceptional support for ESL
 - State scores continue to rise
 - Graduation rate continually increasing
 - Opportunities for students
 - High number of staff with advanced degrees
 - Community resources in schools

- Programs to help teachers advance professional
- Good professional development
- Staff pride in buildings and communities
- Opportunities to go to magnet schools
- Strong partnership with Minnesota Humanities focused on whole child
- Collect data on everything for improvement
- Programs to support student and families
- Mental health support for students
- Input is sought
- Strategic plan with a narrow focus
- Coaching and mentoring of new teachers
- Schools support each other when in need
- Excellent technology
- Schools support the community—foundation of the city
- Supports collaboration with Private schools as well as services receive services
- Great kids and families
- Para teacher program
- Alternative schools, career centers and others to meet the need of all children
- Home school partnership and one virtual school
- Dual Language schools
- Extended day and extended year opportunities
- The 75 north partnership

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- An advocate for OPS
- Visible in buildings and community
- High Integrity
- Approachable
- Collaborative
- Transparent
- Someone who will listen to staff
- Someone that will continue the strategic plan
- Someone who will stay a while
- A background of working with a diverse community
- Work to understand each position in the district and how it benefits the district
- Getting to know staff
- Experience in an urban district and understands the challenges of poverty
- Respect and value the talent and abilities of the administrators who are currently in the district
- Someone who is proactive vs reactive
- A unifier
- Relationship builder with partnerships
- Someone who is kind
- Wise with budget
- Builds team that is best for students and based on their qualifications
- Advocates for OPS to the board
- Works well with board of education

- Communicator
 - Someone with experience and skilled in urban district
 - Run like an educational institution
 - Need to have skills to work with the legislature and advocate for OPS
 - Presence with the department of education
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Aware that the community and state are very conservative
 - Needing a succession plan for administrative positions
 - Honoring the focus of the strategic plan—replacing key leaders with same vision as the strategic plan
 - Transportation issues
 - Securing resources for a diverse population
 - Communication with the media
 - Public opinion— continue to highlight the strengths of OPS
 - Addressing inequities across the district
 - Don't tell our story very well to non OPS people
 - Technology platforms—continue the advances in technology
 - Addressing inequity in the suspension rates
 - Will need to deal with the unification aspects of the board
 - Relationship between the teachers union and the board
 - Address the change that is occurring in the curriculum department
 - A new student assignment plan for next year
 - Clearly state to staff their vision and mission for the district
 - Alternative education—continue to support
 - Addressing severe mental health and behavioral needs of students
 - Creating a clear path for leadership advancement

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Family-friendly, family-oriented,
 - Great school system
 - Cost of living is excellent
 - Big city feel but a small-town setting
 - Great food restaurants
 - Per capita Omaha has more restaurants than any other city
 - Has a lot of higher education options
 - UNMC and Creighton Medical Center—wonderful medical facilities
 - Traffic patterns are good—easy to navigate
 - Diverse population
 - Philanthropy—a community that is supportive of the school system
 - Fine arts options are available
 - College world series
 - Swim trials for the Olympic
 - Has a rich history
 - Union Pacific, started up here
 - A wonderful Zoo—highly rated
 - Very friendly community
 - Very low unemployment rate
 - Have four seasons

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Population has a rich diversity in schools
 - Immigrant education and assistance
 - Expanding early childhood program
 - Continual Improvement Of Test Score
 - Magnet School Options
 - Flexibility In Governance
 - Innovative schools
 - Passionate, committed staff who have excellent experience
 - International Bachelorette Program
 - Excellent infrastructures—updated facilities
 - Tradition of the oldest school in the state—Central High
 - Engineering program at North High
 - Excellent technology access for students and staff
 - Community based health care centers
 - Start up of the first virtual school in Nebraska
 - Excellent research department
 - Excellent special education program

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Strong relationship builder
 - Outstanding communications
 - Clarity of vision
 - Honest and trustworthy
 - Empathetic
 - Experienced in a similar role/demographic
 - Great problem solving skills
 - Passionate about their job
 - Someone with an education background
 - Good listener
 - Someone who is fiscally responsible and understands the finances of education
 - Understands the importance of technology and innovation
 - Diplomatic and a collaborator critical and creative thinker
 - Visible and engaged
 - Has high moral and ethical standards
 - Strategic planner

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Filling a curriculum director position
 - Fiscal challenges of the district
 - Student behavior/discipline
 - Transportation issues
 - Supporting the rollout of new technology plan and professional development
 - Implementing the new student assignment plan
 - Repair relationship with OEA
 - Collaboratively working with a relatively new board
 - Meeting the educational needs of a diverse community
 - Gather input from and effectively listening to teachers and staff
 - Work to enhance a positive perception of OPS with an emphasis on developing a strong relationship with local media
 - Build strong relationships with surrounding school districts
 - Prepare and support the upcoming bond issue

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Great place to raise a family
 - A very friendly community—genuine people—a spirit of wanting to make the city better—a feeling of connectedness
 - Great arts community
 - Great sports community—many colleges
 - Many dedicated donors (philanthropic community)
 - Vibrant economy
 - Working to draw young entrepreneurs to the community
 - Value the public schools
 - Transportation system is good
 - Affordable housing
 - Many amenities for the size of city
 - Many great restaurants
 - Excellent medical facilities
 - Affordable cost of living—affordable housing
 - A safe community
 - Centrally located in the nation
 - Big city with a small neighborhood feeling
 - Best the zoo in the world—academy
 - Many museums—cultural activities
 - A group of vibrant and young professionals moving into city
 - Value innovation
 - A number of fortune 500 companies

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - An intelligent, committed, dedicated staff
 - A strong focus on student achievement
 - Strong work ethic among staff
 - Early childhood program—great place to raise a family
 - The buffet early childhood institute
 - Multiple programs available to students in OPS—many educational opportunities
 - Families have tremendous choice in OPS—student assignment plan
 - Dual language program—nationally recognized
 - Teacher mentoring program
 - Educate students coming from 100 plus languages
 - Diversity is a strength
 - Teachers want to make a difference
 - Many departments have gotten stronger
 - Many schools are being renovated with the passage of a bond issue
 - Facilities are clean and up to date
 - Improvements in the athletic programs
 - Leadership and focus has been really strong
 - Instructional coaching program for teachers

- Strategic plan
 - A research office-analysis of student achievement-student population-how things are working
 - Graduation rate has increased—student achievement has improved
 - Dual credit—career academic
 - Strong career education
 - Recognize and celebrate successful teachers
 - Increased focus on that the viable curriculum is updated routinely
 - A certified school librarian in every school
 - Multiple and diverse programming for students—from career end to international baccalaureate
3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
- Honesty
 - Approachability
 - Someone who will listen to all entities
 - Someone who will get to know staff members by name
 - Understanding of urban education and how to increase student achievement
 - Understanding school finance
 - Wisdom to assess current programs and practices and the courage to make changes
 - Someone who is trustworthy and is transparent
 - Is knowledgeable about research, current practices, strategies
 - Someone who sees the big picture
 - Can empower staff
 - Passionate, dedicated and supportive
 - Willing to work long hours
 - Be visible in the community and schools
 - Wants to be part of the community
 - Will be honest about the challenges of the district
 - What is best for student will come first
 - Being able to communicate with a diverse community
 - A willingness to compromise
 - Works with the state legislature
 - Advocate for the district at the state and national level
 - Willing to be here long term
 - Willing to work effectively with other districts and groups—a collaborator
 - Articulate and deep thinker and a vision for the future
 - Experience in a similar type of setting
 - Doctorate is preferred
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- The budget—funding
 - The school board—a divided board
 - Lack of trust by the staff and parents of the position
 - Being the largest district in the area will present challenges such as staffing

- Improve the branding/reputation of OPS
- The image of OPS needs to be improved
- Promote the great things the district is doing—district communications and PR
- Managing the philanthropic aspects of the community—a huge opportunity—can you exist without it—working with the expectations that go along with this
- Working within the current funding that exists and looking for new ways to do things
- Expanding early childhood program
- Work to blend the views of central office with the schools
- Contentious superintendent board relationship
- Be cognizant of the needs across the district—work to be wise and fair with all regions of the district
- Aware of the suburban district around us
- One third of students are second language students and meeting their needs
- Another bond issue for addition remodeling and new schools
- Community wants us to succeed--opportunity
- School board is viewed negatively—a significant challenge
- The ability to put together a good executive council
- Replacing the assistant supt. of curriculum and instruction

Section No. 4

Individual groups and organizations in the school or in the community.

Name of Group/Individual: Students

Number: 25

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Omaha Zoo
 - Welcoming community
 - Several aspects and events that have a multitude of opportunities for all ages
 - Weather – all four seasons
 - Midsized, not to large, not to small
 - Affordable living
 - Diversity
 - Employment opportunities
 - Walking trails
 - Sports, concerts, downtown – Old Market
 - Higher institutions for education

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Multitude of opportunities for educational advancement according to students' interests
 - Activities/opportunities – clubs, sports, interaction with other students living in different areas of town
 - Personable principals and teachers
 - Magnet schools
 - Dedicated, hardworking teachers
 - Each school works with student's different needs

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - A diverse superintendent that will recognize and understand all cultural backgrounds
 - Someone is efficient and willing to try different methods
 - Someone who will keep technology current
 - Someone who is knowledgeable on history outside the US
 - Humble
 - Someone who will listen to students and let them express themselves
 - Someone who will utilize social media
 - Someone who will be visible in the schools/involved in the community
 - Willing to be involved in activities other than sports
 - Someone who will stand up to difficult parents

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately?
- Not enough diverse curriculum especially history
 - Not enough diverse teachers, it should mirror the student population
 - Poor food portions and food nutrition
 - Grading scale needs to be improved – gear students to higher education readiness
 - Equitable grading practices that reflect the student efforts
 - Transgender views
 - Truancy issues – goggle school start times
 - Added 20 minutes to the school day – not productive
 - Schools are not currently equal

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Omaha is a vibrant community—arts, music and a variety of cultural opportunities
 - Strong employment opportunities
 - Very metropolitan—not a small community
 - College World Series, Olympic swimming trials, Art festivals
 - People are really nice
 - A very diverse community and diversity is positively embraced
 - The rural country is not far away
 - Very affordable—housing from high end to very affordable
 - Omaha is a neighborhood city
 - Easy to navigate Omaha—(I-80/I29/Airport)
 - Plethora of excellent restaurants
 - A wonderful zoo
 - Wonderful health community (hospitals and health care)
 - Great city and state parks are near
 - Vala’s pumpkin patch
 - Voters are strong supporters of public schools

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - OPS has a strong program for ESL students
 - The strongest asset the district has are its dedicated and loyal teachers and all staff
 - A strong community of educators at every level
 - Size of district allows the district to offer students a large number of educational opportunities
 - Significant opportunities for parent involvement in the schools—in a variety of forms
 - Because of a school bond issue (60%) the facilities are on track to be greatly improved
 - Wide variety of competitive activities for students that perform at the state level and receive high recognition (National History Competition)
 - Teachers received national recognition
 - Strong student body that rise to the academic challenges
 - Parents are very interested and involved in the daily academic lives of their students.

