Stakeholder Input Report for

Roanoke City Public Schools
Roanoke, Virginia

submitted by

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February 2020
Roanoke City Public Schools
District Stakeholder Input from
Stakeholder Meetings on
February 10-11, 2020

Executive Summary

On February 10-11, 2020, consultants Dr. Ralph Ferrie and Dr. Barry Carroll conducted meetings with district stakeholders representing eleven different groups associated with the Roanoke City Public Schools. The consultants received personal input from more than 200 individuals in these groups. Input was gathered regarding the selection of a new superintendent for the Roanoke City Public Schools.

Outlined on this page and the following 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. A section of this report will consist of 172 English responses and 0 Spanish responses by individuals who completed the online survey and responded to the same four questions.

The last section of this report is a summary of the common themes from the paper surveys that were submitted. There were 268 English responses and 6 Spanish responses for a total of 274 paper responses from Students; Parents; Teachers; Classified Staff; and Community Members.
Common Themes

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?

- Fantastic town that is small enough to have good relationships
- Public transportation, trolley, Amtrak service and airport
- Landscape is beautiful; mountains; any outdoor activity you could want
- Affordable; Low cost of living
- Good housing market
- Great communities and great schools
- Business incubator location
- Vibrancy – rising tide business/financial climate
- A global reach business community
- An urban center within a mountainous landscape
- Parks/Green Space/Greenway
- Recreation and Outdoor sports, bike trails, hiking, etc.
- Traffic is manageable
- Diverse population – Diversity is a strength representing a variety of cultures and backgrounds
- Named a Seven time All American City by the National Civic League
- The first city in the country to be inducted into the National Civic League Hall of Fame
- Buddy System between school board members and the city council
- Great relationships/partnerships with colleges/universities
- Many age-related intergenerational activities
- Excellent restaurants – many local farm to table restaurants
- Less than 4 hour drive to Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Richmond, and Washington D.C. – to broaden your horizons.
- Downtown is thriving
- City and community partnerships
- Abundance of opportunities to engage in the arts – nationally competitive with visual and performing arts, venues, and diversity in performances.
- Rich in Health care systems – medical and nursing school
- Public Library System
- Untapped potential
- Great place to raise a family and to retire
- An appointed school board
- Appalachian Trail
- Recognized as an international mountain biking city
- Experience all the seasons
- Religions – many choices; something or everyone
- Fantastic Weather
- Local Zoo
- A community with unlimited untapped potential
- The STAR
2. What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?

- Students are prepared for what comes next (college, work, etc.)
- Dedicated Educators - Teachers and Administrators are great
- Trauma Informed School District
- Schools are funded well both locally and statewide
- The school district is the highest budget item in the city budget
- All RCPS are accredited
- Most graduates are highly successful after graduation
- School Board and city ensures the facilities are in good shape
- District provides safety and security measures for schools/students
- Strong academics: Governors School; Plato program; mindfulness program; Honors courses; dual enrollment; Credit Recovery; AP Classes; career technical education; STEM; Web courses (such as Coding); RoTec; Elementary Reading Programs, etc.
- Connection between schools and community, including faith based groups is strong (Community Partnerships)
- Two nice high school stadiums
- Great support from the city council
- Great communication between the city council and the school board
- Increase graduation rate /decreased dropout rate
- Appointed school board is collaborative and cooperative
- Excellent athletic departments in the schools
- Three meals per day are available for students through Food Service
- Community College partnerships – C-Cast (earn a degree at no cost)
- Homeless coordinator is very supportive
- Excellent fine arts programs (Music Education; Strings instruction; Orchestra; Theatre/Plays; Visual Arts, Festivals, etc.)
- Excellent core of parents who believe in the power of diversity
- Gifted and Talented Program / Strong special education program for severe/profound
- 55 Home languages in the district (Diversity)
- Summer Programs such as RCTS Plus
- Backpack programs with food for students on the weekend
- Rich technology (1-1 laptops; smart boards, etc.)
- After school activities, co-curricular activities, athletics, etc.
- Star Council – SGA’s from both schools working together
- Notification System for parents

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

- Addison Middle School is Struggling
- Pay is low in the district
- Equity
- Issues dealing with Poverty
- Recruitment and retention of teachers
- Schools do not get enough support for counselors, specialists, and other staff to meet the needs of students
• A culture of Intimidation - Teachers are afraid of retribution from the superintendent and central office staff for expressing concerns
• Segregated living spaces in the city, but race relations are good
• Teacher and administrator stability are not good
• Transportation (Buses and drivers)
• Communication is lacking
• Need change – teachers are not being heard
• More resources needed for the Homeless population
• Distrust with the current administration
• Lack of minority teachers and administrators
• Standards have been lowered to increase the graduation rate
• Students have an attitude of “they are going to pass me anyway.”
• Students are not being held accountable for their academics and conduct
• No English coordinator or Math Supervisor
• Lack of Coordination at the Central Office regarding Assessment and data analysis
• Stability – One high school had a new principal and 5 of 6 assistant principals are new; Addition middle school has had 6 principals in 18 months.
• Teachers don’t feel safe at school.
• The students are running the schools
• Behavioral Standards need to be determined and students held to those standards. “Students curse you out and get sent back to the classroom with a lollipop.”
• Teachers are leaving due to student conduct/behavior
• Administrators have been switched for political reasons
• Professional development is out of date and unusable
• Lack of diversity in teaching staff
• Lack of trust between the district and the community
• Drug issues in both high schools with no programs (Dare in elementary, but nothing in MS’s and HS’s).
• Security measures need to be heightened
• Too many fights in the schools
• Student computers are not functional – fire wall blocks too much information
• Too much emphasis on the State tests – SOL’s
• Rarely see the superintendent
• Low teacher and staff morale
• Teachers are being assaulted by students
• Superintendent has black bailed great administrators and teachers
• Gangs and bullying in the schools are a major issue
• Outsourced services are not working
• Teachers teaching out of their certified area

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Visionary
• Honest and Ethical
• Servant Leader
• Inspirational Leader
• Keeps children first
• Focus on Excellence
• Democratic, not Autocratic
• Commitment to district, city and community
• Accountable
• Accessible
• Consistent
• Native to the area
• Transparent
• Genuine
• Service Leader
• Supportive
• Accountable
• Good Listener
• Problem solver
• A Good Decision Maker
• Resilient
• Communicator
• Collaborative
• Team Builder
• Compassionate
• Community Oriented
• Reliable and open minded
• Success with Urban Education
• Political Acumen
• Risk Taker
• Ability to attract and build strong leaders
• Goal Oriented
• Does not micromanage, but delegates and holds people accountable
• Honest and straight forward with the school board
• Supportive
• Understands the Homeless population
• Trauma Informed
• Thick Skin
• Passionate
• Data Driven
• Transparent
• Supportive of PTA/PTO
• A champion for students
• Works well with the media
• Productive
• Not afraid to admit mistakes
• Visible
• Technologically savvy
• Down to earth
• Animated, humorous and relatable
• Capacity Builder
• Understands Diversity, Equity and Equality
• Committed to Quality Professional Development
• Creative and Innovative
• Relationship Builder
Roanoke Stakeholder Responses

Day 1 - 9:00 a.m. (Public Officials): Higher Education Center Room 408 (108 N Jefferson Street) (8)

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?
   - Fantastic town; small enough to have good relationships
   - Public Art and Cultural Amenities
   - Metropolitan access; easy access
   - Amtrak
   - Great local fabric – women owned businesses, retail
   - New things happening all the time
   - Landscape is beautiful; mountains; any outdoor activity you want
   - Meet Up App for the community
   - Affordable
   - Good housing market
   - City with 105 cultures
   - Great communities and great schools
   - It is growing as an innovation hub
   - Business incubator location
   - A Global reach business community
   - Inclusion, equality and equity conversations are happening
   - Urban Center set within a mountainous landscape
   - Parks
   - Economic growth
   - Strength of city are the neighborhoods – different lifestyles are available (mountains, city, etc.)
   - Economically it is a great place to be
   - Progressive although it is a small town
   - Traffic is manageable
   - Green Space
   - Diverse population
   - Restaurants
   - Amateur theatre
   - A manageable size
   - Urban school district with urban/suburban/rural
   - City buildings in residence/apartments
   - Future is mapped out/more people/more jobs
   - Cost of living is very low; median home prices are great; high quality/low priced
   - Seven time All American City by National Civic League
   - First city in the country in the National Civic League Hall of Fame
   - Buddy System between school board members and the city Council
   - People come together
   - Mayor is very supportive; has an open-door policy
• Optic fiber broad band network
• Area/Region is growing
• People get along and want to achieve
• Blue Ridge Mountains
• Amtrak service
• Good relationships with colleges/universities

2. **What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?**
   • School earned Blue Ribbon Status
   • Current superintendent puts students first
   • We love our schools; our schools are successful
   • Prepare students for what comes next (work, college, etc.)
   • Teachers and Administrators are great
   • If students have a stable support system, our children will thrive
   • Trauma informed school district
   • Schools are funded well both locally and statewide
   • School district is the highest budget item in the city budget
   • All accredited schools
   • Reputation of school district is strong
   • Graduates are highly successful after graduation
   • City and School Board has ensured the physical plants are in good shape
   • Energy efficient buildings
   • Enhanced safety and security measures; in innovative and creative ways
   • Governors School, Plato program; mindfulness program
   • Connection between schools and community is strong; Community resources are used to support schools
   • Faith Based groups encourage and support the schools
   • Newly renovated – state of the art schools
   • Two high school stadiums
   • Great support from the city council
   • Great communication between city council and the school board
   • Decreased Dropout rate – increased graduation rate
   • District does a great job at both ends of the spectrum (high end students and students with disabilities)
   • Appointed school board is great and cooperative
   • 40% of city budget is allocated to the school district and can carry a fund balance if the money is not spent in one fiscal year
   • An excellent superintendent who works well with the city council
   • Superintendent who finds ways for students to be successful

3. **What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?**
   • Addison MS struggles
   • Teacher Retention at Addison and districtwide
   • Lower paying district
• Segregation
• Equity
• Urban setting: unfortunately accepting what that means is a challenge
• Issues dealing with Poverty
• Recruitment and retention of teachers (recruit from HBCU’s)
• Better job of supporting minority educators – providing them with what they need to be successful
• Schools do not get enough support for counselors, specialists, and other staff to meet the needs of students
• Teachers are afraid of retribution for things they say or concerns they express
• Poverty and Inequity in schools
• 28% minority
• Recognize it is segregated in living spaces, but racial relations are good

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Keep children first
• Lead with integrity
• Focus on excellence
• Fights for the best for our students
• Ability to handle a transition from a very strong leader to a new day
• Do more of the same, better and in their own still
• Needs to understand budget and make magic with the funds allocated
• Someone who is not autocratic, more democratic
• Willing to take the good with the bad
• Open minded
• Recognizes our schools belong to everyone
• Works with community, parents and teachers; and a good relationship with the other schools.
• Inclusive to work with others in the area
• Accessible to teachers, community, staff, etc.
• Get out from behind the desk and understand what is going on in the schools and community
• Recruit and staff from within
• Puts Systems in place to encourage and place qualified individuals in positions in the districts
• Long term commitment to the city and community
• A balance between experience and the willingness to stay
• Creative in problem solving
• Comfortable having dialogue with Roanoke Education Association
• Understands Workforce development
• Works with other local and state organizations to move forward the education needs
• Puts students first and puts our families first to repair the lives of families
• Get to know the community
• Work to provide a high-quality education and quality lifestyle for all students/families
• Engaged, Involved, Open Minded
• People person
• Attend city and organizational functions
• Positive Attitude, Personable and willing to talk/listen to people.
1. **What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?**
   - City where you can be at the table to make decisions but also know the power brokers
   - Enough culture in Roanoke – theaters
   - Museum
   - Friendly city – move here and you will find home
   - Variety for different people, the arts, poetry
   - Age related intergenerational activities
   - The city is growing
   - Excellent restaurants
   - Culturally speaking, a diverse area
   - Urban center – however not too large to lose connectedness to the city
   - Diversity is a strength
   - Conversations across the diverse groups
   - A three-hour drive to broaden your horizon, Winston Salem, Charlotte, Richmond, Washington D.C.
   - Very little traffic
   - Outdoor sports, biking, hiking, etc.
   - Local colleges and Universities all within 45 minutes, Virginia Tech