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - A collaborator—different than being informed—that it happens prior to a decision being made
 - Transparency
 - Effective communicator
 - Someone who will welcome and consider opposing points of view
 - Someone who will come in and get to know the internal and external community before making significant changes

- Someone who has been successful in their previous job
 - Someone from a similar size and demography community
 - Someone who has been in the classroom more than three years
 - Someone who is willing to collaborate with the different unions or groups represented in the district
 - Someone who has considered all viewpoints prior to making a decision
 - Someone who is willing to problem solve together versus managing conflict and expects the same from colleagues
 - Someone who is willing to build a culture of collaboration at all levels of the administration
 - Someone who believes in a more distributive style of leadership
 - Someone who can create a strong working relationship with building administrators and the teachers in the building—create a respectful atmosphere in the buildings
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Significant discipline issues across the whole district that needs to be addressed—create a uniform district wide and consistent approach to discipline for all children
 - Empower building principals to make the discipline decisions within the district guidelines
 - Grading structure—what are the grading practices and creating consistent grading practices across the district
 - Staffing in the support staff arena—understaffed—need to address adequate staffing in the support staff area—need to make positions attractive to hire and retain
 - Maintain support staff that are put in place to address needs
 - Support staffing effects teachers, students and all aspects of learning—needs to be considered
 - Excessive involvement and influence of the in-house attorney in the day to day educational decisions
 - The unwillingness of most of the current administration to work with the OEA as the representative of the educators

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Safe place to live
 - A great place to raise children
 - Diversity
 - Home of Warren Buffet
 - Lots of employment
 - Many opportunities
 - Easy to buy house
 - Low cost of living
 - Great universities
 - We have four seasons
 - Excellent medical facilities
 - Very welcoming—nice people
 - Community support—food pantries
 - Free Zumba classes
 - Very good resources for special education
 - Nonprofit resources provide gifts to kids
 - Big city but a small-town feel
 - World class zoo
 - Many sports events and activities that one can be involved in
 - College world series, Olympic swim trials
 - Nebraska Cornhuskers
 - Beautiful parks—hiking and biking—recreational opportunities
 - Playgrounds for kids
 - Low crime rate lower when compared to other large cities
 - Availability of private schools—affordable
 - Higher Education is affordable
 - Art galleries and museums
 - Processing plans for meat

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Good reputation
 - Dual language program
 - Services for the students and families
 - Diverse population
 - Language services to the multilingual community
 - Good opportunities for the students
 - Transportation for students
 - Career center
 - Magnet schools
 - Migrant programs
 - Support they provide for refugees
 - ESL and refugee education program
 - Great teachers

- Students can access the education equally regardless of race
 - Free and reduced lunch plan and free breakfast
 - Head start program
 - School Based Health Centers
 - School Social workers
 - Community Therapists
 - Afterschool program
 - Tutoring and mentoring
 - Big Brothers and sisters program
 - ESL Programs for parents
 - Open doors
 - Parents volunteer day
 - Coffee with the principal
 - Guest speakers
 - Bilingual liaisons at the schools and central office
 - Great curriculum for the students
 - Sports available to the students
 - Scholarship Foundations—i.e. Buffet
 - Thrive student leadership clubs
 - Music is taught in the schools—helps to unite
 - Good communication
 - Working together with the local agencies
3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
- Very open minded
 - Be bilingual—visited other countries
 - He/she are not racist
 - Consider a female
 - Responsible, accessible, welcoming
 - Professional
 - Good educational experience
 - Cherishes diversity
 - Excellent leadership qualities
 - Humble
 - Must be willing to visit schools
 - Calm under pressure and don't quit
 - Someone close and accessible to staff and parents
 - Someone who follows through
 - Trustworthy
 - Compassionate
 - To be involved in the community and families can get to know them
 - Think outside the box
 - Excellent communication skills
 - Needs to be social and kind
 - Respectful
 - Open to new ideas
 - With great power comes great responsibility—needs great work ethic

- Good listener
 - Good sense of humor
 - Secure a good support team
 - Hire strong people where they consider themselves to be weak
 - Ownership of their decisions
 - Learn from their own mistakes and take responsibility
 - Family oriented
 - Need a leader and not a manager
 - Takes district to the next level of success
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Behavior and school violence
 - Discipline
 - Students are disrespectful of staff and peers
 - Behavior is impeding their education and others education
 - Increased issues associate with the refugee population
 - Buses need to be more safe—need supervisors
 - Safety around the schools
 - Non traditional program for kids that do not thrive in traditional program
 - Reevaluate the program for No Child Left Behind
 - Lack of staffing—need more people in the classroom
 - Need more space—students in the hallways and cafeterias
 - Changes associated with Human growth and develop curriculum
 - Reevaluate the student assignment plan
 - Transportation with the segregation associated with it
 - How they label the partner zone
 - Improving students dress code and hygiene
 - Address gang activity and drug use in schools
 - Lack of purpose and vision in our students
 - Lack of funds in the area of higher education for undocumented students
 - Maintain higher levels of education when compared to neighboring districts—for all students
 - Cursive back in curriculum
 - Possible alternative school for middle school students
 - Dual language has been a success—needs to be expanded
 - Be more proactive in canceling school due to weather
 - Address student attendance issues

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Community diversity is strong and we have collaborate efforts
 - Recreational opportunities
 - Philanthropic public and private partnerships what improve the quality of live
 - Easy to be involved, something for everyone
 - Very welcoming community
 - Strong arts and theatre programs
 - Numerous activities, entertainment and sporting events
 - High quality education
 - More than cornfields
 - People are real and honest
 - Strong headquarter ties
 - Strong municipal government
 - Top notch Medical facilities
 - Higher education opportunities
 - World class zoo
 - Hosted numerous national events

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Diverse
 - Multiple opportunities in and out of the class room
 - Each school has its own strength and students are afforded the opportunity to follow their interests
 - Strong teacher and principal pool
 - Quality driven
 - Strong Public School Foundation
 - District invests in their employees
 - Strategic plan in place – buildings, technology, and curriculum
 - Host of the state track meet
 - Educational opportunities for all students
 - Opportunities for parent involvement
 - District embraces Immigrant community
 - Strong stem community
 - Communication

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Educational piece in place
 - Collaborative and cooperative skills
 - Views the Foundation as a partner in the educational process
 - Someone who has the ability to work with community leaders
 - Work effectively with internal organizations
 - Someone who is able to navigate a diverse board that is highly political and unify them

- Proactive rather the reactive management style
 - Someone who is willing to be in the trenches in the beginning of their tenure, be visible
 - Someone who understands the demands on all the school employees
 - Relationship builder in the district and community
 - Passionate and open to honest feed back
 - Someone who will follow through and act on feed back
 - Strong public relations leader
 - Someone who is able to wear many hats and juggle many jobs
 - Diplomatic administration with realistic expectations
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- In the ethnic communities, one organization does not speak for all
 - Disconnect between board and superintendent and staff
 - Lack of trust system wide
 - Decisions made at board level and administration level without staff consideration
 - Negative image of TAC
 - Fair application of Foundation funds that is in line with Foundation Mission

Name of Group/Individual: Sherwood Foundation

Number: 2

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Good place to live
 - Lots of amenities
 - Attractive community
 - Attractive neighborhoods—family based
 - Great restaurants
 - Lots of concerts
 - Vibrant arts community—music, arts
 - Great zoo
 - Philanthropic community
 - Having Berkshire-Hathaway, initial investors that want to pay back the community
 - Good support of the school district
 - College World Series
 - 3 universities
 - Creighton University basketball
 - Other higher education available near by
 - Great opportunities for kids
 - Med center—great facilities, Ebola center, cancer center

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Student achievement data is on an upward trajectory
 - Kids prepared well for higher education
 - District is on a positive trajectory
 - Still some issues that need to be addressed
 - Innovative—focus school started with Westside and Elkhorn
 - Strong community support for the schools—some financial support
 - Omaha community has a vibrant parochial community, but the public schools have been growing
 - Prominent people in the community send their students to the public schools, not private schools
 - \$420 million bond issue a couple years ago passed, it had strong support
 - Looking at possibility of building a couple new high schools
 - Northwest part of district needs closer schools
 - Southern part of the district needs additional education space
 - Significant potential for the district to be a model for the nation

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Excellent people skills
 - Ability to work with many different groups of people in the community
 - Needs to build support with the business community
 - Needs to work with the subgroups within the city (Hispanic, African-American, white, etc.)
 - Listen to all constituencies

- Express yourself well
 - Be “one” of the community
 - Create positive relationships with the philanthropic community
 - Needs to be a team-builder within the district—administrative staff, teaching staff, other groups
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Some board issues between the members on some issues
 - Four new board members coming on
 - Manage a diverse board
 - Proactive regarding board relationships
 - Effective communicator
 - Ready to pass a new bond issue to build new schools
 - Build public confidence
 - Current bond issue and projects need to be managed correctly (on schedule and on budget)
 - Honor the current strategic plan that has been established
 - Honor what is going on in the district making informed and collaborative changes
 - Get to know what is happening in the district before making changes

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Four seasons
 - Very family oriented community
 - Numerous philanthropic groups that support the district
 - Great community resources to support families
 - Many post-secondary opportunities
 - Excellent medical facilities
 - Amenities and resources are close and available
 - Can navigate the community easily—easy commute
 - Employment opportunities—very low unemployment
 - Number one zoo in the world
 - Many options to go to junior college
 - Lots of arts and cultural activities
 - College world series
 - Growing number of small business
 - Considerable change is going on in the community
 - Very diverse population
 - Variety of housing and affordable
 - An engaged business community
 - Overall the community is safe but could be better

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - It is big and very diverse
 - Active and very involved teachers union
 - Good partnerships with community based organizations
 - The community is generally supportive of the district
 - Renovation of facilities is occurring
 - Strong Stem programs and magnet schools
 - Excellent school and business partnerships in the classroom
 - Strong support from philanthropic community
 - A relatively new strategic plan in place that can be used and reviewed
 - Innovative programs to improve academics are occurring
 - Very dedicated staff
 - Very diverse staff
 - Teachers are responsive

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - A minority
 - Someone that has worked in a diverse population setting
 - Cultural competence
 - A visionary—not afraid to see change
 - Knows how to work with parents
 - Someone not afraid to make change

- A successful collaborator
 - Someone who has successfully navigated change
 - Someone vested in the community
 - Someone that has a proven track record of success
 - An advocate for the success of all students
 - Someone that is committed for the long run
 - Should live in the district
 - Innovative
 - Accessible
 - Focus on the trades
 - Partnering with business and corporate community
 - Someone who gets to know the community before changes are made
 - A national funding network
 - Aware of mental health needs of students
 - Proven skill set in curriculum
 - Someone who can bring various factions of the community together
 - Someone that is engaged—and visible in the community
 - Expert on data analysis—to assist in the change—data driven
 - A well-rounded influencer who advocates for best practices related to achievement gaps
 - Someone who is relatable
 - Someone who holds themselves accountable as well as those who work in the district
 - Someone that is principled and stands on them
 - Committed to creating a climate that allows feedback and open dialogue
 - Transparent
 - Advocates for families—risk management pro
 - Someone who can accept and give constructive criticism
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Transportation
 - Relationship with minority community in north part of the city
 - Board issues and their agendas
 - Poor communication between the board and superintendent
 - Achievement gaps in the minority population
 - Inconsistent disciplinary actions based on school and neighborhood
 - Truancy
 - More equity in the bidding on contracts
 - Employment and volunteer opportunities need to be equitable
 - Contractors and subs need to meet minority requirement
 - Curriculum inefficiencies
 - Grading scale
 - More social workers needed
 - Regaining and building trust in the education process
 - Explore hiring practices regarding minorities
 - A more diverse educational staff

- Students not college ready
- Transparency
- Needs to seek staff and community input in critical decisions
- Need to be willing to replicate successful programs between buildings and address deficiencies
- Hold leadership accountable and remove less than productive staff
- Being an outsider can be an issue
- Academic requirements for athletes needs to be addressed
- Recruitment of strong qualified staff
- Strained relationship with DOE and other state entities (Health and Human Services)

Footnote: Minority implies African American population

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Close to the reservations
 - Diverse and growing community
 - Higher educational opportunities
 - 4 fortune 500 companies located in Omaha
 - Significant community support and resources
 - Number 1 zoo
 - Low unemployment
 - Politically balanced
 - Several redevelopment projects
 - Exceptional medical facilities/choices/2 teaching medical schools
 - Arts and entertainment
 - Easy to navigate
 - Big city but small town feel
 - Warren Buffett
 - Historical significance to the Indian population

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Significant programs to meet the needs of children and parents outside the school day/OPS lengths kids to their basic needs
 - Continuous improvement through the assessment process
 - Cultural diversity throughout the student population
 - Alternative education programs
 - Career education programs
 - Building emphasis on early childhood education
 - Jumpstart program for kindergartens
 - Magnet schools
 - Community partnerships
 - Numerous family events in the schools
 - Open door policies in the schools for students and parents
 - Teachers and administrators are very dedicated
 - Numerous teacher of the year awards
 - Minnesota humanity professional development opportunities
 - Partnerships for higher education

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Examine curriculum regarding Native Americans
 - Some who is trauma informed
 - Visible in community and schools specifically in Native American community
 - Culturally competent and sensitive and aware of native history
 - Humility
 - Continue to support Nice program
 - Possess knowledge of federal programs – Title 7/6

- Transparent
 - Someone willing to listen the community needs
 - Equitable distribution of recourses across the district
 - Ethical
 - Someone who understands the economical and academic differences within our district
 - Care and concern of wellness of entire district
 - Preferred PHD
 - Someone who has a plan coming in rather than creating one on the job
 - Someone who listens and is not rigid
 - Someone who can share a collective vision of the district
 - Someone who is accessible and personable
 - A critical thinker who is a team player and problem solver
 - Awareness and appreciation of nontraditional educational paradigms
 - Trust
 - Expanding the native American curriculum beyond the 4th grade
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Dealing with poverty and homelessness within OPS
 - GPA's and graduation rates have increased while ACT scores are below average and students' skills have decreased
 - Controversy surrounding the student assignment plan and the perpetuation of racial segregation
 - Transportation needs to be re-evaluated
 - Overcrowding of schools and classrooms
 - Professional development for staff to deal with the heart and humanities of students
 - Cultural competency – understanding and honoring cultural diversity of students within our district
 - Students falling through the cracks
 - Community violence
 - More support for all diversity groups in our community
 - Recognize and honor all ethnic groups in our community
 - Lack of fairness and equity to all groups in the community
 - Rebuilding and reestablishing relationships within our district
 - Emphasis on postsecondary training
 - Emphasis on parental engagement

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Cost of living
 - Diversity of neighborhoods
 - Strong economy
 - Quality of public education
 - Fair community
 - Inclusive rather than exclusive
 - Community has definite interest in public school system
 - Strong arts and cultural programs
 - Excellent higher education
 - Solid work ethic
 - Low unemployment
 - 4 fortune 500 headquarters in Omaha
 - Easy to navigate
 - Philanthropic community
 - 2 medical schools, law school and strong community college

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Excellent Infrastructure
 - Excellent support for the bond issue
 - Excellent ESL program
 - Special education program
 - Strong and stable urban school district
 - Excellent and solid teaching staff
 - Well educationally prepared staff
 - A merri0d of programs for students
 - Willingness to work with neighboring districts
 - Stability of vision and leadership
 - Broad range of community support at the building level

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Successful Experience in a large and urban diverse school district
 - Individual that is approachable and touchable to a diverse constituent population
 - Someone who is an effective communicator
 - Someone who has a strong understanding of the politics of education internally and externally
 - Someone who is strong and thick skinned and the ability to deal will a wide variety of issues
 - Someone who is a unifier
 - Open to change
 - Someone who has the ability to maximize educational technology
 - Someone who collative internal and external relationships to reach a common vision
 - Embrace the shortcomings of the district and find fixes

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Divided school board
 - External influence on current school board
 - Current board is harmful to the education of the students in Omaha
 - Current board should know that they have a fiduciary responsibility to educate the children of the district and set policy. Implementation of the policy belongs to the superintendent and staff
 - A board is responsible to meet those responsibilities and if they don't it is considered negligent.
 - Moral issue
 - Leadership issues with OEA
 - Three communities within the OPS school district – recognize and treat equitable
 - Curriculum efficiencies
 - 2nd bond issue approval needs to get passed

Name of Group/Individual: Neighborhood Association

Number: 1

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Vibrant, growing community
 - Arts
 - Respect for history and its past
 - Entertainment
 - Diverse community
 - Hard working
 - Low unemployment
 - Affordable
 - Great medical facilities
 - Big city, yet small town feel
 - Interpersonal connections

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Well trained, dedicated staff
 - Staff has respect for students and perform at a high level
 - Growth mindset
 - Good facilities
 - Problem solvers not problem makers, solution finders
 - Schools support the community they are in

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - PHD is very important
 - Knowledgeable regarding national trends but not over reactive to those trends
 - Someone who can communicate with all groups ie...staff, cultural groups, business leader
 - Relationship builder, yet shooter
 - Someone who is not afraid of fierce conversations across the board
 - Set priorities that are doable
 - Someone who supports magnet schools including transportation to them
 - Someone who can speak to all groups
 - Someone who has the ability to motivate all groups to elevate their current achievement

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - OPS focuses on going wide rather than deep and they should go deep rather than wide
 - Strategic plan is too wide.....
 - Neighborhood schools need to be responsive to the neighborhoods
 - Transportation
 - Discipline issues
 - Increase communication between Neighborhood association and the neighborhood school and district--to this point the district has been unresponsive

Community Partners/Chamber (19 in attendance)

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community?
 - Cost of living
 - Excellent place to raise children
 - Small but big city
 - Convenience of traveling in the city in 20 minutes
 - Centrally located - good geographic location
 - High quality higher education available
 - Non-Profit world, elected officials and business partners
 - Healthy lifestyle – natural resource
 - Philanthropy – community gives
 - Low unemployment
 - Low crime rates
 - Bond issue support
 - Growing community
 - Great medical facilities
 - Good Arts programs
 - Diverse population
 - Great School System – police relationships, arts huge community entities
 - Good point of contact – good relations with community
 - Urban – but with a sense of neighborhood

2. What are the strengths/assets of Omaha Public Schools?
 - Child welfare – great relationships to offer services for metro and state (Great Partners)
 - Work with community partners
 - Able access students for support programs
 - Head start and child daycare before and after school available
 - Joint facilities
 - Strong community support
 - School based health centers
 - Access to students for Red Cross
 - Mental Health contracts students do not have to travel
 - Great changes progress for next superintendent
 - Move forward-invested group of educators
 - Good Relations with Community
 - Diverse population
 - Facilities equality
 - Growing school district

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools?
 - Internally – is any one qualified
 - Experience working with a board that is in flux and a district that is in flux as well

- A board equalizer
 - Builds strong relationship with the media
 - Puts kids first
 - Someone who can work the existing plan
 - A good internal leader
 - A person who can make tough difficult decisions and stick to their guns
 - Have to deal with all the changes with personnel
 - Quality Leader
 - Demonstrated success in Urbana district – not look at past experience)
 - Build on the successes
 - Strong leadership skills
 - Visionary – looking at cause and effects
 - Address the needs of the community
 - Communication-a good public speaker
 - Someone who is very visible
 - Someone with the ability to inspire
 - Strong Educational Leadership
 - Experience with trauma – refugee, hurricane Katarina – (immigrants)
 - Worked in an urban district with a record of being able to improve test scores and thus the district
 - A person who can build pride in the district
4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately?
- Law enforcement – School Resource Officers not always used
 - Urban City Issues – don't have the same issues as other schools in the state
 - Negative image of the board in public
 - Board is taking away from the focus on education
 - Board is dragging the whole district down
 - Earlier intervention for disengaged students
 - Need every high school student to have the opportunity to experience college experience – dual enrollment
 - Address Elementary and Secondary schools – (Social promotions)
 - High end management – disconnect – better communication and support
 - Superintendent should have reacted much earlier – intervention for middle school
 - Better Communication to the partners
 - Early intervention before turning to Alternative schools
 - Dysfunctional Board—needs to address the quality of the board
 - Be a strong leader of the board
 - The board needs to rally around the flag for the best interests of the district
 - Early Intervention and Larger Intervention Options
 - Superintendent should get on top of curriculum and instructional
 - Work with universities partnership with higher ed
 - Pay teachers better

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Great place to raise a family, very affordable
 - Education is highly valued and community is generous
 - High profile philanthropic family
 - Up and coming in the arts
 - Easy to navigate to and from work
 - Development in downtown core
 - Urban but close to rural
 - Sports attractions
 - Business community if very supportive of education

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Incredible offerings
 - Responsive to business and industry needs resulting in numerous student opportunities
 - Diverse
 - Staff willing to embrace change
 - Current administration working towards transparency
 - Shift towards improved student achievement
 - Better communication
 - Open and responsive to community input
 - Working to hold everyone accountable

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Strong ethics
 - Good communicator
 - Serves entire community
 - Inspirational leader, but grounded in reality
 - Transformational, not transactional
 - Someone who does not have an over powering agenda and who is aware of what is currently in place
 - Ability to navigate through board and public interactions
 - Someone who can embrace technology and utilize resources in the community
 - Good balance of internal and external communities
 - Someone with a PHD or EDD
 - Know the role of the community colleges
 - Bold and courageous
 - Someone who can communicate belief that all children can learn

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Racial divide in community
 - Higher rate of unemployment and under educated students in districts 1 and 2
 - Poverty
 - Multicultural issues
 - Recognize educational issues and be willing to find solutions to enhance student success
 - Unified board of education
 - Funding for the district

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - People have tremendous passion and pride in the community
 - People are willing to help others
 - Low employment
 - High labor participation
 - Industry contributes to ensure Omaha continues to grow
 - Strong philanthropic presence in the community (10 +/- philanthropic organizations)
 - A very giving community
 - Considerable public/private cooperation
 - Big town with a small-town attitude (feel)
 - Regional hub
 - Great place to raise a family
 - Great quality of life
 - Attractive to youth
 - Strong cultural presence (arts)
 - A safe community
 - Workable traffic patterns
 - Acceptance of diversity in the city—open minded
 - Best medical facilities—five hospitals—biomedical college—two medical schools in Omaha
 - Excellent zoo—academic programs
 - Affordable housing—low cost of living
 - Recreational options are abundant—cycling
 - Good public transportation
 - A very supportive Chamber of Commerce
 - Redevelopment of the downtown core
 - Huge sports town—swim Olympic trials, college world series and more

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Cooperation is growing between the eleven districts around OPS
 - Quality of education is really good
 - Open enrollment—students can choose the school they go to
 - Schools are very competitive in a positive way which attracts students
 - Excellent options and choices for students (career academies allows for students interests be met)
 - Students are engaged in practical applications
 - Facilities have been improved through the passing of a 400M + bond issue
 - Excellent sports, theater, music and activity options for students
 - A willingness for the district to work closely with the private sector

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - A background in career education and what have they done
 - Evidence that they have worked effectively with the community and career education
 - A person who listens and then illustrates that they have the ability to network
 - Needs to engage the community
 - A strong leader—
 - Engage those that represent the diverse aspects of the community
 - Have worked with an immigrant population and the issues associated with that aspect of the district
 - A person who studies the post graduation activities of students—go to college and finish—those that go into careers
 - Respect and create programs that meet the needs of all students—college bound and non-college bound—encourage all students to engage in their areas of interest
 - A doctorate is not required—more important the skill set of the person
 - Need a superintendent to make positive things happen
 - Willing to encourage employees in their system to lead and develop critical programs (career programs)—a delegator
 - Work to keep talent stay in Nebraska and Omaha
 - An exceptional mediator

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Address and work well with multiple school districts
 - Improve the perception of OPS—positive branding—keep students in OPS
 - School board elected by district—weakens the board—regionalism
 - Be able to market the district
 - Issues associated with facilities
 - Mindful of various groups in the community
 - Be aware of the financial issues in the state and community
 - The rural vs. city issues (Omaha and the rest of the state)
 - Funding will be an issue
 - Dealing with a variety of ethnic groups
 - Work with a board of education and navigate issues associated
 - Articulate programs between K-12 and community college
 - How contracts are procured between groups (architects)
 - Successful management of facility projects

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Generally good place for employment
 - Good place to raise children
 - Strong cultural center
 - A very diverse community and embraces immigrants
 - Good community and police relationships
 - Great health care options
 - Affordable housing
 - Reasonable cost of living
 - Geographically centralize in the US which is very accessible le
 - Strong cultural and arts community
 - Strong Philanthropic community
 - Many college and university options—excellent higher education options

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Adverse student population
 - A positive trend toward closing the achievement
 - Improved graduation rates
 - The presence of health care centers in the schools.
 - Staff and teacher are committed to doing a good job
 - The district has identified areas of need and created a plan to address those needs
 - Openness to community involvement
 - A willingness to allocate resource to areas of need
 - Willing to be innovative

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - A person who is independent and can stand on their own
 - The capacity to handle anxiety
 - A people person and one who is involved in the community
 - Open minded
 - A person who can embrace cultural diversity
 - A person of color
 - Honors current programs that are success and does not come in with their own agenda
 - A person of high moral character
 - One who has experience in the classroom
 - One who is highly educated and possess a Ph.D. or an Ed.D.
 - A good listener
 - A bridge builder
 - Transparency

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Transgender Issues
 - Relationship With OEA
 - Need For A More Diverse Teaching Staff
 - Teacher make-up should mirror student population
 - Promoting the next bond issue
 - Addressing areas within the organization that are ineffective
 - Someone who can work with the state legislature to retain educational funding
 - Someone who will address current transportation issues
 - Be knowledgeable and aware of existing learning communities
 - Understand and develop a relationship with neighboring schools
 - Be aware of the growing school choice movement in Nebraska
 - Be willing to address the relationship between public and private school in Omaha
 - Be aware of the recognition of excellent teachers and work to retain these teachers

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Strong economy
 - More Resources in Omaha to assist new comers to Omaha
 - Variety of attractions for families outside of the school
 - Community works together on challenges within the community, looking for the opportunities within the challenges
 - Medium community that is growing – ease of traffic flow
 - Variety of religions and faith communities
 - Good environment to raise a family
 - Large philanthropic community
 - Heartland – middle of the United States – strategically located
 - An individual can make a difference in our community
 - Police department is SUPER

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Significant improvement in achievement plans, graduation rates are up
 - Array of programs to fit the needs of all students
 - Community support for the school and student needs
 - Trends are up in our high poverty schools
 - School choice at all levels
 - Strategic plan in place that involved community input and by in
 - Bond issue which resulted in renovations and security updates

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - PHD necessary
 - Strong business background
 - City expectation is PHD superintendent
 - Strong track record
 - Culturally diversified
 - People person
 - Collaborator
 - Prior successful record
 - Cultural competence experience of 5 years or more to include racial, disability and poverty
 - Effectively understand history of district and community
 - Family and community engagement and the supports for that are needed for success
 - Someone who will work with all groups as equal partners
 - Questions for candidate – why do you want this position
 - What do you hope to accomplish

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- School choice is an issue...appearance there are options...once paperwork is completed there is not a choice
 - Communication is a C- in the district from top to bottom
 - Consistent grading scale
 - State and Federal effects on funding
 - Need for recruitment of African/American and teachers of color and minorities
 - Replacing good things that are having success needs to be a priority and accelerated
 - Equity and inclusion...additional staff and recourses behind this initiative