2. **What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?**
   - Teachers care about the kids, make sure they receive the assistance that they need
   - Positive culture within the schools
   - Teachers who come to the district really want to teach here
   - Excellent athletic departments in the school
   - Strong academics in the system particularly where there is parental engagement

3. **What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?**
   - Challenges for the students where there is a lack of parental engagement
   - Help students transition to the area from different states
   - Clear from a socio-economic view where the money goes
   - Address equity across the district regarding the distribution of resources
   - Equity across the district regarding the arts
   - Northwest quadrant of the district there is constant turbulence – you won’t find that in the Southwest quadrant
   - Teacher and administrative stability
   - Must quickly learn about Roanoke and the learn about the culture
   - Transportation issues must be resolved
4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

- Superintendent must attend events in all locations within the city
- Must attend throughout all the communities
- Must be visible and must attend events equitably throughout all the schools and all the communities
- Be an active participant on the United Way board
- Gift of building relationships and getting to know all people
- Team leadership is critical
- Values feedback – develops an environment of trust
- Trust is very important
- Compassionate, caring individual
- Person must have a heart
- Possess a skill set to resolve specific issues quickly
- Understand what it takes to be a teacher, a principal, etc.
Day 1 – 12:30 p.m. (Community, Civic, and Volunteer Organizations): Roanoke Higher Education Center (8)

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?
   - Beautiful, natural resources
   - Diversity is great (105 nationalities)
   - Different communities within the city with differences but get along
   - Very diverse
   - Abundance of things to do
   - People care about this community
   - Always something to do
   - Arts are strong
   - Support for Downtown businesses
   - Downtown is thriving
   - Greenway
   - Bike trails
   - Festivals
   - Public transportation (buses)
   - Scooters and bike share
   - Trolley
   - Relatively safe city
   - Quality of life is good
   - Proximity to large cities
   - Amtrak
   - Airport
   - Revitalizations in many neighborhoods
   - The ability to have access: city feel but rural areas nearby
   - Services provided are good
   - Partnerships in city/community
   - Access to higher education

2. What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?
   - Food Service provide 3 meals available for student
   - Community College System partnerships – C-Cast (get a degree for free)
   - Trauma Informed
   - Openness and Willingness to work with community and civic organizations
   - Reading Programs
   - Administrators are supportive of new ideas
   - Administrators/School staff want their students involved
   - School system works at a convener for services and programs
   - Homeless coordinator is very supportive
   - Students are involved Key Clubs in helping the homeless
   - Support ELL in their education efforts
   - Governors School
• Excellent fine arts program (Orchestra; Theatre/Plays; Arts Festivals, etc.)

3. **What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?**

   • Environment (city to mountains)-challenge for the buses
   • Communication
   • Funding
   • Continue momentum to prioritize candidates who understand the great relationship between the board and city council
   • Maintaining what the former superintendent has created
   • Level of wanting change…teachers are not being heard
   • More resources for the Homeless population
   • Some distrust with current administration
   • Selecting a “good fit” for leadership positions
   • Lack of minority teachers and administrators

4. **What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?**

   • Good Listener
   • Curiosity for Innovation
   • Collaborative
   • Background in and understanding of an Urban setting
   • Strong in Instruction
   • Connections across the country and willing to reach out to others to help solve issues
   • Experience as a superintendent
   • A good decision maker
   • A good communicator with community/parents/board
   • Uses social media effectively
   • Communication with community agencies
   • Approachable
   • Ability to attract or strong leaders
Day 1 – 2:00 p.m. (Arts Community): Roanoke Higher Education Center (4)

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?
   - Abundance in opportunities to engage in the arts – nationally competitive, visual and performing arts, venues, venue size and diversity in performances
   - Accessibility to the arts is high due to ticket prices
   - Outdoor communal living concept
   - Roanoke is an “arts town”
   - Health care community is growing, medical school, nursing school
   - Strengthening education community
   - Slow growth however it is growing
   - Roanoke is growing in a way that it wants to grow
   - You can make a difference in Roanoke
   - Costs are reasonable – can rent an apartment at a reasonable rate
   - Variety of the arts programs
   - The greenway
   - The outdoors to include hiking
   - Lack of traffic
   - The city’s investment in the facilities

2. What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?
   - Available of a variety of opportunities for students in the city
   - The Governor’s School
   - The eclectic nature of the programs offered in the school district
   - Spirit of partnership with the community
   - Excellent theater programs
   - The outreach that the school district does to the community organizations
   - Stronger schools due to the diversity
   - Excellent core of parents that believe in the power of diversity

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?
   - Building leadership continuity at the building level
   - Still a huge amount of inequity
   - Roanoke did not desegregate until 1971 – equity remains a challenge
   - Roanoke lost from the state focus due to its western location – “forgotten” by Richmond (the legislature)
   - Low growth (GDP) – community can feel somewhat stagnant
   - Major employer – need to have a conversation about what growth looks like (economic growth)
4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

- Someone who wants to see the school district improve and wants to see the economy of the city improve
- Political acumen
- Willingness to have a conversation about equity
- Community person – reach out to all demographics
- Open minded
- Student/child advocate
- Experienced superintendent
- Experience in an urban school district – understand urban realities
- Risk taker
- Highly principled – yet pragmatic
- Honest
- Do “what is right for the kids”
- Team builder
- A motivator – collectively motivate the team
- Understands how to redistrict
Day 1 – 4:00 p.m. (Professional Staff): PHHS Cafeteria (2102 Grandin Road, SW, Roanoke, VA) (26)

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?
   - Culturally diverse
   - Beautiful city, beautiful location
   - Amtrak and the airport
   - Recreation (whitewater, mountain biking, greenway)
   - Universities that provides opportunities
   - Med School
   - Cost of Living is low
   - Health Services are great – Level one trauma center
   - Public Library System
   - Untapped potential here
   - Arts and Culture available are surprisingly good
   - Traffic is not bad
   - Urban outpost/progressive place

2. What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?
   - Dedicated Educators
   - Music Education is top notch
   - Fine arts in general are great
   - Funding for libraries is good
   - Neighborhood schools in elementary
   - Partnerships are strong with colleges
   - 3 colleges give reduced price
   - Governors School
   - Whiz kids in math and science at Governors Schools
   - Gifted and talented
   - Middle School for academically excelled
   - Creative and Innovative students
   - 55 Home languages in the district – diverse
   - Growing population/enrollment is increasing
   - Strong special education programing for severe/profound
   - Community partnerships
   - Graduation rate has increased
   - Summer Program (RCTS Plus)
   - High School Remedial Programs
   - Credit Recovery
   - Nice Facilities and well maintained
   - Tremendous amount of resources, intercept program; faith-based organizations; library system; regional programs; social services programs
   - Faculty/staff works together to properly utilize
   - Backpack programs with food for students on the weekend
• Mentoring program
• Only one of two districts in VA with an appointed school board
• Rich technology (1-1 laptops; smart boards, etc.)

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

• Bus issues (changed companies but the issues remain the same)
• Graduation rate increased because the standards have been lowered
• Badgering of teachers to help students pass to increase the graduation rate
• Quantitative Approach to learning…lack of qualitative work.
• Students have an attitude of “they are going to pass me anyway”
• Students are not being held accountable for their academics
• More concern about passing the standardized tests instead of student learning (problem solving, critical thinking, etc.)
• Hiring many positions but No English coordinator
• No HS math supervisor
• We need vertical alignment in curriculum; we need more emphasis on curriculum
• 36-week school year, but we only have about 27 weeks to cram all curriculum into 27 weeks
• Three levels of benchmarks
• We don’t have coordination at the CO on testing/assessment/data analysis
• Lack of communication between CO and teachers
• Too many benchmarks and simulations
• Administrator turnover – New principal and 5 of 6 Assistant Principals are new
• High Schools need STRONG Leadership – Teachers need help
• Teachers don’t feel safe in schools
• “The children are running out schools.”
• Behavioral Standards need to be determined and students held accountable
• Teacher retention is terrible…educators leave because of behavior
• Teachers are crying out for support from the superintendent and board.
• 10-15% of the students are the most challenging. Many are special education
• Applied Diploma is a pass for students
• Vocational School has higher behavioral standards than for the High Schools
• Administrators have been switched for political reasons
• Not enough support in the elementary schools to provide for the needs of the students. Missed opportunities when the services begin in middle Schools.
• Elementary class sizes are too small.
• Equity for students and services
• Teachers won’t respond or express opinions because of retaliation for expressing opinions
• Culture of intimidation from the top down
• Kids curse you out and get sent back to the classroom with a lollipop
• No addressing the kids in the middle
• Teacher recruitment
• Class sizes are big; we have portables
• PD is unusable and out of date

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Thinks outside the box. Smaller class sizes for special needs students and students with behavior issues
• Visible in ALL school levels
• Good listener - Pay attention to what employees have to say without becoming explosive
• Puts the needs of kids first
• Current and best practices
• Take care of the students by taking care of the teachers
• Create working conditions that will allow you to recruit and retain teachers
• One who understands the secret sauce is human capital
• Team builder
• Collaborative – Discusses issues with employees
• Experience and stands steadfast for employees
• Committed to Quality Professional Development
• Good Communicator
• Surrounds themselves with people who will listen and can help
• Urban and ELL Experience
• Understands diversity, equity and equality
1. **What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?**
   - The quality of life is excellent
   - Diversity is a strength – many cultural backgrounds
   - Larger town with a small-town feel
   - Location is excellent – positioned in a great area
   - Great place to raise a family
   - Excellent mix of the arts, culture and universities
   - Strong financial support of the school system
   - An appointed school board
   - Stakeholders that support the city, library system, police department – great deal of community support
   - Supportive place – support system in place
   - Cost of living
   - Neighborhoods – get to know your neighbor
   - Close to other large cities
   - Safe city to live in and collaboration with police department
   - Collaboration
   - The medical community – medical school

2. **What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?**
   - Basic needs of the students are met
   - The principals are very passionate about their schools
   - Support system for administrators
   - Support for the school administrators
   - Excellent facilities
   - Meet the needs of every student, gifted programs, special needs students, meet the needs of the students in the middle, two blue ribbon schools – a hidden gem
   - Support and nurturing of students
   - Pride in the individual school communities however also support principals throughout the district
   - Students are passionate about their education – about their learning and about social and emotional issues
   - Dedicated administrators and teachers who are willing to be lead and will get behind initiatives – dedicated and passionate
   - After school activities, co-curricular activities, athletics, etc.
   - Make certain that these activities are available to the students
   - Give a little to the students and you get so much out of them
   - Great administrators in the buildings, great teachers
3. **What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?**

- One of the middle schools needs strong, stable leadership
- Maintain the current infrastructure
- The schools are segregated – the city is segregated – need to address this proactively
- Need equal representation on the school board
- Gaps in instruction – some administrators have too much responsibility
- The loss of central office staff – some individuals taking on multiple roles and responsibilities
- Disciplinary problems in the schools – great deal of time dealing with these issues – difficult to serve as the instructional leader
- Maintain accreditation
- Increase the diversity in the teaching staff, African American, Hispanic, etc.
- Increase diversity in the entire staff
- Budget is a challenge particularly related to State funding
- Communication needs to be improved from central to building and from building to central
- Transportation is an issue throughout the district
- Teacher retention
- Issues in getting substitute teachers
- Early retirement incentive program should be examined
- People may not really understand the work that the administrators are doing daily
- Lack of trust between the district and the community

4. **What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?**

- Experience in urban education
- Communication
- Effective leadership
- Collaboration
- Employee engagement
- Decisions in the best interest of students
- Make it easy so everyone in the organization can do their job
- Experience in a diverse district of similar size
- Extensive background in community and family engagement and is comfortable in this role
- Accessibility
- Consistent
- Good listener – someone you could talk to without getting in trouble
- A business leader – understands business and budgeting
- Not a micromanager
- Dedicated to the community long term
- Morality of the district and the teachers in the district
- Innovative – proactive
• Willing to find the strengths of the people around you
• Receptive to feedback
• Capacity builder – build a network of problem solvers
• Seeks input before rolling out a new initiative
• Keep the central office team
• Someone who fills in the broad strokes and allows the administrators to fill in the details
• Inspirational leaders who will lift up the administrators
• Willing to take the responsibility
• Willing to be accountable
• Measure of humility – empower those around you
• Open door policy
• Proven track record of caring about all members of the school community
• Understand trauma and its impact on students
1. **What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?**

- Family events/activities
- Christmas activities
- Running events
- Star, nature, restaurants
- Community building; family building
- Great place to raise a family
- Appalachian Trail
- Focused on involvement of students, parents, etc. -everyone has a voice
- Great Schools
- Positive Life
- Big but a small town – getting involved is easy
- Build and grow with the community
- Roanoke is very diverse – festival to mix diversity
- Religions – something for everyone
- A lot of involvement outside the school district
- Very tight community

2. **What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?**

- Many opportunities for students -Honors courses, dual enrollment, AP classes; career technical education; governors’ school; STEM.
- There are no minorities – everyone is equal
- RoTec program - Culinary, engineering, etc.
- Student involvement such as FBLA (Ronald McDonald House); Key Club; National Honor Society
- Raise awareness and further immerse ourselves within the community
- Credit Recovery
- Star Council – SGA’s from both schools working together
- Arts – Band, Visual Arts, Performing Arts (teachers help get students placed in areas where they are interested and have abilities)
- Good Teachers who make sure we graduate
- District focuses on helping us succeed – student development and student accomplishment
- One to one initiative
- Web paged courses – coding, office, etc.
- District hires teachers reflective on the student
- Emphasis on the arts – photography (something for everyone)
- Extra-curricular activities
- 555 enrichment programs for Middle Schools (careers exploration for 6th grade students)
- District makes an effort to make sure everyone feels at home
• Graduation is emphasized
• Outreach programs outside the school that allows us to flourish
• Required to maintain good grades to participate
• Emphasize being a “Student”-Athlete

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

• Transportation – Buses are late, strike with bus drivers
• Bus drivers don’t get paid enough to keep drivers
• Buses for after school programs
• Financial and Racial challenges – understanding equity
• How many students there are in Roanoke (large district) – the job in complex
• Drug issues in both high schools (DARE in elementary), but no emphasis in the MS’s and HS’s
• Security needs to be heightened – needs to be stationed in different locations
• Some students don’t care about their education
• Dropout rate; suspensions; expulsions; for students from other cultures
• Need a better ELL program – need more fundamentals
• Language is a barrier for some students
• Diverse school, but we feel separated academically, a huge gap between AP and regular
• AP courses are not reflective of the student population
• Regular students are allowed to act out more than advanced students because they don’t want to be there
• Middle School programs – students stay in the same classes together the whole time, except for electives
• Weather issues causes students to miss classes
• Homeless students need more funding to help them succeed
• AP classes at Fleming are not as challenging as AP classes in other schools; students do not do well on the AP assessments
• Gov School is at PH and students at Fleming feel left out (must ride a bus to PH to attend)
• Problems from the community spills into the schools
• Fleming and PH have the same problems, but people view Fleming differently (more negatively) – Image of the school needs improvement
• Racial divide in the schools and community
• Media only covers the negative and not the positive at Fleming
• Addison MS has issues
• More crossing guards

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Not a 9 to 5 job…comes to extra-curricular events
• Visibility
• A voice for the students – focuses on students
• Technologically savvy and wants more technology for schools
• Knowledgeable about Roanoke
• Develop positive leaders in the schools
• Strong leader
• Has and builds connections
• Focuses on ALL students
• Passionate about their job but willing to compromise
• Down to earth
• Family person and understands struggles
• Listens to student opinions
• Empathetic and Equitable
• Values the arts
• Animated, humorous and relatable
• Understands problems student have at home
• Engaged – Puts words into actions
• Helps students become more engaged
• Has a background in diversity and pushes for diversity
• Younger with energy
• Open minded and willing to work with students, not just administrators…I want to get to know the superintendent
• Transparent and shares ideas
• Involved in Community
• Urban Background
• Understands the needs of sports teams
• College prep training
1. **What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?**

- Excellent outdoor community and things to do
- Easy to walk around the city
- Diversity
- Small and can build connections
- Always find someone you know when going places in the city
- Many biking trails
- Good places for sight seeing
- Hiking
- Always events and festivals downtown
- The Star
- Many opportunities for children to explore and better themselves
- Great downtown
- Public parks
- Downtown market
- Recognized as an international mountain biking city
- Experience all the seasons
- Theaters, bowling ally
- Community involvement
- Variety of events and activities
- Connected to local farms – farm to table restaurants
- Nature – example – berries
- Local brewery’s

2. **What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?**

- Variety of sports
- After school activities
- The arts
- The music program – every student gets an instrument
- Variety in the elective programs
- Students can create clubs
- Rotech
- Governor’s Schools – math and science and STEM
- Volunteerism – fund raisers for the homeless
- Gear up programs for college bound students
- C-cap – community college for free for two years
- Pep rallies
- Student one-to-one initiatives
- Good teachers
- The library
- Extra library lounge for students
• Fee waivers offered for students in need for SAT’s, etc.
• Availability of resources
• Challenging curriculum, AP classes, etc.
• Arts programs have connection out of the schools
• Partnership with the Roanoke youth orchestra
• Middle school students come to the high school
• College tours
• College advisement
• Nursing services

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

• Lack of diversity within the teaching staff
• Bathrooms need cleaning and maintained
• Not enough teachers – teachers teaching out of their subject areas
• Too much fund raising to support school activities – more funding for the arts
• Some books taken off the reading list – example Columbine
• Too many fights in the school
• No field trips
• Better advertisement for classes – some students don’t know what classes are offered
• Improve communications to students – student broadcast system
• More study halls
• Senior option opportunities
• Lack of culture awareness within the curriculum
• Consistency in leadership – principal turnover
• Infuse cultural proficiency into the curriculum – examples not just Black History in the month of February
• All offered computers – the computers are not functional very often- fire wall blocks too much
• Many of the literature read is not relevant
• Make better decisions – example weather closing
• More vending machines with actual snacks
• Mistakes in the schedule at the beginning of the year – had to reset and gave students new schedules
• Understanding the pressure on the students with assignments – to encourage more balance – sleep and exercise
• Too many late busses
• Tardy policy is not fair
• School lunch needs to be improved – improve the quality
• Too much emphasis on the State tests – SOL’s
• Too much teacher directed instruction
• Examine the school tardy policy – students believe it is unfair
• Rarely see the superintendent
4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

- Someone likes kids
- Young and progressive
- Embraces and appreciates diversity
- Understands mental health
- Respects and cares about principals and teachers
- Give more information to parents/guardians
- Creative -servant leadership
- Understand what is important to students
- Doesn’t just care about the scores on tests
- Not in it for the money
- Understands that all students are different
- Equal chances for all students – equity
- Understand special needs students
- Trust, honesty, transparency
- Good listener
- Productive
- Not afraid to admit their mistakes
- Efficient in getting changes done
- Acts on the things that they say they are going to do
- Involved in the community
1. **What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?**

   - Quality of Life is high
   - Very good standard of living; affordable housing
   - Amazing outdoors
   - People are kind
   - Entertainment and Healthy activities available
   - Tourism and Conventions are attracted to Roanoke
   - People like to live here and return her to live
   - Great Schools
   - Graduates of the Roanoke Schools are staying in Roanoke
   - Restaurants are amazing
   - Close to the ocean, mountains, outdoor activities
   - Concerts
   - Vibrant downtown
   - Vibrancy…rising tide climate
   - Significant partnerships
   - Emergency – Fire, help will be there in 4 minutes or less; Emergency, 6 minutes or less
   - ISO rating of 1
   - Welcoming community
   - Diversity is a strength
   - Comprehensive plan 2040
   - Perfect size – you have everything you want without the big city feel
   - Traffic is manageable
   - Positive attitudes about the future
   - Growing small businesses is a specialty of the area
   - Growing entrepreneurs
   - Alignment of the partnerships with secondary schools, community college and universities are great
   - Willingness of others to collaborate and innovate to do things that people thought were not attainable
   - Roanoke is rich with health care systems

2. **What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?**

   - Students come out of the high schools are well prepared for college
   - Performing arts are strong
   - Student Athletes can compete with students across the country
   - High School graduation rate has increased
   - Great collaboration among business community
   - Empathy of teachers is great
   - Facilities are phenomenal
• RoTec is NOT a second-best program; it is a top-notch program with amazing students.
• Students get EMT certification

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

• Public views require the superintendent to have thick skin – He/she will be criticized and judged (sometimes unjustly)
• Administrator turnover
• High Poverty – High percentage of free/reduced lunch students
• Diversity can be a negative
• Compared and contrasted to other districts in the area
• The dynamics of the district is complex

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Understands diversity and homeless population
• Trauma informed
• Thick Skin
• Students First
• The tone starts at the top in creating the culture
• Innovative/Creative
• Solution Focused
• Problem Solver
• Passion of inner-city education
• Ability to bring groups together to collaborate
• A champion for students and for their staff
• Ability to recruit and retain teachers/administrators
• Articulate, well spoken, chart a course and stick with it
• Change management – Assess needs and change what needs to be changed
• Approachable
• Don’t be afraid of the media
• Understanding of Social Media
• Visible – meet the students and parents where they are
• Manage Resources
• Servant Leadership – Lead from the bottom up
1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?
   - The diversity of the city is a strength representing a variety of cultures and backgrounds
   - Small city with great diversity
   - Proximity to the outdoors – hiking trails
   - Craft brewery industry
   - Farmer’s markets, food, restaurants
   - Greenway
   - Medical facilities are fantastic
   - Locally owned restaurants
   - Proximity Smith Mountain Lake
   - Small but at the same time have big city feel
   - Night life, quiet places, much to see and do
   - Great place to raise a family
   - Fantastic weather – mild climate
   - The relationship with Virginia Tech and other colleges and universities
   - Local zoo

2. What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?
   - Schools have fantastic arts department
   - Always in the news for what the students are accomplishing
   - Resources are available to students
   - Strings instruction (VH1)
   - Services that the schools provide for the students
   - Relationships that teachers take the time to develop with their students
   - Focus that is placed on student health, clinics on site, mental health support
   - Programs and services provided to ensure that the students graduate – increased graduation rate – support after graduation
   - Diversity is a strength in the school district
   - Students enjoy their experiences in the district, sense of community, accountability, alumni come back to the community
   - A family atmosphere within the district

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?
   - Provide so many services – sometimes spread too thin – do many good things however we need to be great at some of these things
   - Low morale among staff, teacher retention, some left to the surrounding counties
   - Support from the administration is needed
   - Lack of structures that need to be revised and put into place, example given was the grading process, develop systems, example – copiers should be used as
• Scanners – use the technology for better efficiencies and more compatible with other school districts
• Lack of a culture of trust, shaming language used toward students, heard tails of teachers receiving emails where they are called out regarding their benchmark results
• Broken copiers – broken and not replaced
• Take the trauma training too far – trauma is a reason, not an excuse – don’t hold the students accountable regarding discipline
• Discipline is an issue in the schools
• New teachers require training in classroom management
• Teachers need professional development, assign mentor teachers, experienced teachers conducting staff development
• Building administrators’ hands are tied due to directives from above
• Teachers being assaulted
• That’s the way that we have always done them – need collaboration in looking at new ways to do things in the district
• Decisions are made somewhere else and they trickle down – need more collaboration
• Lack of diversity in the staff – the staff should be a reflection of the student demographics
• Do not hire or promote from within
• Time for collaboration is needed
• Calendar is an issue – time to rejuvenate and rest
• Paraprofessionals feel like second class citizens – summer pay schedule for paraprofessionals
• School board should be elected

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Resourceful – connections outside of the city
• Look at other school district’s successes
• Open-minded
• Goal oriented
• Does not micromanage – delegate and hold them accountable
• Visible – becomes familiar with the students in the schools
• Willing to engage the community and make them feel a part of the school system
• Attend events – speak to people while attending
• Cares about students
• Superintendent who can be honest and straight forward with the school board
• Encourages the community to be active
• Well rounded and cares about all disciplines
• Understands special education and special needs students
• Supportive
• Understands and values family
• Passionate
• Appreciates the staff’s efforts
• Date driven
• Transparent
• Supportive of PTA/PTO
• Good at recruiting and vetting administrators that are assigned to schools
Day 2 – 7:00 p.m. (Parents and PTA): WFHS Auditorium (40)

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?