Name of Group/Individual: SEIU

Number: 3

1. What are the greatest assets of the Greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Big city small town values
 - Diverse community that works well together
 - Good place raise kids
 - Low crime rate
 - Easy to navigate
 - Best zoo
 - Lots of restaurants
 - Lots of entertainment
 - Locally owned and ethnic restaurants
 - Three arenas, lots of sporting events
 - Redevelopment projects
 - Low unemployment
 - Well located airport
 - Located in the heartland
 - Arts and museums
 - Affordable housing
 - Great shopping

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Good teacher
 - Good support staff
 - Huge family atmosphere
 - Good diverse programs for families, students and staff
 - Dedicated, prideful staff
 - Diverse population

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Strong leader and ethical
 - Honest.....
 - Open minded
 - Hard worker
 - Friendly
 - Tough
 - Outgoing
 - Thick skinned
 - Someone who is able to accept criticism
 - Fair
 - Visible and in the schools
 - Someone with business sense

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Lack of honesty and transparency
 - Lack of trust
 - Transportation
 - In house lawyer is an issue
 - Appears that In house lawyer is running district
 - Disrespect shown by in house attorney towards staff
 - Outdated equipment – residential equipment vs commercial equipment
 - Poor leadership
 - Unresponsive to needs of association
 - Improved analysis of spending

1. What are the greatest assets of the greater Omaha Community? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Nice people
 - Strong cultural center
 - Easy commute time
 - Family friendly
 - Resources for support
 - Reasonable cost of living
 - Recognized as a great place to live
 - Midwest silicon
 - Care about community
 - Access to higher education

2. What are the strengths/assets of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Open to dialogue with parents
 - More family and parent support of schools
 - Diversity
 - Innovative technology
 - Bond issue that is updating facilities

3. What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)
 - Someone proven that they can do this
 - Build community relationships
 - Someone who can meet the specific needs of Omaha
 - Someone who encourages Greater access to mental health care

4. What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Building trust with OEA
 - Negativity in the press
 - Need to have better marketing techniques
 - Follow through on the strategic plan
 - Need to address difference learning styles—especially reading
 - Build in career education programs
 - Lack of being prepared for post-secondary education
 - An awareness that the community has single parents and meeting their needs
 - Increased diversity in the faculty and administration
 - Increasing parental involvement
 - The need for adequate cultural competency
 - Lack of access of basic needs for some and thus not as successful as others
 - Implementing the first year of new student assignment plan
 - Increasing graduation rate and increasing test scores

*Survey Monkey Results for Omaha Public Schools
January 2017*

*(NOTE—these responses have not been edited,
they are printed as entered by the stakeholders)*

256 Responses

Administrators

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Our District is divided and in need of some healing. Data may show improvements but, a huge cost has been paid through loss of human capital and by paying external groups to solve internal problems. Staff morale is low.
- That student discipline issues are significant, and will continue to grow unabated unless some clear (and real) solutions regarding both academic and behavioral remediation are put in place. Good teachers are hard to come by, but the best avoid OPS because they feel that student discipline prevents them from actually teaching, or they are tasked with unreasonable expectations to "differentiate" across multiple ability levels within a single classroom.
- lots of inequities with hiring practices - being honest about those hiring practices (especially with school administration)
- The districts inability to see/ reduce the number of ineffective teachers, classified staff and principals.
- The challenges of working in a large urban public school district and factors from this setting that affect student achievement (health, transportation, % of families on FRL, etc)
- Our current Superintendent reestablished relationships in the business and local community. However, morale and relationships with district staff (especially building staff) suffered. Under his tenure, there was a lack of respect for building level staff. The new superintendent needs to be aware that a lot of healing will need to occur between the higher-ups at TAC- teachers, administrators- and the teacher's union.
- The superintendent should be aware of the importance of transparency; real, honest, genuine transparency. This is different from putting things in place to create the illusion that people have input but really don't. One example is principal appointments. The district currently has a time scheduled where principal candidates interview in front of staff and parents. Staff and parents then write their input on cards. The input really doesn't make a difference as to which candidate is selected. It seems the selection has already been made, regardless of how the community feels. It would be better to just appoint a candidate rather than have a pretend forum.
- We can and should expect more out of all stakeholders.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- The skills and characteristics to include: relationship building, integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, leadership, knowledge of current educational issues, and the ability to work with others to solve problems facing education nationally. Most importantly they must support and be a strong advocate for public schools it's educators, students, and families.
- The courage to take on school board members who have agendas that undermine or dismantle public education and who regularly disparage teachers who have devoted their careers to serve students. The willingness to seek solutions that actually meet the needs of students at a social-emotional level, instead of aiming for graduation rates by way of lowered academic standards. If we are going to serve the whole student, then let's make sure our programs are capable of doing so.
- not be afraid to make changes based on trends, documentation, etc.
- Clear communication, collaboration and a vision to use a majority of the districts well developed academic action plan and Best Instructional Practices Handbook
- Strategic competency in understanding and addressing the connectivity of factors in the community that affect academic performance.
- * strong interpersonal skills * focus on building level front line staff and their needs
- Strong knowledge of instructional best practices, understanding of OPS history and current practices with an ability to continue implementing strategies that have helped to move us forward, kind yet firm approach to interpersonal interactions, belief in the importance of strong curriculum and balanced district leadership, balance between individual school leadership and central office decision-making to continue to narrow the achievement gap through best practice and focused leadership
- Qualities and characteristics that a superintendent should possess include extreme integrity, passion for the mission of educating students, clear communication, and the ability to lead a diverse district.
- Visionary, determination, and a roll up your sleeves kind of style.

Classified Staff

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- The current IT is antiquated, and new staff members are given very limited training on its use, as well as ongoing training & updates. Reports are not accurate and cumbersome to collect data that upper management requires from employees. Management should be able to pull data needed from reports instead of having employees document in 4 different places & count written data. This is a waste of employees time, and the district uses too much paper. ALL employees of student care should have updated equipment that provides streamlining electronic records with one entry. Orientation for new staff is fractured and should be longer than a week. Teachers should have a very close mentor for the first year, and longer if needed. The district should provide and require ongoing education for each professional area and not cram this into after hours & require the employee to pay out of their own pockets. Each school should have a nurse with fulltime health paraprofessional. Safety staffing ratios are egregious. The current staff does an excellent job providing education as best they can, many teachers work into the evenings and are dedicated, however, this does not provide the necessary time for family or other activities and is simply not healthy. Simply stating the teachers have the summer off is not a fair statement and does not justify the amount of work they are required to accomplish during working hours.
- Our heavily diverse population; learning how to understand and get along with each other; need of cultural sensitivity training. 2) Our student behavior issues/suspensions; especially towards peers, staff, and teachers. 3) Student Choice i.e. busing, schools, etc.; i.e. the Student Assignment plan. 4) Collaboration between TAC and the Schools; schools don't like the TAC. 5) Increasing parental/community engagement, so our students can succeed.
- Diverse student population
- More focus needs to go towards closing the achievement gap for all students. Too many kids are failing.
- All OPS staff needs to be treated with respect and Classroom support staff salary needs some looking into.
- The emotional/mental needs of all students, including many who come from trauma-based backgrounds. Note: Question # one should make it possible to choose more than one. I am also a parent of a student with special needs so my answers are based from a dual view.
- Students who are bullied are not getting the help they need to feel safe. The schools could look at the evidence based practices that help students and staff to deal with bullying.
- The diverse nature of the population of the district, the urban sprawl that makes transportation issues of extreme importance, and the need to address the shortage of ESL staff in the district.
- The vast diversity of the district as well as understanding that higher poverty schools perform lower and need goals that are reachable for their demographics.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- He/she should recognize the dedication the staff provides to students, and the toll it takes on the staff to run on a shoestring budget. OPS is the dumping ground for ill behaved students and refugees & immigrants for the city. This should be a city problem not a school district. OPS is run by the parents that complain, and should take a stance that school is for learning & not baby sitting.
- A friendly smile and personality. The ability talk talk to anyone, no matter what hierarchy that employee ranks. 2) Must love children and truly care about their future. 3) Someone who can "think outside the box". 4) Wants collaboration among his/her employees. 5) Someone who can look a the "whole picture"/future. 6) Someone whom is TRANSPARENT to his/her employees. Must find that communicating with co-workers is extremely important. 7) The desire for equality and fairness among his/her employees.
- Great interpersonal skills
- Provide open and honest communication with staff and community. It was awesome to have a superintendent so visible and willing to approach staff.
- Have a very clear understanding that the district is very, very large and he/she needs to support the teachers with student behavior issues, make parents accountable for their children, and have a successful plan for our children to graduate from high school.
- Understanding diversity, meeting the needs of all students, providing safety in the schools for children and staff alike and making sure that all, including administrators and teachers, have a trauma based approach/ understanding in the schools.
- I would like to see that the superintendent makes their number one priority as insuring that each and every student is given the time, tools, support and encouragement to be successful. The skills needed to accomplish that? Be proactive by having the leadership and communication skills to address problems with strategies that are best practice. Keep OPS teachers, nurses, etc informed on issues concerning students and reach out to them for their opinions on those issues.
- They should be able to articulate an educational vision that encompasses the entire district and all 52000+ students. They should be able to develop an educational plan that ensures that students are ready for the challenges that the working world will bring and be able to use the skills they have learned in a wide variety of careers.
- approachable, friendly, family oriented

Community Members

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Creating equitable environments for students outside of the white cis het norm.
- Staff does not feel safe and supported by administration. District expectations of staff requires a great deal of time and materials that the district does not provide.
- The rampant institutional racism that permeates Omaha and an awareness that students suffer daily in this city because of it . They should be aware of the inexperience of the present department heads in cultural proficiency . An awareness of the school board members' dysfunction , and know how to communicate across the city with all of the citizens -- rich and poor and all in between .
- The return to expense ratio for this system is deplorable and we simply have to focus on getting better student outcomes and returns on investment for taxpayers across all communities.
- Lack of diversity within the staff. Meaning hiring a more diverse staff.
- Working with a BOE that is very strong willed. Needing to keep OPS moving forward. Mr. Evans made great strides in the short time he was here and OPS needs to continue in that way. The new superintendent will need to get the second bond issue passed so facilities can continue to be updated and not forgotten.
- Diversity - Too many people at the TAC building, not enough focus on helping the teachers in the classroom - Equal pay for teachers.
- The grading system -- especially in the high school. Students need to be held accountable and EARN their grades not have them given to them.
- OPS has very serious discipline problems in many schools. The poverty achievement gap must be further narrowed. We have many persistently needs improvement schools.
- Pre all school act 16. With all school assessment will be eve. Lower. Significant wasting of student opportunity exists. District blame game and society refuses to hold parent/s with student accountable to that limited resource opportunity.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Compassion, an absence of grandeur or ego, a unique and intense understanding of intersectionality and how social issues play into the quality of life of OPS students.
- Be able to communicate his/her vision for the school district and inspire staff, students, and community to work toward that vision.
- They will have to be a local OPS guru with knowledge of urban school needs. They will have to reach across this city and build empathy for all students and empower parents to demand and expect the best from all teachers and administrators .
- It would help if they have done quality teaching in a multicultural environment.
- Bilingual and very diverse background.

- I would like to see someone more engaged with the community, students, teachers and administrators. I feel Mr. Evans has spent a lot of time in his office and wasn't seen out in the schools, at school/district events nor engaged with the leadership at TAC.
- Keep politics out of it - focus on educating YOUNG PEOPLE and being fair and helpful to the teachers! Attend events for all students, to show the superintendent is interested in them. Be sure students are prepared for a competitive world and they aren't just "passed" through the system. Increase teacher pay where diversity is higher, challenges are greater -- many teachers opt for West Omaha where pay is higher and the job is easier. General new direction . Current superintendent has not been visible, as Dr. Mackiel was. (Would he like to come back!?)
- Great communicator, positive, willing to learn the history of OPS, observe and make changes where necessary and have all the necessary skills to lead the Urban School District of Omaha.
- Innovative. Great communicator, including in listening. Must be able to restore excellent discipline in all schools. Must be able to help close achievement gaps. Must not view the school board as a rubber stamp. Must be a compromiser and bring people together, not a rigid ideologue.
- must be a parent who's own experience shows that its a partnership to raise successful children. Expecting too much from either side makes stress for all.