- Beautiful area
- Everything is convenient
- Great Community
- Unlimited untapped potential – Star Quality
- Great place to raise children and to retire
- Access to outdoors
- Vision for the city is to increase accessibility
- Accessibility by city government
- Local businesses and an upside to starting businesses
- Close tight-knit community
- Proximity to colleges, community colleges,
- Medical work – Health Accessibility
- Friendly, Robust Community, Diverse
- Surrounded by medical schools and colleges
- Carilion
- Small town with Big City feel

2. What are the good things about the Roanoke Public Schools?

- Music and Theatre programs are very good
- Schools are filled with dedicated teachers who spend their own money to ensure student success
- Teachers follow their students after graduation and continue to impact their future
- Honors programs; Governors School, Dual Enrollment
- Facilities are good
- Non-profit and local businesses are helping schools
- The parts of the city who are not associated with the schools really want to be
- Great mentorship programs to help students (Amazing opportunities for community groups to mentor students)
- Great potential to expand mentorship programs
- Safety and Security – Check in and check out
- We get a lot of notifications from the district
- Millennials are coming back to Roanoke to work and help
- Opportunities to work and be a part of the community are abundant. Students come back after seeing the world to make a difference in Roanoke.
- Rotec, Plato, C-Cap, Honors program, AP, Governors School
- Graduation Rate has increased from 56% to near 90% in 14 years

3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

- Develop partnerships with health community
• Add the Challenge program back to school district
• Great students, but many have challenges
• Buildings and programs we are not using
• City partnerships need to be expanded
• Superintendent needs to visit the schools to see what really happens in schools
• Roanoke is two different places; two different things going on; bridge the gap between the schools and different parts of the city.
• Equity is an issue
• Schools teaching staffs do not reflect the student population
• Don’t make blankets statements that helps one school and hurts another school.
• Fairness to all communities is an issue
• Busing of students from their home area to another area
• There are 4 zones in the city with 4 different cultures
• Cross breeding students in a school is causing problems
• Not being open to uniforms – Uniforms can help solve issues with student dress
• Mental Health services are lacking (Suicide is an issue with students today). Students need people to take an initiative to talk with students and help them with their issues.
• At-risk students fall through the cracks and parents don’t know how to help them.
• Culture of fear around giving input or expressing opinions. Teachers are afraid of retaliation…this culture has been built over time.
• Superintendent has black balled great administrators and teachers
• Diversity is a strength, but it is the most segregated place I have ever lived.
• Gangs
• Outsourced services that are not working and have not been consistent
• Style of Leadership has been a controlling style, not collaboration
• Magnet programs need to come back from elementary and high school
• Bullying in the schools is a major issue…kids are bullied for what they don’t have.
• Some statistics have been massaged and manufactured in the past, so the new superintendent needs to understand that some results may take a dip
• One school has had 6 principals in 18 months
• Teachers hands have been tied behind their backs and are not allowed to do what they need to do.
• Buses and Transportation

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

• Has a heart for children
• Holds people accountable
• Understands submission and accountability
• Someone who takes responsibility for their actions
• Open to Uniforms for students
• Progressive
• No discrimination lawsuits
• Ownership and Accountability
• Communicator
• Collaborative
• Team Building
• Compassionate
• Community Oriented
• Reliable and open minded
• Honest
• Ethical
• Experience in Urban Education
• Success with Urban Education
• Educator and not a politician
• Engaged
• Native to this area
• Transparent
• Genuine
• Service Leader
• Supportive
• Accountability
• Cares about students and teachers
• Approachable
• Supportive of teachers/staff
• Good Listener
• Problem Solver and Solution minded
• Resilient
• Empowers the staff to be problem solvers and solution makers
• Change and Shift the Culture to an open and inviting culture
• Visionary
• Advocate for a different approach to educating students and better outcomes for students after graduation
Survey Monkey Results for Roanoke City Public Schools
February 2020

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

172 Responses

Administrators
Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Roanoke is a cost-efficient place to live. Houses are adequately priced, many neighborhoods are established and diverse, quality of life is satisfying, many local points of interest, good schools in all districts, local jobs with growth potential, airport within close proximity in the valley, and all religious denominations are represented.

- Roanoke is a great area for raising a family. We have many outdoor adventure opportunities locally or within a short drive. Housing in our area is more affordable than some similar areas. Roanoke is an official “Welcoming Community” with refugee resettlement and related support networks. Our immigrant and refugee community members have fascinating life stories and add wonderful contributions to our lives. Our city council and school board truly want students to be successful.

- Roanoke is an excellent place to raise a family. If you love the outdoors, everything from mountain adventures to a beach vacation are within driving distance. The local arts and restaurant scene is vibrant and growing to a point where there is always something new and interesting to do.

- There is a rich history here in Roanoke, Virginia. Its heritage have been shaped by great people and events going back to the Native Americans who settled the Blue Ridge Mountains. The people of the Roanoke Valley in Virginia's Blue Ridge proudly embrace their history. The Taubman Museum of Art, where we studied internationally acclaimed work from a wide variety of artists, from the classic style of Norman Rockwell to the modern paintings of Kehinde Wiley. Center in the Square, an arts and cultural center in Roanoke that contains several unique museums dedicated to science, history, and, our favorite, pinball machines. The Roanoke Pinball Museum has more than 50 different pinball machines, and you can play all of them. Black Dog Salvage, a repurposed salvage warehouse famous for its own television show on the DIY Network. Browse through makeshift aisles filled with stained glass windows, antique furniture, and countless intriguing knickknacks. Grandin Village, a small shopping district filled with clothing shops like Urban Gypsy, historic sites like the Grandin Theatre, and for those with a sweet tooth, Pop’s Ice Cream and Soda Bar. The Salem Red Sox play at Salem Memorial Baseball Stadium as the High Single A minor league ball club for the Boston Red Sox. Smith Mountain Lake, a massive lake, encircled by the stunning Blue Ridge Mountains which has become a popular recreational area for water sports with almost 21,000 acres of water. There are many local breweries in and surrounding Roanoke. At Big Lick Brewing Company, you’ll sample some of the finest local craft beers in Roanoke. They are well known for constantly rotating their tap menu depending on the
season, serving up to 24 different craft brews at a time. Roanoke boasts some of the best people and community in Virginia. It is a great place to live and raise a family.

- Roanoke is a great place to live and raise a family. Virginia is one of few states in the country to offer both mountains and coast living. Roanoke offers many activities for small children, teenagers, and young adults. It is a wonderful town to raise a family and connect with communities and small groups. Roanoke continues to grow and flourish. Many businesses from all over the country are locating their business right here in the Southwest because they are thriving and seeing success.

- Roanoke city has so much potential. It is a city that is on the rise and it has a diverse population.

- Roanoke has a strong reputation for hardworking, honest individuals who sincerely want a better quality of life. It is a picturesque setting nestled in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It’s a big city with small town charm appeals to a diverse group of ethnic groups from around the world. Roanoke is a refugee center where many cultures come together as one

- Roanoke offers a lot of outdoor activities. There is a large cycling community and greenways throughout Roanoke and surrounding areas to enjoy. The Carilion Medical Center is growing and will likely bring growth to the community. The downtown area is growing and attracting young adults to either stay in Roanoke or return to Roanoke. Additionally there are some great colleges nearby including Virginia Tech, Roanoke College, Jefferson School of Health Sciences, University of Virginia, Radford University, Hollins University and Virginia Western Community College. There is a great partnership between Virginia Western Community College and Roanoke City Schools. Virginia Western offers the CCAP program which provides free tuition for students from surrounding high schools. The economy has been very good for the last couple of years evidenced by the increase in funding from the City of Roanoke to Roanoke City Schools.

- We are a growing area, with new businesses opening all the time. We have great outdoors activities, lots of breweries and local restaurants, and a variety of cultural activities (opera, ballet, several theaters, etc.). The city is progressive and diverse.

- I've lived in Roanoke my entire life. It is a diverse community with a lot of resources and the community values education. We are not a big city and not a small town, but a perfect combination of each. Our location to other big cities makes us attractive; 3 hours from Richmond, 2 hours from Charlotte, 4 hours from DC, and 4 to 6 hours from various beaches gives us an opportunity to experience the big city life without being a big city resident.

**Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- We have two people who could do the job. You could not choose anyone better for the job.

- The teachers and staff are caring and dedicated to the students they serve. Long hours are worked to ensure preparedness for each school day. Most go above and beyond their contracted time and work long hours to ensure their students are cared for emotionally and instructionally. The staff including administrators come together under the
schoolhouse roof as a family. Some schools are diverse, and the diversity adds a warm layer of individuality to our schools.

- RCPS has wonderful students, teachers, administrators, and support staff who enjoy seeing one another succeed. Each school has untapped potential that is waiting to be discovered. The right candidate will find that he/she has an opportunity to be a part of something very special.

- Roanoke City schools are full of passionate teachers who truly understand what it means to come together in the trenches and advocate for students. I have taught in other school districts where, for the majority of my career, I felt as though I was teaching on an island and many of my colleagues were content putting in the bare minimum. This has not been the case in Roanoke City Schools where time and again I have witnessed teachers do the unheralded, behind the scenes work necessary to provide the best experience for their students. I have also witnessed experienced teachers mentor novice colleagues and guide them into becoming strong educators. We have a diverse student population with a variety of needs, but the educators who come to this district and have a lasting impact are those willing to do whatever it takes to meet the needs of the children we serve.

- RCPS Schools have some of the best professional educators in the valley and state of Virginia. They are tireless in approach to best practices. They care about the whole student inside and outside of the classroom. These professional educators put the time into teaching, coaching, volunteering, staying extra hours, donating and about 100 other things for the students, parents, community and all stakeholders in RCPS and their school. Teachers and students from PH created the STAR Council to help the homeless. Clothes and food drives in our elementary schools and clothes closets in our middle and high schools help students and families in need. Partnerships with community businesses, colleges and the City of Roanoke give opportunities for our students to see and experience potential career opportunities for their future such as Fine Arts, Technical and Vocational, Social Work, Engineering, Medicine, Education, and Business to name a few. Advance Placement, Dual Enrollment, Honors, Plato and other rigorous classes are offered to challenge students in any field they want to go into. Students are college ready, job ready and given the full spectrum of opportunity to fulfill their educational needs from pre-K to graduation. I have been fortunate to work at RCPS and also see my children grow in their schools. I have had the satisfaction of seeing some of the best minds come out of 13 years of quality education and succeed on the next level of their lives. The professionals that make up RCPS and each and every school have one thing in common… The success of our students is our most coveted priority. These fine educators make it their personal and professional mission to find success in every student and make sure they get everything they need to be successful. There is greatness in RCPS and it starts with the amazing professional educators that make up every school in the city.

- One good thing about Roanoke City is the diversity and the ability to face new, exciting challenges with diversity within a school and within a division. Roanoke City is an urban school division however, every school is different in their make-up. A school is nothing if not for its leaders and staff. Roanoke City Schools has some of the hardest-working teachers, most dedicated professionals, and trusted staff in SW. These people continuously work hard, put hours and hours in at home, buy food for their students, work around the continuous inconsistency from higher up leaders, roll with the constant
changes within a school year for policy and process. It is said if you can teach in Roanoke City, you can teach anywhere.

- Many city schools that have been renovated are beautiful. The district consistently puts an emphasis on music and the arts. We have many good teachers and faculty in the district. Our district has one of the highest teacher salaries in SW VA.
- RCPS has a tremendous resource in its leadership.
- Principals and teachers have a difficult job, more so in some schools than others in this community. Their dedication and years of service are evidence of their passion to help students succeed, no matter what their background, income level, etc.
- Roanoke City Schools has a history of innovation and creative initiatives (e.g., Forest Park school for overage students, VH1 Save the Music grant, early adopter of trauma-informed practices, etc.). The staff who work in the schools, by and large, are committed to educational equity and believe all students can be successful, regardless of circumstances.
- Instruction is phenomenal at most schools. We truly have the best teachers in the area. It is especially advantageous for students who are slightly below average (due to the numerous resources available compared to surrounding districts) and students are on track for the Governor's School (due to more available slots).

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

- We have a full-time mindfulness coordinator, but we do not have a full-time English coordinator, math coordinator, or social studies coordinator. Mindfulness is a joke.
- #1. Too much change for the sake of change. If change is warranted, there needs to be explanation for it which should be relayed to administrators and staff. Change for the sake of change is not always good. RCPS doesn't give a process adequate time to be integrated and evaluated before it is changed for a new flavor of the month. #2. The buzz word "trauma informed". We talk it and have it, but not enough resources are pumped into our schools that need it the most or suffer it the most. What has happened is the opposite. Our day treatment providers have left mid-year (Medicaid requirements have tightened) and dropped their clients (students who need the most consistency of all have none). No plan is in place to address the trauma informed system. All it has been is lip service. #3. Equality versus equity. Some schools in our district (the most diverse ones) are not receiving the resources and funding they need to be successful. Teachers in one end of the city are doing much more "hazardous duty" teaching than those on the other side of the city. Not enough compensation for these teachers to stay in RCPS. #4. Stop outsourcing to get cheaper services. That is what we are getting, cheap service. Buses that don't show, drivers that are quitting, no sub drivers, teachers working past their quitting time to watch students that have to ride a second shift bus only to have to then go back and work in their classroom to get ready for the next school day. #5. Students who are disrespectful and behaviorally challenged requiring and demanding so much time from the teachers and staff that the truly great students who want to learn are falling through the cracks. These wonderful students are falling by the wayside and are not getting their due recognition and instruction and what they deserve and need because of the behaviorally inadequate students.
• Stakeholders (internal and external) at all levels, have various and sometimes contradictory opinions about how the division can best move forward. The superintendent will be successful if he/she allows each voice to be heard before making major division-level decisions. An unspoken hierarchy exists in the current structure of the division that includes administrators and teachers. The superintendent will succeed if he/she is able to establish a organizational structure, founded on mutual respect, that does not tolerate favoritism. Struggling schools need interventions that are able to be implemented quickly in response to student needs. Our schools accreditation performance should not be so dependent on expedited retakes of SOL tests. Too much testing and not enough instruction occurs during the spring semester in RCPS and all of Virginia.

• At the current juncture we do face a number of challenges: Several schools are over capacity and lacking the number of staff necessary to best meet students' needs. School lines have been drawn in such a way that students with the most needs are located in the same schools with largest student populations. There is a disconnect between central office staff and building level teachers/administrators. Teachers and administrators feel either unsupported or at times "strong-armed" by central office administration. Professional development opportunities for teachers/administrators are few and far between and the professional in-services have been poorly planned and ineffective. The district lacks effective alternative school options for students with excessive disciplinary problems. There are not enough spaces for students at Noel C. Taylor learning academy and the program fails to meet the needs of students with excessive discipline.

• The new superintendent should be aware that RCPS has a trust issue. Too many times teachers and administrators are fearful of central office and will not trust the intentions of central office personnel or the office of the superintendent. Poor communication between the teachers, schools and central office has been major factor of this trust issue. Listening aggressively is not a priority. Selective hearing has been the norm which needs to change. Open communication and transparency should be paramount. Thinking strategically, globally and delegating the plan accordingly shouldn’t come from sacrificing the talent and future leadership that should be groomed for the future of the district. Future leadership should be nurtured and kept instead of losing it to other districts. Seeing the ship from the eyes of the crew has not been a high expectation and overall has been forgotten. Maintaining high expectations and standards –at a cost to losing, demoralizing and destroying quality professional educators is a cost that is too high. As a result RCPS struggles to maintain 100% (even +90%) teacher retention every year. When you have the people that know what needs to be done… Keep them. If you do not know… Find them and ask how they found the answers and replicate throughout the district. Unfortunately when we find those people they are discarded. They need to be kept and shown their importance in every way. RCPS employees are afraid to ask questions or seek guidance in fear of retaliation, showing weakness or branded incompetent. While the professionals in the classroom, schools or elsewhere know what is urgent and what needs to be taken care of immediately, there is a disconnect with leadership on how to prioritize those needs and more of a reactionary focus opposed to a pro-active stance towards inclusiveness and embracing what these professionals see as needing attention. Everything does not have to be a crisis all the time. RCPS continues to be a five-alarm fire that is constantly burning. This doesn’t have to happen. Sometimes you don’t need a fire truck to put out a matchstick. Along with problems with outsourcing (sub teachers, food/cafeteria, busing), staffing shortages, leadership
absences, questionable graduation rate/SOL scores, Special Education IEP issues and overall morale… The next superintendent will have a full plate.

- **Issue 1:** There is constant policy changes within a school year. At times this change is just for the sake of change itself, there is no rhyme or reason (and if there is, it is never explained). **CONSISTENCY and FOLLOW THROUGH** is what Roanoke City Needs! Issue 2: As an urban school district, over the last two years, the new direction of being "trauma-informed" has been a focus; however, there has been very little process changes for these students. As a school division who services many students with trauma and high ACE scores, there has not been many differences in how we serve these students. Very little direction on how we service students appropriately who have experienced trauma. With cuts occurring for many mental health positions in school and outside agencies, Roanoke City needs an action plan and resources to help the students and the teachers.

- **Issue 3:** Roanoke has wonderful, dedicated, hard-working, caring teachers who are leaving Roanoke City Schools. There is a high turnover rate that I have seen especially this year with teachers and administrators. Great teachers are leaving the district, going to other surrounding districts for less pay...why? Teachers are expected to roll with the punches, change practice and lesson plans half way through the school year, continuously give it their all, and come in the next day and work even harder. Teachers are not respected, given a voice, or understood in their daily role. I would love to see in five years, the opposite- where Roanoke City has positions available (because teachers are retiring and some moving due to family) and teachers from other surrounding districts Want to be at Roanoke City. They want to be here not because of the competitive salary, they want to be here because they hear good things in the media about Roanoke City. They want to here because they want to be a part of something great. They want to be here because they love coming to work everyday. They want to be here because they want to be PART OF THE CHANGE. Issue 4: Outsourcing is an issue. Outsourcing nurses, cafeteria staff, school buses, substitutes has not been good for Roanoke City. School buses have been in the news often this year with all of the media coverage, but don't forget outsourcing substitutes is problematic. It doesn't make the news, however, it is not working. Substitutes don't show up especially at schools who make media coverage for negative reasons. So what happens is the class is split up so many ways, teachers are watching additional students and students are not learning. Teachers are told do not take a sick day, do not take a Friday or Monday because there will be no substitutes- that is not a real request. Outsourcing is an issue.

- **This is a district has needed a new superintendent for some time now.** Our recent climate survey did not show positive feelings in a number of areas. We consistently struggle with hiring and keeping teachers in district. A higher salary does not equal a good job. We lack consistency between schools and would benefit from programs that are district-wide like PBIS. Many of our schools struggle with student behaviors that are difficult to manage with the resources we have. We lack mental health support to the extent that our students need it. We have done training for being “trauma-informed” but not all schools are using that information to better support and understand their students. We need an emphasis on students and families in our district. Their aren’t many good outreach programs to families and that could be really beneficial to our students and their schools.

- **Micro managing is the death of good leadership.** The communication gap across the district is wide and deep. There are many administrators that wear many hats, not all the
hats fit the administrators. There are many administrators/teachers/Workers that feel pigeon holed.

- We do have some schools that are more difficult than others, one being Addison Middle School. There has been a change over of principals multiple times in the last few years and parents really want stability in that school. Also, there are schools that are in need of renovation, repairs, etc. and overcrowding is a concern in some schools. We do receive $5.0 million annual through debt funding from the City of Roanoke each year to maintain our school buildings. Roanoke City Schools is responsible for the debt on that bond funding but we are able to plan for capital improvements knowing that the funding is available each year.

- Culture of central office is toxic - directors and coordinators seem to each be out for themselves, and afraid of retaliation. A lot of fear about speaking up, asking questions, making mistakes, etc. - which then is communicated explicitly and implicitly to building leaders and teachers.

- There is a lack of trust in many central office staff members. Many employees feel like central office staff members do not create an atmosphere of collegiality and trust. They are combative, do not trust building-level staff, and trash-talk other principals and teachers behind their back to other principals. Staff do not feel like they can openly communicate with central office staff (particularly executive staff) without fear of retribution. Two years ago, a staff survey was conducted by an outside company that found issues with communication. Unfortunately, the questions were written poorly so the survey could not zone in on the actual issues with communication. The central office staff viewed it as issues with literally communicating initiatives to teachers, ie a direct line of communication. As a result, executive staff put the blame on principals but nothing really changed. In reality, the communication concerns were the threatening culture established by executive staff and the Superintendent. Additionally, our SPED department is suffering. On a yearly basis, we are severely short-staffed. SPED teachers have 20+ kids on their caseload. Many leave to go to Roanoke County because they have 8 to 10 kids on their caseload. SPED teachers get burnt out quickly. I would recommend overstaffing SPED so that we could absorb the hit if a teacher leaves during the school year.

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

- Visibility. A new superintendent should be visibly present in ALL schools, not a select few. Experience. A new superintendent should have the years of experience an urban and diverse school district requires. Committed. A superintendent should be in this for the longevity of the position and know that true improvement takes time. Fair. A new superintendent should ask for a diverse panel of educators to be the check and balance for the system, making sure decisions are made with all schools and employees in mind and with input from this select task force of educators. Firm. A new superintendent should not be afraid of parents who do not have the best interests of their students as their highest priority. High Expectations. A new superintendent should hold our parent populations to the highest of expectations when it comes to being responsible parents to their minor students.
• Servant leader  
• Familiar with educational research  
• Knowledgeable on Special Ed and ELL  
• Knowledgeable on Virginia schools  
• Progressive  
• Supportive  
• Positive risk taker  
• Builds trust  

• Experience in an urban school district  
• Willingness to listen and make connections with ALL stakeholders.  
• Vision for professional development especially when it comes to reaching a high needs population  
• Promoter of Collegiality and one who builds relationships  
• Servant and participatory leadership style  

The Superintendent is the face and the name of the division. The characteristics that they must convey to the school board, students, parents, personnel, community and all stakeholders is a consistent message that they will do whatever it takes to make sure all students are successful and fully prepared for the next chapter in their lives. The superintendent needs to have a vision, a course for the division and a willingness to get there. The superintendent should be able to convey their message with strong communication skills that everyone can understand and rally around. They should be invested in the community and be known as a person that is approachable, caring, understanding, and wanting what is best for their student. The new superintendent should remember and continue to walk in the shoes of teachers, assistant principals, principals, coordinators, directors, assistant superintendents, parents, community members and (of course) students. They should have a strong background in urban education that gives them the unique perspective, knowledge and skills to be an effective leader in a 21st century world. The superintendent must have trust in the whole team within the division and quarterback them to success. There must be an expectation that the superintendent listens to all people in the division to determine the best course of action and willing to share decision making with others to move the division forward. There must be a trust between the superintendent and all stakeholders with undeniable respect to all. The Superintendent must be able to grow people professionally within the division and find people outside the division that are masterly skilled to give all students options for their future and move the division forward in a 21st century world. The superintendent must have the capacity to care for all people in their division and show empathy with an understanding that people can learn in different ways. The superintendent must make the tough decisions that is in the best interests of all stakeholders and be transparent as to why this is the best course of action. The potential RCPS Superintendent must be able to find the right resources and talent, place those resources and talent in the schools, facilities, central office, and all parts of the district. They must maintain those resources for continued success in the classroom, school, and district. They must regain the talent lost and open the door to those that want to return. The new superintendent must have a strong track record of teacher/administrator/staff retention, teaching/leadership success and overall student growth that has continuously shows the potential of all students. The new Superintendent must demonstrate graduation and job ready seniors that are ready for the next step in their lives. The Superintendent should produce and showcase skillsets that will decrease overall dropout rates in all levels of school including knowledge on how to get students to graduate to each grade level or overall on-time. The new Superintendent should demonstrate evidence, skills and a plan to retain 100% of English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, ELL, PE/Health, Vocational, Elementary and all other teachers along with administrators, aides, and other staff in the district. Retaining Teachers and Staff should be a strength that should be proven with their knowledge, skills and evidence provided. I
believe these are qualities that should be required and expected to be the next Superintendent in the City of Roanoke.