Parents

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- There is a communication gap between TAC and families. Many parents have no idea how to advocate for their students. TAC administration must meet families in their neighborhood schools on a regular basis not just for the superintendent search or the strategic plan.
- Bullys the fear of correcting students because of flashing back from disrespectful students and their parents is definitely out of hand
- The behavior issues are not taken seriously - the superintendents lack of willingness to get to know our city and our students and the NUANCES across the city has resulted in policies that might work in one place but fail miserably to the point of causing more damage than they had to begin!
- The common challenges that exist in an urban school district. -unequal distribution of resources; working with diverse learners; lack of diversity in administration and classrooms; achievement gaps between minority and majority populations; overcrowded classrooms.
- Bullying open mind willing to here out the parents
- The violence in the schools. If a child(ren) need help. What kind of help and how do they need it.
- Teachers and faculty not listening to concerns of parents. It starts a vicious cycle leading to less parent participation.
- The lack of trust for the office and the OPS School Board. Many feel money is wasted on "created jobs" at TAC and that teachers are not respected, utilized fully, or valued.
- Our screwed up busing situation/company, the chaos in the middle schools regarding 6th graders, teachers being bullied and cussed out by students, better communication in a more timely manner from the district.
- Communication gaps- especially in busing and student costs. Spending too much on busing, too much on ineffective teachers and staff, too much on "support" staff at TAC center.
- A negative narrative exists within the business community that does not reflect the true narrative coming out of OPS 24-7-365.
- inner city needs are diverse, understand that not every child is the same nor comes from the same background.
- That the OPS school districts need help, and the teachers need help!! That kicking kids out of the classroom to go roam the halls and leave them out there the entire class IS UNACCEPTABLE
- I would like to see a higher focus on overall well-being of students, ie more emphasis on the PHYSICAL, social, and emotional well-being of students.
- Over croweded schools, busing issues, bullying.

- OPS needs a fully staffed and funded communications staff with a clear strategy. As parents, my spouse and I are continually disappointed with the lack of coordination in district and school communications. The district website needs a complete overhaul - it is sprawling, outdated, and difficult to navigate.
- New human development curriculum and students that may not want to be involved in that
- Safety issues at middle and high schools
- The diversity of the district, the importance of being a community partner and a willingness to work with local city leaders and the philanthropic community.
- Parent engagement. Implement more technology. Correct facility maintenance issues.
- The gap between the different schools with regard to money, staff, students' and facilities. Some are great some not so much. Many students are raised by family members or are in foster care or have been in and out of foster care, and are. Many parents are and or have been incarcerated. In addition, there are immigrants and refugees. Each set of "students" are here under very different circumstances, thus have a variety of different "services" that they are eligible to receive. Which of course means that there are different pockets of money that need to be managed and distributed. These folks also come speaking a plethora of languages that the teaching staff is required to accommodate; Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Karen, Nuer, Kurdish, Ukrainian, Russian, Burmese and Farsi to name a few. Nebraska has refugees from over 16 countries and that number is growing almost daily as secondary immigration is becoming a huge burden to Nebraska. Meaning refugees that were settled in one state moving to Nebraska based on our lower cost of living and tax basis.
- It's been my experience that OPS, as well as public schools in general, have left boys behind and boys are treated significantly worse by teachers and staff. There are far fewer boy focused groups but a plethora of girl exclusive groups, and the teaching styles already favor girls. When going to school events, girls are primarily focused on and awarded. When walking the halls, boys are treated with much less patience and much more harshly. Kids in general need more hands on, unstructured time and the one size fits all method of teaching is detrimental to those that do not happen to learn well by sitting and regurgitating information given to them.
- Not only is closing the achievement gap important, but offering some sort of collaboration with parents at home to bridge what students are learning at school with what they may be lacking at home. Our students are amazing and some need more guidance and more life skills than others. As a parent and employee, I believe there should be more supports for home, as well as standard life skills being taught in every day situations.
- Decision making needs and district planning needs to include staff from the schools, parents, and community members. Too many decisions are made from higher level administrators without input from teachers and staff that work directly with our children. Lengthening the school day with complete disregard to opinions of families and teachers (who had days lengthened without additional pay), was an unsupportive and unethical move.
- the need for the new high schools and capital improvements

- OPS does not practice full inclusion for special education students. Other districts in the metro area, like Papillion LaVista, do practice inclusion for special education students.
- Not all schools are equally resourced. Any child who harms a staff member should be expelled out of OPS. Just because there's a "no bullying " sign doesn't mean it's not really happening. My teens have both had teachers who don't except conservative sides.... NEVER! They've sold their souls just to write leftist papers because its the only way to get an A. Ive had teachers lie to me that my child being accepted
- That it takes hard work and dedication to the students and staff members to be able to depend on a well rounded individual.
- There is still a feeling by some in the community that Omaha Public Schools are second rate. I don't think this is the case, but we need to work on changing the perception. We need to celebrate the successes in our schools.
- High number of students with special needs. Diversity of OPS Reluctance of State to be more helpful financially
- There are a lot of staff who have not had background checks since they were hired decades ago. Too many students in the high schools not enough training for the types of students being taught
- 2nd bond issue
- A major issues is controversty surrounding the Human Growth & Development / Sex Ed curriculum. It goes against the beliefs and teachings of many of the Christian households that are part of OPS, and frankly exposes the kids to too much information or inappropriate teachings for their ages.
- Sometimes communication is lacking. It is a big job so need a solid plan.
- The inability of teachers to do their job effectively due to the excessive amount of testing. The unnecessary stress placed on our children and teachers due to the extended day and all the testing. We are in essence asking our children to give up their childhood in order to meet the standards set by people who have not been in the classroom for decades if ever.
- I love OPS and want to see it thrive and be the best district in the region. Omaha is now experiencing the similar situations described by Jonathan Kozol in his book Savage Inequalities. I believe it to be in the best interest of the greater Omaha area and beyond if this next superintendent is not only knowledgeable of this issue but has a clear plan to rectify the issue.
- The fast moving technology and making sure Omaha Public Schools are ready to embrace public officials who support a WiFi community and the future of Omaha for the next generation. NOT playing is safe but smart, making sure OPS is a leader in the school district and excels beyond Millard, Papio and Westside. Letting individual schools choose their programs.
- Recent positive accomplishment with the updated HGD curriculum. SBHC's and their role in keeping kids in school. Great academic achievements of both kids and teachers within OPS.

- Students donning yoga sketch rescuers seriously and behaviors in classrooms and fighting in hallways is at an all time high.
- We need to stop being the school district that people avoid if at all possible. A major selling point for housing is being outside of OPS. In addition to focusing on the urban areas, we need to also realize that we're chasing away families in West Omaha.
- The challenges of an urban school district
- The superintendent needs to be aware of the resources available to the district and use them wisely. It is also very frustrating that so many of our children's learning opportunities are put on hold to either direct time and effort to ensure an individual child is learning or so the teachers and staff can instruct to ensure the students are passing the state test.
- The biggest issues I see are relating to discipline. Children with severe and sometimes even violent discipline issues are given many chances without being removed from the school. This provides a huge disruption to the teachers and my children's learning environment.
- Many schools are not operating in a manner where students are able to focus on learning. Some students and their behavior prevent teachers from engaging the rest of the class in meaningful discussions, presentations and class work.
- Helicopter parents and special interest groups have too much influence on policy, curriculum, and classroom environment. We need to refocus the decisions to the teachers - the trained professionals. Most of a teacher's interaction with administration and parents is negative in nature - when there's a problem. We need to find ways to implement the basic retention strategies found in other employers to show teachers that they are appreciated and that their work is important. Then we keep those who are highly skilled which will have an immeasurable positive affect on the students. Building administration is there for the teachers - not the parents.
- Maybe this is decided at each school, rather than at the district level, but why do schools with lower testing scores lose funding? Low scores should not equal the removal of para's, and other teaching professionals. Maybe remove extra-curricular activities, but more money should be allowed for educational assistance. Additional teachers, para's, etc. allow for smaller groups to help those students that are struggling. Removing the extra teachers will not help improve scores. Schools with higher scores do deserve to be rewarded though.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- The new superintendent must do more community outreach and engage all stakeholders. There is a generation of young parents with children in the secondary setting struggling to support school staff. These are parents who became parents while they were attending OPS secondary schoolsources and were part of the high dropout rates of the late 90s, early 2000s. Why hasn't anyone from TAC put that data together?

- Effective classroom teacher prior to moving into administrative role. Willingness to get to know the city and the neighborhood qualities of the city and recognize that differences across the city will affect the policies that are put in place.
- The new superintendent needs to be genuinely relatable to the issues and challenges facing the OPS demographic of students. Quantifiable experience in an urban school district. He/She needs to be able to engage the community and develop innovative solutions to transform and engage parents, staff, and students. Open to alternative forms of learning (ie: Focus School) Able to effectively delegate, and provide greater transparency. Provide proper support and training to prepare teachers for diverse classroom and its challenges.
- Being honest to follow through on what happened in the school system
- Do you have good people skills. How can you handle situations with a teacher and student. Can you communicate with the parents and the community.
- Listening and budgeting The ability to not get caught up in politics and drama
- Ability to communicate and work with OEA and the support staff union. Be able to "clean house" at TAC and put more money back into the schools instead of spending it on salaries of unnecessary TAC jobs.
- Understanding, open mind, diligence, persistence, engagement with families and students, empathy, listen to parents more (after all we are the ones actually experiencing the end results from changes and decisions made first hand. Parents and teachers should be the first ones to share their experiences and REALLY be listened to), and be proactive
- Honesty with community regarding mistakes made and finances/spending.
- Ability to be brutally honest. Ability to deal with a Board of Education that absolutely has no real clue about their role. Ability to deal with the millennials.
- understand of cultures and how diversity impacts a child and their ability to thrive in the school. reach the child by speaking their language.
- They need to be diverse and have the PASSION to make OPS great, they need to have a plan. Millard schools and Westside school districts are technology ready, where OPS is struggling in everything. My son is a Junior in HS and can barely read.....if that tells you anything.
- Ability to motivate administrators and teachers toward a shared vision.
- Answers above
- Acknowledgement and understanding of the genesis of the achievement gap -- historical and intergenerational trauma, poverty, and government policies that have perpetuated the achievement gap.
- Good listener and solution finder; ability to accept feedback from teachers and students and use it to make changes that serve the greater good; solicit input from parents or create focus groups to get more specific feedback
- The ability to be collaborative – yet make tough decisions to change the status quo. And be able to communicate those decisions.

- Leadership, diversity and inclusion Positive implementation of resources to all schools and a good expression of decisions being made and how it will impact each student body as a whole.
- Patience and Persistence. I believe that there are many old timers in the district that are tremendous cogs in the school system. Nebraska is no longer a white middle-class state who bleeds husker red. Nebraska is quickly becoming one of the more racially, culturally, religiously diverse Plains states. As such, I truly believe the new Superintendent of the Omaha Schools needs to be NOT FROM HERE. One who has no family members who work in the district. One who speaks at least one different language and perhaps is neither Christian or Catholic but perhaps Buddhist, or Hindu. I say this truly based upon the fact that the Omaha Public School system is quickly becoming a melting pot of so many different people. What would it harm if the new superintendent was much more like the students he or she would serve. I have spent a lot of time in Wilson Focus and Lewis and Clark, Georgia Wheeler in Millard, Norris Elementary in Millard and Beadle Middle. What I have noticed are white Christians leading out kids. What would be great is to see someone who is, as I stated more like what this state is becoming DIVERSE. P. S. I am a white 50 year old female who sports green hair with a 12 year old son at Lewis and Clark.
- A willingness to oppose Politically Correct ideologies and go against the grain that Washington DC decrees must be followed. An ability to hold teachers responsible and encourage teachers to try new methods and be more patient with boys.
- The ability to create and collaborate on supports for home and bridge what students learn at school.
- An ability to support your teaching staff with high-quality professional development, low class size, flexible schedules, and better compensation.
- Ability to get people to come together and motivated to achieve the goals of the district and help it grow.
- Timely responses to parent concerns.
- Take no prisoners!! Please run a fair, tight ship!
- Being well rounded is being able to handle every situation that comes your way and having a diversified mind set to deal with all avenues of their responsibilities to the students and staff members.
- Prior success on implementing best academic principles
- Community consensus builder Good administrator who can motive staff and students Leader
- Building trust with all people is critical!!!! The new superintendent must come in with prior successes and a strong history of collaboration and communication skills. I'd like to see someone who encourages families to be involved and actually gets involved in the neighborhoods where the students live.
- Have a keen knowledge of the District - Have the right mindset for the community at large and not in it for self - Support for students staff and community

- The next superintendent needs to be someone with some "staying power" - someone who is committed for a good length of time to the job and will not put the district in a position of having to search for a replacement in a few years again.
- Great communication skills along with excellent interpersonal and public relation skills.
- They need to have leadership skills that are all inclusive. They need to be open and honest with all staff, parents and the media. They need to understand and have experience working in a diverse school district and know that not all schools in OPS are created equal. The superintendent should be willing to get "into the trenches" to see what our teachers and students are up against. They need to be willing to listen to the concerns and ideas the teachers and parents have on improving our educational system.
- Great listener, heartfelt leader, collaborative, wide reach of resources and experience, in depth knowledge of challenges facing today's youth
- Collaboration, independent decision making, familiarity with technology, focus on education/ STEM, and arts/music.
- The superintendent needs to make our children's safety a priority. We are focused on protecting our children from outsiders coming in during the school day. But there are des when my children come home and all they talk about is all of the fights they witnessed.
- We need to get back to the basics - academics. If the students aren't learning then everything else shouldn't matter. We can't just dumb down the standards, we should expect nothing less that 100% pass rate on the state tests.
- Experience in an Urban school district, success with student achievement.
- I think the new superintendent needs to be able to ensure the district is doing the best to teach each and every student. The new superintendent needs to be diverse enough in interpersonal skills that he or she can direct the districts personnel to educate children in accordance with state requirements without teaching to a test.
- I believe the new superintendent should have the skills necessary to try to improve the reputation of the OPS district. With this would require the ability to make changes relating to the current environment in many of the schools which, as I mentioned in the previous question, has to do with promoting a safe and undistracted learning environment for all students and teachers. Also, this person should not only listen to the board but also listen closely to the feedback of the teachers working in the district and listen to and act on their feedback.
- The new superintendent should be able to set goals and boundaries for students, expectations for parents and support the classroom teachers so that they can take back their classroom and create an effective learning environment.
- Empathy, humility, a passion for learning, respect for all staff, collaborative approach to parents and the community, and a heart full of love.