- I would like to see a younger person who is here for the inevitable future. A person who likes structure and process and who abides by it. A person who has experience with diversity. A person who understands that people are not happy about Roanoke City and can help RCPS get back on track. A person who understands that running a school division comes with obstacles and will not give up. A person who understands a checks and balances system. A person who does not retaliate against its employees or seeks retribution. A person who does not treat employees like they are five years old. A person who is consistent. A person who loves Roanoke City and wants to be PART OF THE CHANGE.

- They need to have experience with urban schools for 5+ years in an administrative role. I would personally like to see someone younger and more relatable to the students and families in our district. We need someone who is ready to roll up their sleeves and take on challenging situations like what we have at Lucy Addison Middle School. We need someone who understands that we have a large student population that receives special education services and who understands the importance in providing resources to those students and the faculty that serves them. We need someone who has experience and good quality classroom management skills. Our teachers need support at the highest level and need to feel that, which has not been the case for many years. We need someone fresh and ready, someone who can spark a passion for students’ achievement in everyone who is in contact with the district. We need a new reputation and someone who can bring positivity and change to Roanoke city.

- Respect for all persons regardless of Creed, Color, Position, and the ethical/sensible treatment of all. Fair in all dealings Honest to a fault Positive in communications and feedback.

- I hope the new leader would appreciate the talent of the administrators, teachers, and staff that are already in the school district and work with all of us to continue making Roanoke City Schools a great school district. I think that many people are concerned that a new leader will come in and want to replace top staff and we are concerned about job security. I hope the new person would have a listening ear and support all employees no matter their talents. This person definitely needs to have a background in urban education and know the challenges that come along with students who are dealing with adversity and trauma.

- Should be great at unifying diverse groups of people; interested in becoming a part of the community and building personal relationships with school staff; and have an understanding of cutting-edge educational practices and how we can move Roanoke City Schools forward.

- Garnering input from all staff members is critical. Valuing each staff member would be welcome. Working to decentralize the hierarchy; many staff members feel disconnected from the Superintendent and Executive staff.
**Classified Staff**

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- There are a lot of different people. We have challenges but we never lose hope that things will get better.
- Roanoke is a great community. It is a small city but still has a lot of options for families and professionals.
- Roanoke is a beautiful, family-friendly area with many outdoor, art and educational activities. We have a diverse population that is mindful of engaging in continuous growth and progress.
- 1-Many outdoor opportunities including hiking, biking, kayaking, running etc. along with music festivals. 2-Variety is restaurants and community vibe 3-Quaint Raleigh Court and South Roanoke Neighborhoods
- Close proximity to different attractions such as the Appalachian trail/Blue Ridge Parkway, Mill Mountain Zoo & Star, different breweries to hang out at, as well as the Greenway. Lots of diversity throughout the community.
- Roanoke has a lot of diversity and is wonderful about celebrating it! There are many outdoor activities and festivals all year round to participate in. There is something for everyone here.

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Most of the students do what they need to do. It’s the few that are insubordinate. There’s a lot of recent construction on our schools, they look nice and have up to date technology.
- Roanoke City Schools offer more options to their students in programs than the surrounding systems. RCPS has some very dedicated teachers who care for the kids and their learning environment.
- The city schools has a staff population that is diverse and full of hard-working professionals with a great knowledge base in their areas of expertise and with a passion to help and education students.
- 1-Diverse population 2-Opportunities for a variety of classes...Arts, Music, ROTEC, AP and DE 3-RVGS across from PH
- There is a career and technical school that students can attend to take classes in different career options such as auto mechanics, carpentry, culinary, etc. There’s also the governor’s school. In the last year, they created an adaptive art program for students with special needs. They can also take other electives as well. There’s an amazing junior ROTC program in the district and they get to participate in different parades.
- Our schools have committed employees that pull together and fill in the gaps when we are short handed.
What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- The students don’t respect each other and they don’t respect authority. There needs to be greater focus on mental health.
- Massive staff turnover, RCPS has a habit of running off very good teachers and administration. Low staff morale, with the lack of support from the current administration the staff feels beat up and unhappy with their professional lives and thus leaves for surrounding school systems. Classroom discipline is an issue with the lack of support from their administration. Making it difficult for all of the students to learn and get the best classroom education they deserve.
- Roanoke City schools has similar issues as many urban school populations, including the affects of poverty and communities that have been historically discriminated against. It would be helpful for a new superintendent to be aware of the adverse effects of mental health issues, homelessness, systemic racism, etc. and have ideas for how to combat these issues. Having an understanding of populations that have always had difficulty in school and how this affects student dropouts, absenteeism, etc.
- 1-Need for additional security on school grounds (PHHS)- very concerned with amount of fighting  2-Behavioral concerns and violence (PHHS)- take a look at how behaviors are managed in the middle schools. By the time the students reach high school, behavior is out of control. Very disrespectful students.  3-Understaffed classrooms (SPED dept)  4-Need for quality employees-Salaries in the surrounding areas are more competitive. Less busy work and diverse thinking/teaching in the classroom  5-Need additional qualify staff and support in the counseling department (PHHS)  6-DRUGS should not be tolerated. Drug dogs present every few days would be helpful.
- One of the biggest issues is pay for the classified staff. We don’t get paid much more each school year (increases by 20 cents) which causes a lot of staff to have to look for second jobs in order to make ends meet. We also feel unappreciated for all of the hard work that we put in; especially those of us who are 1:1’s and have challenging things to deal with during the day. The summer pay for those who work summer school shouldn’t be less then what we make during the school year. It should be the same and follow the same schedule (end of June for the first two weeks of summer school,middle of July for the 2nd two weeks and end of July for the last 2 weeks). The current summer school pay schedule has us waiting a month before we get paid again and a lot of people have big bills that hit the first of every month. Our hours are another issue. Currently we only get 35 hrs a week when we could be getting 40 a week & we lose a bit of pay if we work over our scheduled time. Morale is pretty low and there’s a distrust in the Central office. When there’s notifications for bad weather, it would be nice to know the night before if there’s going to be a closing or delay so people can make the proper arrangements if they have children & DON’T wait until last minute to make a change in the call because it puts a lot of staff’s lives at risk if they have to travel in bad weather from any distance.
- Students are allowed to say and do anything they wish with no repercussions. Some principles are impossible to please and allowed to skip standard request policies that causes unnecessary panic and concern someone has not done their job when in fact the issue was not given the proper time to be taken care of by the correct channels.
Our schools are chronically short on teachers, aides, and substitutes. It wears on employee morale and makes it difficult to offer students the quality education that they deserve. Lucy Addison Middle School is the poster child for this situation.

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

- Listening and communication skills  
  Know what needs to be done and how to accomplish that  
  Leadership- support from admin

- I would like a superintendent who will work with and coordinate the school calendar with Roanoke County, Salem, and other surrounding schools. The fact each system has very different schedules is ridiculous. My kids attend city schools, my wife works for the county. We have to scramble to find child care for them for two weeks because each system starts at different times. This is very hard and unfair to the students and staff who work in another system but want to live and raise a family in Roanoke City.  
  We want a superintendent who will focus on the overall wellbeing of their teachers and students. With strong happy (secure feeling) teachers, they perform better and thus the student's benefit. A superintendent who only focuses on test results is destined to fail their community and students. The next few years with our children's education and strength and support of the schools will determine if my family will remain in Roanoke City.

- Being trauma-informed. Being able to lead with a sense of understanding and unity.  
  Addressing common areas in school where students can "fall through the cracks."

- 1-Experience in large diverse school communities with varying physical and emotional needs   2-Open minded and flexible  
  3-Approachable and present IN the schools  
  4-Educated in Behavioral Management and Pediatric Mental Health  
  5-Works well with others-team player  
  6- Active Listener

- Honesty  
  Caring  
  Appreciative of ALL staff that put their heart and soul into helping students of all ages including the special needs students  
  Transparent  
  Willing to get out and visit each school to see what goes on at each school - especially in the Special Education areas of each school  
  Good listener  
  Genuine  
  Open minded  
  Trustworthy  
  Doesn’t micro manage each school  
  Hold meetings with staff, students & parents to see what’s going on and if any changes need to be made so everyone can see & have the ability to make their voices heard on different “issues” that may be on their minds  
  Kind Encouraging when interacting with staff and students as well as the community

- This person should possess an equal amount of common sense as they do education and/or degrees. Not afraid to stand firm in the face of political/social groups.  
  Have hands on experience, understanding and respect for each support trade and/or skill required to provide a safe and comfortable environment for the teaching and administrative staff each and every day.  
  Recognition and respect of all employees no matter their roll goes a long way!  
  Being belittled must not be tolerated.

- The new superintendent needs to be supportive of employees and take employees' first hand knowledge into consideration when making decisions that affect employees. The new superintendent should not feel the need to rule by fear and intimidation, but have more of an attitude of give and take especially since they are not on the front lines and have no idea how that feels these days unless they have been in the classroom on a regular basis.
Community Members

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Dedicated teachers
- Beautiful diversity
- Many highly involved community organizations
- Museums, concerts, parks, cultural activities, small town feel
- Roanoke is a progressive, diverse city comprised of neighborhoods with historic and distinct personalities.
- A surprising amount of diversity and urbanism in a small community.
- Cost of living.
- The Gainsboro community is full of Black history. The next superintendent leading Roanoke City needs to have a deep understanding and commitment to the causes taking place within this community and the children, parents, and stakeholders that live within. This means grassroots recruitment to hire qualified candidates within THIS community to work with RCPS youth.
- Diverse community with great amenities and high quality of living
- We continue to work to improve
- There are many great people in the community that care about the education of the children in our city. More has to be done to promote those who are qualified within the school system.
- Family oriented, diverse population, local businesses
- The diversity and small town in a city feels unique to me in a great way. I love the low cost of living, mountain hiking, and short commute to work. This area is very caring, and it serves as a hub for smaller towns to come in for health care and other services. The amount of volunteering that the community performs is astounding.
- We have a strong community of great, generous people who give their time, money and effort to helping others. Whether you love the city and urban life or quiet countryside, the great outdoors or a bustling retail space, Roanoke has it all for someone seeking a new home to call their own.
- Every individual is of equal value
- We care about our community. We are constantly striving to make it better by helping one another out and sponsor events to empower people and children in our community through education, nutrition and health, exercise, making our community safer, etc.
- Diverse population, composed of working class
- Low cost of living
- Adequate recreational options
- Strong progressive faith community
- The streets are neat and clean. The traffic is not real bad. Neighbors mind their own business and are easy to get along with.
- Diversity, having one another's back, proud of heritage
- It is becoming more and more diverse
• Diverse, small but lots of opportunities for recreation, no traffic, beautiful
• Lots of diversity and potential for growth. Many dedicated people willing to make Roanoke a great city.
• The willingness of the community to come together when someone is in need.
• A well rounded area with living possibilities for any interest or life style. We are blessed with amenities for anyone.
• BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS, GREAT SCHOOLS, GREAT TEACHERS,
• I love that my community rallies together to better not only adults but youth in the community as well.
• Roanoke City is dynamic with a growing population of young families attracted by quality housing, jobs, and a true sense of community.
• Natural beauty, quality of life, growth of VTC
• Wonderful outdoor activities, great musical scene, cost effective place to live. Community mostly supports its educators if trust is established.
• Passionate & Pride NW
• wonderful outdoor amenities, high tech/health care, low cost of living, neighborhood schools
• Very diverse for a small city

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

• Dedicated hard working teachers Diverse student population
• Dedicated teachers and principles with fiscally supportive supervisors
• RCPS is home to neighborhood schools with loyal constituencies. We have a core of extremely loyal - and effective - educators who have weathered many storms.
• Somehow, there are still dedicated teachers who love their students who manage to hang on and try to make a difference, despite threats to their safety and mental health. We used to have a plethora of pathways for students to succeed, now it’s just a community of fear with no advanced programs, lowering the standards to pass children who haven’t achieved passing grades to make it look like the graduation rate has risen, while teachers a drowning in work, fear, and hostility.
• Diversity
• Neighboring schools like Lucy Addison are rich in cultural history. The school was named after pioneering educator and administrator of the same name who served as principal of the Harrison School (now the Harrison School Apartments). The next Superintendent coming in MUST understand Roanoke's rich history.
• The teachers and staff.
• Asking for help to provide quality education
• Provide those teachers who have proven they can do the job with promotions and advancement. Schools are challenging today and you need teachers who are in it for the long haul.

• Diversity, stem learning

• The teachers do what's best for the children despite enormous pressures. I know many teachers who feed children from their own pockets.

• The teachers, without question. The teachers care so much about their students and community, and deserve to have a leader who watches out for them and has their backs in any given situation, because they work tirelessly (evenings, weekends, sports, clubs, donating money, raising funds for their own materials) and deserve someone who cares about their staff.

• Every student deserves equitable distribution

• It is close by. It has always been a good school. Besides being historic, advance programs were offered in space and advance math. This school also serve the community in sponsoring events. This school means everything to then.

• Same as above.

• CTE Programs Enrichment options

• Don't have children in school, so I am unaware.

• Sports. Many people gather for the history of sports in our schools.

• I love the Colonels pride both new and its alumni’s

• Diverse, safe, great for college bound students, trauma informed work is amazing

• Great teachers and students eager to learn.

• The teachers for the most part, are great. There are a few that the current superintendent has allowed to get away with a lot more than they should.

• Very well intentioned people other than one.

• GREAT SCHOOLS, TEACHERS, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

• Our schools have a wide range of course offerings not present in other school districts across the state.

• As a parent whose children attending Roanoke City Schools from start to finish, I cannot say enough good things about the quality of education and experiences afforded to Roanoke City Public School Students. Most of all, I love the diversity of people and cultures that influenced my children to be the caring, compassionate adults they are today.

• Dedicated teachers, beautiful facilities, diverse student population

• Great schools, some better than others. Good teachers and administrators who do a wonderful job, when left alone to do their job and are supported by administration.

• Lucy Addison is a legacy Patrick Henry has a mixture of colors & ethnics

• walkable, community centered, great physical plant
• Strong arts programs, potential for expanded career tech and accelerated programs

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

• Taking over a system that's been run on fear of speaking up Teachers feel over extended and under appreciated Parents and community need to become partners with the schools and feel empowered

• Toxic culture  Fights Cheating scandals  Race issues Employees leaving daily Staff Turnover Kids are disrespectful  School violence More fights Ineffective upper management Incompetent and unqualified special ed dept Culture of fear, hostility Entire division is just lipstick on a pig  Beware. No support from community.  Hostile social media outlets with public humiliation used as a tactic  Bullying all over even adults

• Writing the following does not bring me joy but it is necessary. Our administration rules through fear and intimidation. This has been modeled by the Superintendent, who, by all accounts (and unfortunately), has acted with ruthless vindictiveness. Our incredible turnover is a result of many manifestations of this “management style.” Teacher morale is low. Generally, administrators either learn to mimic the Superintendent's leadership or leave. The message, delivered faithfully by many principals and central administrators, is "Teachers, no matter what you do, you will never be good enough." Honestly, I am hesitant to even submit this response, and I am certain that school district technology staff are, at the direction of the Superintendent and her most loyal staff, are monitoring who participates. Note, as evidence, the central administrator was sent to the teacher stakeholder meeting to observe who attended and what was shared. I participate in the feedback process at my own peril.

• Gerrymandered districts at the middle school level which cause unnecessary animosity, frustration, and anger among students. A lack of support for teachers and administrators, siding with students out of fear of angering parents. A lack of true school safety; not enough SRO’s. A focus on preserving a positive image through “community relations” over actual school improvement, safety, and holding students accountable. Lowering passing standards to inflate the graduation rate. An absolute lack of trust and communication between “central” and the schools. A complete failure (and apparently no accountability for this failure on the part of the teachers and administrators) at the elementary level to prepare students to succeed at grade level in middle school.

• Improving test scores, reducing drop out rates, enhancing trades, improvement in guidance - counseling, reducing class sizes and changing the current instructional environment under the present leadership. The use of school facilities after school hours.

• In response to Governor Ralph Northam’s Executive Order No.39, the district must address the barriers that are keeping competent teaching candidates, who have graduated from an accredited teacher preparation program, out of the classroom. One of the biggest threats to history education in Roanoke City is inconsistencies with the PRAXIS tests and alternative measures must be found. Many teachers, especially of color, are receiving mix information about the PRAXIS type and scores, or many of them simply are not passing the test at all. According to a 2019 National Council on Teacher Quality Report, only 38% of Black candidates and 57% of Hispanic candidates ever pass the most common
teacher licensure exams. This is compared to 75% of White teacher candidates who pass the same test. In other words, Black educators are more likely to pass the Bar Exam than they are to pass the PRAXIS and therefore this blocks many of them from being able to teach African American history in Roanoke City classrooms and this epidemic must be addressed so that our students can have the tools needed to succeed for tomorrow.

- There is absolutely a culture of fear among RCPS staff for things like making new suggestions, speaking up when something is wrong, addressing concerns that might make the school system look bad, etc. The new super will have a major culture shift to address and should know they face a serious distrust of central office by teachers and staff. Additionally, many of the programs, policies and processes in RCPS are just inefficient and outdated and need to be overhauled. (One of sooo many examples: please change teacher pay to be spread over 12 months instead of 10. Teachers are already underpaid, and making them go 2 months/year without a paycheck is archaic. Most other school systems pay over 12 months). There is a very diverse student body that needs to be nurtured and cared for in completely different ways and that will be tough to do in this community.

- Knowledge of the current issues within the school system. Inadequate tools and educational discipline, etc.

- Be open with the school staff and public. Let there be an open dialogue between school board, administration and teachers.

- Lack of trust btw community and school board, lack of schools supporting their teachers

- The new superintendent needs to know that Roanoke City Schools has engaged in a top-down, bullying administrative culture for some time. It started at the Superintendent level and bled into too many school administration teams. Many teachers left due to the pressure and lack of respect for their autonomy and expertise. At some point, the micro-managing must stop, and the respect for highly-qualified educators should begin. By the way, I am a happy teacher in Roanoke County Schools...I live in Roanoke City and have spoken with many teachers in my city.

- There needs to be strong leadership that SUPPORTS their teachers. When the administration does not support their teachers, their classroom management suffers, and in turn, the students suffer. It's a hideous cycle that has been in decline for the last few years, and part of that is because the teachers do not feel they are supported by our current administration, and are too afraid to speak out for fear of their careers, as those who do are either transferred or shoved so far into the shadows that they end up quitting. Lucy Addison Middle School is a prime example of no administration support. The parents are consistently told the teachers are at fault, instead of holding the kids responsible for their actions (threatening teachers, stabbing them with pencils, cursing them, stealing, etc.). Those kids are written up and IMMEDIATELY SENT BACK TO CLASS - this is unacceptable, and admin does it because our SUPERINTENDENT has told them to - accreditation is important, but it shouldn't be the only focus a superintendent has. We hear "the students are traumatized" and need to avoid punishment - how will these children learn to work in the real world after graduation when they have not been held accountable for their actions? Attendance directly tied to accreditation
means no student can be punished through expulsion or suspension because it ruins the numbers. That is not fair to teachers or other students who want to be there and learn.

- The Superintendent needs to be aware that there is a lack of trust between students and families you will serve based on a pattern of past discrimination, misconduct, and unethical conduct at the superintendent and administration level.

- This community is low income and with hard working people. It was a historic african american high school founded by Lucy addison. They need to know the residents take the education of their students very seriously. Trust could be an issue. We need someone that is a great communicator and really behind this community. They in turn will support and rally around the new superintendent.

- Awareness of diverse cultural needs. Must be comfortable with diverse populations of urban city. Honesty

- Transportation Homelessness Some neighborhoods in despair Addison leadership stability

- That we can't continue with the status quo. The children's needs and education must be met. The Superintendent must care that the youths needs are being met with great teachers and great principals. For the schools in the predominantly black neighborhoods, they need to see and have black teachers.

- Diversity - Trauma informed - Well rounded - low SES in some schools - genuinely being a kind person, and always remaining humble and true to the cause.

- The teachers that are being hired are not as diverse as the student body

- Morale, problematic relationship with majority of the community,

- Low morale, difficulty getting parent involvement in certain schools.

- As I stated above, the current superintendent allowed many of the teachers and other administrators such as principals to get away with things that should not have been allowed. We need someone who is not going to be a push over, puts the children’s needs and safety above all else, and someone who is approachable for the public.

- The difficult attitude of the loud minority in any situation.

- WE NEED TO END PRIVATIZATION & PUT TRANSPORTATION BACK UNDER THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS UMBRELLA NOT A PRIVATE COMPANY...

- There is a gross amount of systemic racism present district wide toward teachers, parents, and most importantly students of color.

- This City supports its students and wants all children to succeed in school. RCPS has made tremendous strides to improve benchmarks of success including graduation rates, accreditation of schools and SOL pass rates. The system struggles with a high percentage of students in poverty which puts stressors and challenges on the system. There are a number of nonprofit, faith, business and organizational partners who step into support children and their families in the region.

- Budget cuts have eliminated many teacher positions so teachers are stretched too thin to handle the challenges of an urban school district.
• There is a disparity between schools based on location in the city. We have a diverse population with particular needs that need to be met. Teachers often feel unsupported or targeted by administration. Thus area needs improvement.

• The schools are very very segregated. That is a problem that can be fixed! No one felt they could really share ideas without repercussions. Employees will send private messages to ____ but fear liking posts or commenting or talking to rcps directly. Out sourcing substitutes and bus drivers have belittled them and made them feel like cogs in a wheel, they are dismissed without exit interviews which masks how they have been treated. More worried about graduation numbers & not worried that too many graduates can't read, count money, or do basic math.

• RCPS has teacher retention problems due to bullying from the top down.

• Depleted leadership team at school and district level, general mistrust

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

• An understanding of how important quality staff is to quality schools. A willingness to support staff. An understanding of the dynamics of a highly segregated racial/socioeconomic community that is predominantly low income and very diverse.

• Miracle worker. Must provide support to staff. Hold students accountable. Get rid of violent kids to save the good ones. Special ed background. Must have some experience in city or will leave like everybody else. Needs to know what getting into. Impossible task. Decades of poor leadership to overcome. No small children because you will never be home.