Students

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Cut a few day that there is no school

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Limited day of no school so they can get out early in may for summer break

Teachers

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Behavior of students
- Many of the schools lack the support, resources, leadership, and technology to help their students be successful. Many schools are facing discipline issues, students are violent with staff and students which disrupt the environment for all students, this is not only happening in the high schools, but the middle schools and elementary schools too. There also needs to be a review of leadership skills at each school, many schools are struggling because of the leader they have in charge not because of educators that are trying their best daily.
- We need more technology in the classrooms, move to a 1 to 1 environment. We need more paras in the classrooms to support students.
- School Board that is divided. Teachers and families want to be part of plans that effect their students. There are great staff members who can best meet the needs of the students
- The incoming superintendent needs to know that our district is filled with incredible educators who have developed skills to meet incredible challenges. He/she needs to look in-depth at the unequal staffing allocations for schools with high need but lower student numbers (population) as there are elementary schools being led by only a principal and a second part-time administrator. On some days, such building she have NO administrators present due to meetings/absences--it is unfair to our schools and to our administrators who are being stretched thin in these circumstances. The incoming superintendent must also know that we have/are putting in place effective practices that are leading to success. Now is NOT the time to do a 180--he/she would instantly lose the buy in of many teachers who have endured too much change too fast. Let's continue to spread the good news about OPS! Let's address the issues within our district directly and specifically with those who are a part of such issues. Let's spread#OPSProud!
- The importance of teacher input in curriculum, behavior management, school times, and delivering instruction. Positions at TAC should work to support and lessen the workload of teachers, not provide more paperwork and less time to complete it. Having TAC positions moved into schools would likely improve this. The amount of curriculum expected to be taught in a school year is also very unrealistic, especially with testing. Look at the amount of curriculum for social studies and science expected in 4 - 6th grades with only 45 minutes devoted to this each day for both subjects.
- Views are divided and therefore poorly affects the productivity of our district
- Teacher burn out, there are things we are expected to do that don't make us better teachers. And all the new curriculum that is thrown at us with little training. We don't have enough work days to really do our jobs effectively. Apparently there isn't enough trust from TAC towards the principal's because TAC feels like they have to micromanage them.
- Our concern as teachers has been not allowing the teachers concerns and needs to be addressed. We as teachers have been ignored when we express concerns about discipline, buildings that are environmentally unhealthy, due to roof leaks, asbestos, poor air quality,

and out dated classrooms. The class sizes are too large, we have too much paperwork, and we need several alternative schools to work with our students who are continually disruptive in the classroom. We as teachers are overworked and underpaid. We need a superintendent who understands and supports our diverse cultural population and embraces our cultural community.

- OEA is looking out for what's best for our students, and teachers. Work with them, not against.
- Not all administrators are culturally competent. Many need diversity training to get out of their white, middle class bubbles.
- The teachers lack adequate support in many classrooms. More qualified teachers are needed in order to meet the needs of our students, especially in low income areas.
- You need to diversify your departments over at TAC... for example... look at the ESL department... all run by middle class white women with elementary backgrounds who mean well, but treat middle and high students and teachers like they are in elementary. They lack the language to stick up for themselves--form of racial inequality--racism! Why isn't the ESL department representative of cultures and promoting former ESL students to work in this department and not just as translators, but administrators? This isn't the only department. Look at the GATE Facilitators. Nearly all are, again, middle class white women who want to know how to motivate minorities. How about have some examples in the ones who teach them?! I can look in my school although we service a high population of minorities, our team leaders are mainly all white. We do employ a higher number of minorities, but very few are given leadership roles I understand that Omaha is not a huge hub of diversity, but it does start off serving many. We are driving them away. How do we help with achieving the gap... start by employing people the students can relate to. Start with the diversity gap.
- Our behavioral problems across the district and grade levels, And the board's tenuous relationship with the union.
- There has been a history of poor communication
- Communication is a huge issue. Too many things are being done behind closed doors. Too often teachers find out about things that affect their work environment by reading it in the paper.
- Not every school is treated equally. We need to clean house up at TAC as well as with some administrators and stop letting some get away with things because they know people.
- The District has a discipline problem that is not being addressed. Their current method is weak!
- growing social/emotional/behavioral needs of students across all grade levels district-wide, need to provide more paraprofessional support in schools rather than administrative positions at TAC, discord amongst board members and OEA due to lack of transparency, busing needs
- Technology needs to be addressed along with student safety. Sure our doors lock and people have to be buzzed in but 99% of the time they just push the button and let the person in without knowing who they are. I don't feel safe as a teacher.

- The superintendent lacks effective communication, transparency, trust, and collaboration with the teachers in this district. Teachers are disheartened and feel unheard and frustrated. We do not feel valued.
- *climate of disrespect towards teachers *lack of transparency * lack of using expertise of teachers and staff *lack of understanding of Federal Regulations for Special Education and other special populations (ESL, Migrant Workers, etc) and enforcement of these regulations within the district *high level of mental health issues among students and need for services within schools
- Transparency with the district staff is a must. Our primary source of information as been the local news and this is not acceptable.
- There is a lack of trust between teachers and the District administration / school board.
- The TAC Building is counterproductive and needs a strong leader to keep its' employees on task and accountable for their actions. Student GPA's do not reflect ACT scores, the GPA is high but ACT scores are low.
- Teachers' concerns over classroom disruptions and the increasing number of social and emotional difficulties that impact student learning and create unsafe learning environments.
- Over staffing on the upper level... we need more teachers and less admin and TAC employees. Poor managements of money... more teachers, less behind the scenes.
- There is a lack of professional collaboration between classroom teachers and administration. Teachers often feel marginalized and/or ignored when building or district officials are trying to address issues.
- The discipline problems in the schools today are not being addressed appropriately and with consequences.
- When our new superintendent takes office, he/she needs to be aware there are administrators who have less than 6 years of experience in a classroom, yet are hired for whatever reason to manage entire school buildings. Right off the bat, this creates tension between educators and their administrators. We need principals and assistant principals who have paid their dues and have at least ten years of classroom teaching under their belts. It should NEVER be about "who you know" but about who can BEST do this job in a fair and consistent manner. Who can manage a large staff of educators yet maintain their respect over time? Who can build positive, lasting relationships with families and communities in their neighborhood schools? In addition, if an administrator is doing his/her job magnificently at one school, why are they frequently being moved to other schools? The opposite also occurs: When an administrator is doing a TERRIBLE job and everyone knows it, he/she is ALSO just moved around to make an entirely different staff miserable. These issues need to be corrected, or we will continue to have teachers who no longer care about their positions OR their students. They'll continue to do the bare minimum just to get by because NO ONE flourishes in an environment where they feel less than the super-heroes they were meant to be. Administrators with next to no experience in a classroom have NO business telling veteran professionals how to ACT, how to FEEL, how to SPEAK, and most of all - how to TEACH.

- Student behavior in decline. Students who want to learn unable and disappointed by other student behaviors that are interfering with the learning process. Please find someone who speaks for these kids.
- That we have a Board that is anti-teachers, no experience as educators, administrators in the district that have not taught in the classroom for years, students that feel they can run the school because the impression is that schools can no longer hold students accountable for their behavior and the only thing that matters is what the media publicizes.
- The many diverse needs of our students across the district
- OPS is a large as it is diverse, including high achieving students, lower ability learners, ELL students, schools that are 99 or 100% free/reduced lunch, and students that are extremely wealthy.
- The grading policy needs to be looked at. Discipline is a concern.
- That our grading policy inflates grades and allows kids to be complacent with deadlines. That buildings do not address discipline issues as they are afraid of what having consequences would like for statistics and comparisons between other districts.
- Teachers need to be heard and respected as the professionals and the EXPERTS in the field.
- Lack of para support in the lowest achieving schools. More and more work/paperwork/expectations being added to teacher responsibilities w/out the time to accomplish it all. The unfair expectation that teachers will get the work they need to do done on weekends and evenings. Teacher voices not being listened to when it comes to the issues that matter. The fact that the district still practices exclusiveness when it comes to special needs kids. The district continues to segregate that population into their own classrooms when all the research states that it is more beneficial for both the special needs students and the typical students for the kids with special needs to be FULLY included. ACP classrooms go against all that research. Lack of parental support/involvement.
- That student behavior needs to be address
- The board has been doing things without involving the staff of the district, example lengthening the school day
- Discipline problems are a growing concern that is not being effectively addressed. These are adversely affecting ALL student achievement in the classroom. We are continually losing our best and brightest to other districts and the parochial school system because parents want their children to be able to learn without continuous interruptions by students who are not ready to learn, Many of these problems - and their root causes - need to be addressed earlier and parents, students, and teachers must be held accountable for ensuring that all classrooms remain places of learning and not just a place to hold students until the period ends. Transporting students all over the metro is time-consuming and judging by the latest audit definitely not cost effective. We need to focus on building up our neighborhoods by investing in ensuring that EVERY SINGLE elementary school provides a high quality education. Parents shouldn't have to send their child miles across the city to access this. Perhaps we would strengthen our neighborhoods if we focused on improving our schools and the discipline problems that

result in teachers unable to effectively teach and manage a classroom. The side benefit would be a budget that is not consumed by transportation costs that are over twice the national average.

- Staff are very concerned that discipline has been placed on the back burner at the expense of learning and staff safety. In our effort to combat excessive numbers of racially diverse students and students on IEP/504 being suspended at a higher rate than their peers, we have gone to an extreme where people are afraid to discipline. I am afraid for my peers in buildings where this is a massive concern and afraid for what this means for my own career moving forward.
- The media in Omaha is very critical of OPS.
- Teachers are being overworked with unrealistic expectations for delivering lessons within the time frame of the day. I'm speaking specifically about LLI, an AMAZING program. Reading Specialists need to be brought in to help with those gaps.
- Teachers should be given opportunities to provide real input on district decision-making with regard to curriculum, grading, schedules, and student behavior. By real input I mean not just surveys with pre-determined question parameters, but opportunities to share successes and challenges in person and in writing. Teachers are incredibly stressed with regard to workload expectations and available contract time to complete said expectations. Please select a superintendent who is committed to honoring teachers' time and expertise. I hope our new superintendent will be committed to sustainable practices and environmental education. What goes on in our school cafeterias is shameful. There is an unbelievable amount of wasted food and students use disposable trays and cutlery every day. We are teaching our students to be careless and wasteful, instead of mindful about their consumption habits. In the past, school cafeterias used reusable silverware and trays, and students were responsible for washing them. There was much less waste and much more opportunity for learning responsibility. The new superintendent should be committed to "greener" facilities and practices as well as the inclusion of more science and environmental education in our district's curriculum at all levels. They should be committed to teaching what used to be called "home economics" in middle and high schools...nutrition, cooking, budgeting, child development, and community service should be included in every secondary student's learning plan. These should not be considered remedial/vocational skills for students unlikely to attend college - they should be life skills that every student should have the opportunity to learn.
- Diversity is not apparent in all schools. Those schools that provide education in high poverty areas have special needs to help address the achievement gap. The demands put on a teacher far surpass a teacher's ability to adequately plan, use data, and best practices in the classroom. The detailed plans that are 'required' take hours and hours and hours of a teacher's personal time. Teachers need more plan time in order to prepare excellent lessons. Social workers are essential in high poverty areas to meet various needs not present in a middle class area.
- Diversity. Keep high expectations of all: teachers, administrators, community, students
- **TEACHER RETENTION!** Taking care of teachers so talented educators stop leaving our district.

- The diversity of our district and the ability to support those diversities. I would like to see a person of color placed in this position.
- They need to work with the OEA. We do not need a charter school for alternative program for middle schools. We need to have Wilson, as it was meant be, an alternative for middle school students that are not being successful in regular middle school.
- The teachers are very frustrated by the lack of support from the school board and superintendent with discipline issues and sweeping these problems under the carpet. It's about time people at TAC listen to the teachers!!! Ask them their ideas. Students are not meeting higher standards. The system has lowered the standards by passing students who are not qualified. School boards and the powers that be are so concerned about numbers, the real needs are not being met. The problem is more social workers, home visits, and psychologists are needed. Figure out how PARENTS need to be held accountable for their students' behavior, not the teachers and staff. Disruptive classrooms are hard to deal with. Students think they're untouchable because decisions have been made not to hold them accountable for their actions.
- Inequity and inconsistency between buildings. All OPS schools should provide a rigorous comprehensive education, not just those that have parents with loud voices. Each student should be able to attend the school in their home attendance area and parents should be able to feel comfortable knowing this will not compromise the breadth of opportunities available to their students.
- Overall teacher staff morale is currently low; frustration over perceived lack of support from district level as well as broken lines of communication (lack of input opportunity).
2. Substitute teacher shortage (contributes to low morale as teachers have to continually cover for unfilled sub positions. 3. Lack of sufficient positive and effective alternative school settings for students who are unsuccessful in the traditional school setting (again, contributing to low staff morale as schools forced to simply move students with severe behavior concerns from one building to the next). 4. Current grading policy leads to grade inflation, inability for teachers to give students who do no to very little work a failing grade. 5. Policies that encourage social promotion over readiness.
- Great richness in the OPS community!
- The social-emotional needs of students as well as the academic needs
- Teacher morale is low due to heavy handed approach by school board and TAC administration. Student discipline is a problem due to lack of alternative schools as well as effective tools to curb behavior (suspensions, expulsions, in school suspension - PAC rooms are a joke - kids WANT to go there)
- Violence in the classrooms, ways to support the teachers when students become violent, positive relations with staff and OEA, salaries for staff
- the size and how diverse it is inequality of available technology in schools
- Student behavior issues are not being addressed, and take educational time away from students without behavior issues.
- Many feel we have talent within our district and those here should be greatly considered for the job. Many in OPS community feel the consulting fees for so many positions and decisions are wasteful.

- Discipline and mental health concerns seem to be increasing.
- The top down approach does not work. Teachers are restricted to basils and pacing guides that are not accurate. Technology is lacking and to restricted. That things need to start with elementary and move up and not high school down.
- Classroom sizes need to be balanced. Some teachers have 170 students, while others have less than 100. There needs to be more options for students with chronic behavior problems. The safety of the students and staff are at risk. You can raise academic achievement until you can maintain order in a school or classroom. The number of students receiving busing is ridiculous. Students need to attend their neighborhood school and should not be bused unless they are over four miles. If a parent wants their child to attend a different school, then the parent can provide transportation.
- The teacher and paraprofessional are greatly needed to help the students succeed. Every teacher should have a para to help meet the needs of the students.
- We, as a district, are working so hard to close the achievement gap and make gains in student achievement. We are not near where we need to be, but are on a strong trajectory toward continuing success. We need to ensure we are providing opportunities to teachers, administrators and other district staff to continue to learn best practices and how to ensure they are being done in our schools.
- Poor custodial care within the buildings; an over abundance of "coaching" positions when the resources spent should be to hire professionals to work directly with youth; lack of training for para-professionals who have no knowledge and refuse to adhere to requests to support classroom needs; lack of administration responsibility to withhold accountability among youth regarding academic achievement and behavior concerns; financial equity among schools is prioritized;
- The classroom teacher is maxed out and feels overburdened. Student discipline needs to be addressed. Teachers need to feel they are supported by administrators on all levels.
- Please keep our technology integration progress moving forward! We are finally beginning to "catch up" to surrounding districts, and that progress should continue.
- Teachers opinions and voice has not been an importance when making key decisions. Teachers should be given the opportunity to have their voice heard since they are the ones in the classroom on a daily basis dealing with the parents and students and not someone who hasn't been in the classroom from 3-4 years.
- We need more support for students with behavioral problems - it takes far too long to get them the help they need; instead, they continue to impede the learning for those who are wanting to learn; we are doing a disservice to both the students with behavior concerns AND the remaining students. Teachers try to deal with the problem, but get little support from administration and it takes far too long to get the individuals the help they truly need.
- That we need alternative education STAT.
- There is a great deal of inequity among buildings. Too many positions at the TAC building. Smaller class sizes needed.

- Respect the teachers- they do know what they are doing. Use the skills in the district to solve problems don't just look for a consulting firm to correct problems--we have the resources in the district use them! Don't make big decisions that affect students, parents, teachers and administrators without input first--ie, add minutes to the school day!
- Lack of technology repair personnel
- Low teacher moral/lack of teacher voice on issues & decisions. "programs treated as "less than"
- We are a large district with very diverse needs. We have some of the wealthiest and poorest students in the city attending out district. We need a leader that is competent in meeting needs that arise with these lifestyles.
- There is a disconnect between staff and diverse students families that must be addressed. There are teachers in schools that have been in their school for years and are comfortable and disengaged and providing poor instruction to students who can't afford to have poor instruction.
- not micro manage the teachers
- I believe they should be aware of the fact OPS does not quite compete with other districts of the area. Though we have many different socio-economic standings and cultures to work with, it does not mean our students can not meet the highest standards.
- *The lack of parental involvement across SES levels. *We do not need to jump on every bandwagon that comes through town; scaffold what works; discard what does not work.
- The divide that exists between Title 1 schools and those that aren't, in regard to curriculum resources. Fair and equitable education and resources should be available to all schools - not just those with Title 1 funding. Teacher burn out and dissatisfaction is dangerously high. Something MUST be done about this to ensure that the district has the best, most qualified teachers in classrooms.
- The schools in this district a lot. The needs of each school changes. They should not be receiving the same things as another school with a very different situation. A new superintendent should understand this and be more aware of the specific needs when a school asks for them.
- Physical aggression of students and lack of supports at buildings to help students with mental health challenges.
- That the local media (Omaha World Herald, TV stations) are usually more than ready to compare (to surrounding, more affluent suburban districts) & announce (and sometimes sensationalize) OPS's "challenge" moments: low test scores, busing problems, or individual (if singular) cases of inappropriate or below-the-law situations. That there is yet on-going lack of monetary support for education/per pupil costs in the state of Nebraska (and the Learning Community is still not owning up to the poverty levels affecting OPS/Douglas County, that also affects student learning.) That there is an increasing culturally diverse student & family population in OPS: being inclusive and supporting these languages, ethnicities & cultures is only going to need increased attention and respect - not less, or "status quo." That technology is always playing catch-up in schools, so that many schools are seemingly behind, before ever getting caught up. That teacher/student ratios need to go down - not up (which indeed means smaller

classes, more staff, perhaps more school buildings.) That OPS staff are working longer hours for less pay, due to the present superintendent. That there needs to be after school programs (with adequate man-power & pay) for students, to equip them physically (as, more sports programs) and mentally (more clubs, technology support, career support) IF we wish to have healthier, mentally challenged and happier students. That we need more social services in each school: connections for counseling (for students & families), clinics - reasons for families TO CONNECT to and thereby support (!) their neighborhoods & schools, and teachers. That we need more language liaisons to help with all of the above. That more money is needed (from...?) - not doing more with less (each and every year.) That teachers need to be valued - so that they stay in a profession where the raises are not keeping up with cost of living/insurance costs, where we can't get subs if we need them, where teachers get housing subsidies (really?!) because the wages are so low.

- Situations that are divisive concerning TAC decisions and a sad willingness to discount the collective knowledge of all staff. Stakeholders that are not administrative can be heard.
- Many of our infrastructures are deteriorated. The bond addresses some of those issues but not all. Spending needs to be utilized to improve the educational environments for all students regardless of their zip codes. All schools should have the opportunities for technology integration not just a select few.
- Behavior issues in middle schools, the unnecessary virtual school, the lack of substitutes for paraprofessionals, how UNDERPAID paras are
- The superintendent should be aware of the effects of generational poverty on children. Many of the behavioral issues we experience are due to poverty's influence. This person should also be aware that an increase in suspensions/expulsions is not an indicator of poor teaching, but a reflection of the horrendous struggles so many of our students face. Teachers need to teach. They are not diagnosticians or doctors. To be successful a significant number of students need mental/behavioral intervention that we are not able to provide in the regular classroom. When addressing issues facing Omaha Public Schools, the superintendent needs to know that not everyone on the school board actually supports public education. There are those who want to start outsourcing the jobs to private companies. Companies that teach for private gain will not save the district money, but they will cost our students their futures.
- The social and emotional needs of students. Many students are carrying a lot of emotional pain with them into the classrooms every day. I would love a superintendent who focuses on an alternate disciplinary system (implementing meditation rooms).
- There is more stress placed on teachers than before. There needs to be better resources to help students who have behavioral and emotional problems.
- The lack or imbalance of educational, social, and environmental resources for North Omaha Middle Schools.
- lack of communication skills, telling teachers they were getting raises, and then letting us know via the news we are adding 25 minutes to our day. Discipline issues - wide spread across the district and they are getting worst as other students see what can be gotten away with.

- The achievement gap is big. Students and parents need to be held accountable. Class size is too big to meet the needs of our students.
- I think there is some mistrust between teachers and the central office-so someone who is willing to work to close the mistrust between both parties.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Ties to Omaha, an understanding of how poverty affects student achievement
- They should have an understanding of who the students are that the district is serving, from all over the metro. They should be a listener, they should be organized, they should be able to communicate and able to support and work with the ops staff throughout the district.
- Critical positivity and a desire to play more offense than defense. Tackle issues and problem, not attack those who bring them forth.
- Do not be a politician, be an educator who understands the needs of the teachers, students and parents.
- Educator. Communicator Leader who is not afraid to make changes and stand up to the consequences.
- Commitment to improvement district-wide. Interpersonal skills. Ability to think analytically and strategically. Willingness to become involved in a pro-public education conversation with the public.
- Education background Awareness & ability Ability to command production where here is a standstill
- Caring, understanding, sensitive, great communicator, and trust that we are doing the best we can!
- A superintendent who spends more time in our classrooms and buildings and less time in his office at TAC. Someone who listens, supports and follows through with our concerns as teachers and support staff. We need someone who will work with our teachers union and allows us to be at the table when decisions are made. A superintendent who sincerely wants to make our school district to become a positive place to work, a safe place to teach, and a district who can work with us on improving the classroom atmosphere.
- Personable, reliable, and have safety in mind. Certain times we were required to go to school in unsafe conditions
- We need someone who has experience in a diverse, urban environment, understands and supports ESL and dual language education, and understands and has strategies to help students achieve who are products of generational poverty.
- Know the job of the teacher. He/she should have been a teacher in a school for at least 10+years. Preferably in a low income or high needs school.
- It would be nice to see a minority superintendent really focus on the diversity gap to close the achievement gap. The new superintendent needs to continue to bring us into the 21st

century. Mr. Evans briefly brought us in with making us fix our technology infrastructure. We need to keep moving forward. We need someone who is innovative and unafraid to hurt the mentality "This is how we have always done it." and move us forward!

- They should have the children's best interest at heart, which, to me, means an emphasis on working with families and communities to educate the whole child, and a much lesser emphasis on testing and bureaucracy.
- To be able to keep communication open with teachers. Not rely on administrative staff and supervisors to get the true picture
- We want a collaborator who will treat teachers with respect and work with the teachers' union.
- Come with open eyes and understand the pressures already on teachers. Stop adding things to do for them and focus on equality across all of OPS to help all students achieve, not just those with better administrators that can handle money better or who know more people.
- The new superintendent should be knowledgeable about the students, teachers, and the city of Omaha. This person should be able to interact with all people. This person should have been a classroom teacher in the past for more than 5 years! This person should be able to help form a coherent educational plan for the district.
- -transparency in communicating with all staff, community, and board members - professional and respectful -competence in working with a diverse urban school district -empowering -of great moral character -a good listener -knowledge of/experienced at budgeting a large urban school district
- Be able to listen and not come in with a chip on their shoulders thinking they will demand everyone around.
- A willingness to collaborate with teachers, students, and parents. The superintendent must also trust his or her teachers as the experts and go to them before making decisions. The superintendent must build motivate the students and teachers in his or her district to do their very best without focusing solely on test scores.
- *Have experience with working in an Urban school district with high concentration of poverty and refugee/immigrant populations Effective skills in: collaboration, communication, providing and accepting feedback, utilizing expertise of veteran staff in district (10+ years of service), build partnerships within community (colleges in Omaha),
- Must have an understanding of the district's demographics and how to best meet student needs. Must value teachers, the job they do and seek input. Needs to embrace a variety of pathways to prepare students for their future, which may include training for technical vocations. Must be honest and transparent with the staff, parents and community.
- Open, honest with an understanding of what teaching and learning in a vibrant public school setting is all about
- The superintendent needs to be visible and active in the community and within the schools.

- High expectations regarding student achievement and behavior, especially in regards to student/family respect to teachers and staff.
- People skills... talk with the teachers. Willing to visit each building on a regular basis and talk with teachers... check on them, make sure all is going well for them in their building. Make changes that will affect students and teachers in positive ways. Develop a focus group of teachers and meet with them often for input... we are the front line and we have ideas worth listening to. Feed us Pizza... it would be cheaper than hiring a consultant for everything.
- Ability to develop collaborative relationships between teachers, administrators, and other staff. Ability to empower teachers and building leadership to work together to address building specific issues.
- Be a pro teacher superintendent and support the staff 100% in all negotiated items such as salary, benefits, work environment and work load. Decline any pay raises if the test scores go up and give credit where credit is due, with the teachers.
- Though I chose my top 5 above, I must say Mr. Evans did a GREAT job of communicating with his educators. His podcasts were a brilliant idea and he improved district communications via email by making sure it was simplified so we can pick and choose what topics we would like to know more about. He understands that we clearly do not have the time to read EVERYTHING about our district. That's been a quality I've appreciated most - COMMUNICATION AND MORE TRANSPARENCY. Thank you for allowing me to present my opinions. I work two jobs and am unable to make the gatherings at TAC and elsewhere. This was a GREAT way to try your best to gather as much input as you can and I appreciate your efforts! Best wishes on finding an AMAZING superintendent in 2017!
- appropriate, SUCCESSFUL, experience in a similar setting
- They need to not worry about pleasing the Board and listen to the teachers in the trenches every day. Otherwise, no one will be going into teaching as a profession anymore. OPS has the great white flight happening again just like when busing started in the 1970's. Why? Parents do not want their kids sitting in classes constantly disrupted by unruly students so they are sending them to suburban and private schools. It has been going on for over 15 years and TAC just ignores it. Now that the State has told our admin that if the child is a minority and has an IEP they cannot be disciplined, the climate of even our high achieving schools are chaos. No one wants to come to work anymore. No one feels supported. The absence rate reflects morale. The OEA is ignored. The majority of OPS employees either live outside of OPS or send their kids to private or suburban schools instead of an OPS school. That speaks VOLUMES! OPS classrooms are no longer good enough for OPS employees' children. No there is a worthwhile survey! Ask the right questions so you can RECOGNIZE AND FIX THE PROBLEM.
- Hard working Motivated Strong understanding of district history
- Versatility and adaptability.
- Background of working in a diverse environment. Supportive of staff.
- Budgeting, busing issues,

- The ability to know that their way might not be the best way- to listen to the ideas of those working in the trenches. A willingness to have open and honest communication with all staff, the first time we hear something about the district we work for and the things that impact us should not be on the evening news. The understanding that all schools in the district can not be treated equally- the schools are diverse and each school has different needs, just as our students are/do. The idea that in education one size does not fit all.
- Leadership with the ability to communicate his/ her vision
- Want to support teachers,
- This current superintendent and his predecessor have really kept a distance from the teachers in the classroom. They rarely stepped foot in a classroom or actually spent time candidly speaking with teachers to find out what were the concerns and success stories. I realize this is a large district, but if you only rely on the principals to give you the pulse of the district, then you need to be aware that those viewpoints may be slanted to only provide a false sense that everything is running smoothly.
- I hope you no longer hire a superintendent that doesn't follow through. Our last one claimed he would move forward with his plans to obtain a PhD and never did. How can we expect our students to value education when our leadership doesn't appear to find it necessary. Additionally, I would like our future superintendent to look at the integration of more "career ready" fields. We have amazing partnerships with the HD Zoo and UNMC, but I would love to see some more partnerships with companies that might have trade jobs (electricians/ carpentry/ etc). I would like to see a superintendent who is forward thinking in this area. Additionally, it is important for our superintendent to have skills which are relevant to working with students of diverse backgrounds in an urban district. Finally, I would like to see someone head our district who is invested in our district. One who perhaps has been with our district before or who doesn't jump from district to district. I am tired of feeling like OPS is a springboard other places.
- The ability to work with people at all levels-parents, administrators, teachers, students.
- One who has taught for a significant number of years and therefore is in touch with the realities of students and their teachers. One who will involve teachers in the decision making process rather than just administrators.
- I hope you will select a superintendent with demonstrated experience working in a racially and socioeconomically diverse, urban school district. I hope you will select a superintendent with significant teaching and administrative experience in urban settings, and a commitment to supporting teachers. Strong support for teachers (financially and logistically) leads to strong support for students. I hope you will choose a superintendent who will use our budget wisely. When outside contractors approach OPS with goods and services for sale, I would hope our new superintendent is able to distinguish between what is actually useful, necessary, and cost-effective for our district and not just what appears flashy or trendy in a sales pitch. If we can accomplish something using existing district resources (personnel, facilities, etc.), then we ought to utilize those resources instead of seeking outside "consultants" at great cost to taxpayers. Our new superintendent should be a strong supporter of the arts and student-centered learning. This person should be able to direct teachers toward more project-based, interdisciplinary learning experiences, and be aware of how our current curricular,

scheduling and time constraints are preventing us from providing those kinds of opportunities as often as we know students need them. The new superintendent should be able to clearly communicate with and influence lawmakers on the state level who deal with education policy. The new superintendent should be able to educate and advise such lawmakers, many of whom have never spent a day in a public school classroom, on the successes and challenges of our Omaha Public Schools, and be able to convince them to support us financially. The new superintendent should be able to communicate the value of public schools to the public and stand up for what we provide in our community. The new superintendent should be able to communicate effectively with, and seek input from, OEA, and be able to facilitate productive dialogue between her/himself, the teachers' union, and the school board. FYI, I am a teacher as well as a parent of students in Omaha Public Schools.

- The ability to have the courage of his/her convictions and be able to stand up even if his/her view is unpopular. (particularly with other superintendents/govt officials). Compassion, understanding, and support of the great effort teachers put in to help students succeed. A willingness to listen to complaints, determine the source of problems, even if the problem is with the district policies themselves, and the ability to come up with solutions that actually work (instead of just "looking good on paper.")
- Having experience as a high school teacher in a core subject.
- Ability to get along with all! To be honest and forthright. Not to speak out both sides of their mouths. Not to be a name caller when confronted with different views. Not to make the district top heavy, but support educators, administrators and the students!
- He needs to be humble and talk with teachers on at least a weekly basis, in order to keep in contact with what is really happening in the classroom. Otherwise, they will be out of touch with reality of teaching. They need to have teacher's back with parents that are always using the race card as a basis for their child misbehaving.
- He/She should make use of the best resources, the teachers!!!!!! Teachers and staff should be able to meet with the superintendent, express ideas and concerns without retribution, and be made to feel welcome.
- If this district is going to successfully educate students in the way parents and their children deserve, we must ensure that all buildings have high expectations and provide students with the ability to learn. It is less about what we teach them and more about their ability to learn if they are to be successful in the future. We hire late, we place teachers in buildings they do not want to be in, our pay is not that great, and our student body is more challenging than any other in the state of Nebraska. It is imperative that we stop losing fantastic educators to other districts and that we are able to hire those that show a true dedication helping students grow into successful adults. Help great educators find their niche here and the rest will fall into place.
- A willingness and commitment to do what is truly in the best interest of OPS stakeholders (students, teachers, parents +) over protecting public image/perception. 2. Experience with managing such a large and diverse district. 3. Above 5 skills. 4. Willingness to creatively and non-traditionally solve problems unique to OPS.
- Healthy relationships on all levels are key.

- Successful experience leading a diverse urban district. Great communication skills. A desire to develop relationships with ALL stakeholders - ALL teachers, students, parents.
- Diverse, honest, upcoming and new education trends
- Be able to listen to all voices, and make decisions based on input from all sides. Listen to the teachers, admin, and staff that have ideas on what should be done.
- Able to listen and hear those doing the work, such as teachers and administrators- not just add in a new teacher training that we need to spend more on. Able to work with the Board. Transparency not surprises. If paying for these surveys, look at them.
- Have a true interest in learning not test scores
- The ability to set academic and behavior standards that hold all students accountable. Also, the ability to stand up to parents and tell them no.
- He/she should be an advocate for children, teachers and not worry about the politics.
- Personable, possesses a growth-mindset and can accept feedback, and is willing to work with all stakeholders.
- This position should be held as an elected official selected by staff, community, students and parents.
- The new superintendent should be committed to this district, and have a genuine love for this district. I did not ever feel that after Mackiel retired.
- Understanding of how diverse our school district/ city is and how a "one size fits all" model will most likely not work for everyone.
- Communication and a strong backbone to accept criticism.
- He/she needs to communicate more with the teaching staff - not just a sugar-coated letter to the masses now and then, but real open communication with smaller groups of teachers, where staff are allowed to voice concerns in a setting where they can get straight answers without fear of retaliation. Teachers feel they are rarely given an opportunity to share ideas and concerns.
- Be honest and have integrity.....don't sign a contract he or she doesn't plan to uphold.
- A willing partner who listens to the teachers and staff who deliver the "product" of OPS: excellent education for all.
- Someone who truly care to take OPS to great heights. Someone who is dedicated and will stay more than 4 years! Someone who is trustworthy and will not try to blame others for his/her mistakes but take responsibility to correct them. Someone who will tell you the truth not misguided information or false information.
- Futuristic, Achiever, Learner
- Ability to engage with and support ALL school-level staff. Treat teachers like they are the educated informed employees they are.
- Transparent, humble, high level of integrity, grit
- Understanding of a diverse student population and a push for early literacy intervention.

- support the arts and think globally
- I think the new superintendent should be able to work with the community and advocate for the best of ALL students and create a place for students of all ages to go if they do not fit the mold of a traditional classroom so everyone can learn.
- To be as forthright as possible. To be truly engaged for student success; not for her or his career growth
- I would love to see a superintendent who is out in the buildings meeting students, teachers and other building staff. While principals provide feedback to the district, sometimes a teacher's/student's voice is lost. In my entire career, I've never met a superintendent while in my own building. Additionally, I'd love to know that the superintendent is highly qualified for the position and has researched solutions or even experienced similar struggles our district faces and was able to work through them resulting in an optimal solution for all.
- The ability to communicate well with the whole OPS community...students, parents, staff, business leaders, and others.
- He/She must be a positive person with the ability to build relationships with students, staff, parents and the community. This person also must have a clear vision of where the district needs to go.
- That she or he is vested in this community (not trying to only bring their past with them), that they don't agree with the school board more than 50% of the time, that they actually like kids & families & teachers/administrators. That they can communicate their approval of the good and positive things OPS does/staff does, as well as toot their own horns.
- Answered above Quality: Collaborative/community building-vision and tenor
- The next Superintendent needs to demonstrate a mutual respect and understanding of the varied socioeconomic statuses present within the Omaha Public School District. There needs to be a willingness to acknowledge the level of trauma many of our students have suffered and how teaching needs to change to support the emotional and educational development of our students. A successful candidate will be willing to listen, incorporate and develop multiple perspectives to address our troubles and invite all stakeholders-students, teachers, community members, and administration in creating ways to improve the educational process throughout the district. We are OPS and we all need to achieve.
- Someone who is upfront about their decisions and decision making. I was appalled to have found out about extended minutes added to the school day and to my JOB via the NEWS rather than from my superintendent himself.
- This superintendent will need a strong spine, a thick skin, an ability to deal with conflict and an astute awareness of agendas that aim to dismantle public education in the name of "student achievement" or "cost saving".
- The new superintended should have a socioeconomic and cultural knowledge of Omaha Public Schools, aware of the diverse community that OPS is made up of. A position like this needs someone with a strong drive, a willingness to communicate, and how to effectively make decisions to help the district.

- Open communication, hard working, ability to work well with others and supportive
- Building level representation and visibility in all classrooms by the superintendent.
- Open door policy, Communicator, Listens to their employees, Decision making which is best for the district, educators and community.
- Genuine, hard working, and knowledgeable of how hard teachers are working!
- They need to be willing to listen to teachers, parents, and the community about what is best for all students. They need to communicate effectively with teachers and ask for teacher feedback on all issues.

*Survey Monkey Results for Omaha Public Schools—Spanish Survey
January 2017*

*(NOTE—these responses have not been edited,
they are printed as entered by the stakeholders)*

1 Response

Administrators

No responses

Classified Staff

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

(no response)

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

Great communication skills coupled with excellent interpersonal and public relations skills. The ability to create an environment to motivate students and staff toward achievement.

(Grandes habilidades de comunicación junto con excelentes habilidades de relaciones interpersonales y públicas. La capacidad de crear un ambiente para motivar a los estudiantes y a el personal hacia el logro.)

Community Members

No responses

Parents

No responses

Students

No responses

Teachers

No responses