• The new Superintendent must be ready for a volatile political environment and a culture of distrust. Our most recent Superintendent has ruined careers and personal lives. Her inner circle treats teachers with impunity and disrespect. The new Superintendent will need to quickly identify massive holes in our administrative configuration, including lack of instructional leadership, total lack of a professional development department, and multiple administrators who fail to meet basic standards for professionalism and who blame every misstep on the teaching core.

• Empathy. Honesty. Dedication to holding students (and parents!) accountable in a way that will help them become successful, contributive members of society. Openness to a variety of pathways to graduation, but a dedication to high standards and consistent enforcement of achievable rules and consequences across all school and paths.

• Diversity acumen, successful track record in urban schools, listener, engagement skills, strong communicator, leadership skills to pull the community together as one. Roanoke is one of the most segregated cities in the south. Place resources where the greater needs are like Hurt Park Elem.

• 1. VISION: They must be able to answer to all the constituencies within the Roanoke City School district promptly. The newly elected superintendent should also have a clear idea of what needs to be done for the good of the district. This includes setting a vision, objective, and financial plan for a minimum 5-year contracted term for the district with a 3-year minimum contract for newly elected principals who must follow the same framework. 2. LEADERSHIP: A great superintendent is knowledgeable about the best
practices for maximizing school achievement (e.g., Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence)
where support is given to the teachers who in turn support and enhance student learning.
3. ACTIVE LISTENING & OPEN COMMUNICATION: The new superintendent must
take in all the differing viewpoints as well as communicate the needs and
accomplishments of the district. This may mean communication with media, school
events, public meetings, and even through written reports.

- Competence in management, preferably multiple years of classroom experience in an
  urban setting, love of children, honesty and a commitment to transparency, an
  appreciation for extracurricular activities, a commitment to standing behind their teachers
  including an effort to improve student behavior, and working towards appropriate
  funding for teacher pay AND classroom supplies.

- Workable plan to turn these issues into a positive environment for the Student, Teachers
  and Parents, affording a healthy educating experience. Superb counseling experience.

- Should have a strong background in diversity and be able to manage a wide socio-
  economic gap between students in the school system.

- Fairness, strong leadership, solid communication, sees the bigger picture, must be able to
  work collaboratively with a diverse population, honest, empathy, compassion, bring
  community and schools together

- Positivity, trust, a balanced life, a willingness to delegate fully...An honest respect for
  EvErY employee of the district, including bus drivers and custodians. A willingness to
  listen and act via anonymous surveys, meetings with teacher groups, and meetings with
  the community. The Superintendent must begin with a true respect and trust of others,
  and if there is reason for concern, work with the individual or group.

- Supportive of their staff. Period, full stop. Determined to get to the root of the problem
  - forget treating the symptom (teachers fleeing the district) and find the cure (support
  teachers instead).

- Must be willing to seek out the truth even if it poses a liability to the district, and resolve
  problems fairly

- We need to consider a qualified African American person. Someone who is passionate in
  making sure children of color succeeds. Someone who can relate and respond to needs of
  the african american community from which these students are from.

- Transparency

- Regional collaboration  Building strong school leaders  Financial acumen  Recognition of
  the historical narrative of the division

- Be aware of cultural differences. Care about the students, and the teachers. Of course,
  have necessary credentials for the job.

- Trustworthy  Honesty  Transparency  The ability to fit in with the students and families
  that make up their district  Putting themselves in the shoes of teachers and students, and
  the challenges both parties face  Driver of change, especially for diversity and inclusion
  "from the bottom up."

- He or she should have a listening ear to the teachers and the parents, They should also
  add classes to help adolescents enter the workforce as soon as they live school.
Plumbing electrician and carpenter are still needed. Truck drivers managers retail and people who can do hair and make. Have a good sense of the arts

• Openness to innovation, building partnerships, transparency, experience with a diverse school system

• Great communicate, creative, experience leading a school and working with the community. Best principal I’ve ever worked with.

• A person who will stand their ground and be firm but still someone who the staff, children, and community feels is approachable. Someone who gets out and visits the schools and not just sits in an office all day. The students need to see who is in charge and also understand that this person is here to help them. This could be good for the teachers as well.

• Having lived in Roanoke city for over 20 years, watching my 2 kids go through city schools, working in 3 different school divisions

• HONESTY, INTEGRITY, COURAGE TO STAND UP TO CRITICISM, ABLE TO GET THE GRADUATION RATE TO 100% AND KEEP ACCREDITATION AT 100%

• 1) The next superintendent should have a strong sense of community. 2) The next superintendent should put students. 3) The next superintendent should be aware of integrating the school district socioeconomically.

• Collaboration, creativity, ability to convene partners to address systemic issues, unwavering commitment to high standards of excellence in education,

• Be pro teacher. Build positive relations with the community.

• Must be open to hear all concerns from community and school personnel. Be supportive and respect individual school administrators, and trust them to handle school issues. We do not want a micromanager. We need a younger, enthusiastic leader open to suggestions and willing to listen to folks with experience in our school system.

• Team builder Be willing to hear from the community & have dialogue not just make statements and walk away

• they should listen to all stakeholders

• Good communicator, honest, open, ability to connect with different communities
Parents
Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Our community has a lot of potential to be great, especially if the power that would be more community oriented rather than only economically.
- The city of Roanoke has a vibrant and diverse population. Many of us were raised in the Roanoke region with some of us staying and some of us returning to the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. Everything you need/want is within a 20-minute drive. Hikes on the AT, greenways, downtown market, breweries and wineries, plethora of restaurants with every flavor, theatres, the Symphony, Opera, sports, college campuses, churches, etc. You will also find a genuine friendly community of people who want to work together toward common and united goals.
- I live in the Raleigh Court community, and I love all the available activities for families. Also it is a very linguistically, economically, and racially diverse area.
- I like how the homeless program help with students. We have had a lot of Professional Ball Players, Doctors, Lawyers, Teachers, Engineers from this area that we to Public Schools here in Roanoke.
- N/A
- Safe small-ish town surrounded by beautiful mountains. Lots of opportunities for outdoor activities. Four seasons, but mostly mild. No traffic!
- Our community knows how to come together. We believe in equality and fairness.
- The kids want to do better.
- NE Roanoke is a diverse community and the new superintendent needs to have an understanding of the people and causes that are taking place within this neighboring community and its history. He or she should also try looking at hiring more qualified individuals within the Roanoke community who have graduated from Roanoke City Public Schools to come to teach and contribute to the school system.
- Desirable quality of life, moderate climate with all four seasons, outdoor activities
- Strong sense of community, great outdoor recreation, greenways, light traffic, mountains, low cost of living, vibrant downtown, unique neighborhoods, festivals.
- Roanoke is a warm, inviting city with a thriving downtown, growing healthcare industry and plenty of activities for outdoor enthusiasts with the nearby Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains.
- Sidewalks
- There is not alot for middle aged kid to do, so this is why there is teen pregnancy and crime also there is no strong male role models for them to learn from. Nor females
- Roanoke City is a compassionate and welcoming city. It has beautiful landscapes and culture is weaved all around. There are many family friendly outings readily available and most are conveniently located.
• Neighborhood with sidewalks, lots of kids and neighborhood school for activities and convenience

• Roanoke is a great place to raise a family, amazing performing arts programs, wonderful things to do in the arts and outdoor activities, low cost of living

• It is a beautiful place to live. The arts are great. There are great restaurants. The healthcare is superior. There are so many things to do there really is such a sense of a close community.

• Affordable housing. Access to outdoor amenities.

• Please have 10 of your recruiters/staff call real estate gents in the ROANOKE Valley. Pretend to be relocating to this area with elementary school aged kids. Document what they tell you about the area, economy, school systems, etc... I think you will find it interesting to see where they steer you into house purchasing with young kids. The ROANOKE Convention and Visitors Bureau has a ton of great insight. Please reach out to them. Grandin Village is a treasure (Theatre, Pop’s, restaurants, religious opportunities co-op, etc...) Black Dog Salvage The Star Hiking opportunities The Appalachian Trail The Greenway

• Surrounded by outdoor assets: River, blue Ridge mountains, greenways City with friendly streets, where most children could walk or bike to school Full of opportunities for children to learn Arts, culture, history, diversity, music, sports, outdoor activities City proximity to national landmarks and historic sites: Monticello, James Town, Washington DC, Richmond, Williamsburg. City hub for advance medical research Strong neighborhoods

• It is safe. My children can ride their bikes in the neighborhood and I don't worry about their safety.

• Good partnerships between non-profits and schools, most of city supports the public schools (even those with means to go private) and wants them to succeed.

• Large population of families with two, college-educated parents, lots of outdoor activities to enjoy the mountains, rivers and lakes in Southwest Virginia, educated and engaged school board committed to continuous improvement of the schools and preparing students for life after graduation.

• The community supports strong academics as well as sports, music, arts, forensics, etc. Parents and teachers care and are engaged with RCPS but this relationship could be strengthened. Roanoke is a city in which one person can make a difference. Many people are working and volunteering to make Roanoke a stronger, better community.

• It has potential for growth.

• Cohesive, supportive, strong parents and students; outdoor activities; hospital growth and creation of new jobs; young, growing community

• Roanoke city is a beautiful city in the valley with wonderful mountains and outdoor activities. The close knit city is diverse, friendly and a wonderful place to live. We’ve attracted so many companies and young families from big cities to live in our little town.

• Our community has a lot of diversity. Also our community is growing and has a lot to offer.
N/A

The good things about my community are we support our local sports. More young adults are being more active in our community.

Community is very involved in our school.

Roanoke is the most wonderful place to live. We are unusual in that we are a small city while simultaneously serving as the medical, financial and legal hub for western Virginia, eastern Tennessee and parts of West Virginia as well. We are a tight knit community where people take care of one another. Roanoke has a vibrant outdoor sports scene with award winning biking and hiking opportunities only minutes away. In the past ten years we have been discovered in the restaurant arena with a growing foodie scene as well. Roanoke is a wonderful place to settle down and raise a family. We love living here as we have all the perks of mountain life while being a short drive to beaches and big cities.

Involved, great outdoor options
We come together as a whole family.
Diverse population, beautiful landscape, always something to do here, small city
The community believes in it's youth; they understand the importance of providing structure and stability to give them a foundation to grow!
Beautiful mountains, nature is close by, not too much traffic, moderate cost of living
Very diverse
Family oriented
Our community parents are looking for someone whom would be passionate about helping our community kids stay educated. Education is a key priority to keeping poverty low and not high. Education is a key to keep our community safe. We need someone who cares about our kids future.
Our community is beautiful and has plenty of outdoor activities.
Hard Workers, Determined to be successful, Kids with BIG Dreams, Want to Better Daily
There are some really talented kids in our area if they are able to use their talents in the school environment. There are some good teachers but also some bad that you can tell don’t really want to teach due to the lack of stability. It could be good if there was another middle school in NW Roanoke. I cannot express that enough!!! Ruffner needs to be rebuilt and made a middle school again.
It's the perfect size -- large enough to offer opportunities, small enough for everyone to have an impact.
Small, great outdoor activities, nice people, good food, mountains.
We have concerned citizens that value input, feel connected and want to be valued by our schools
We have rich diversity in Roanoke, even though it is largely segregated by neighborhoods. We could do better there. The city supports music, theatre, dance, and
opera. The Blue Ridge Parkway offers endless nature/outdoor activities, restaurants and breweries are plentiful, and it’s just an easy place to live (weather, traffic, etc. are non-issues).

- Friendly, community oriented. A great place for families and young ones. Lots of great outdoor amenities. A small town feel, yet a diverse population.
- Beautiful, kind, innovative, smart
- Our community is pedestrian friendly, which creates an environment for meeting your neighbors and being outdoors. People are friendly and genuinely care about each other.
- Has lots of walkable amenities and live the fact my kids can walk to school
- We are a diverse community located in a beautiful area of the Blue Ridge Mountains, with excellent outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Lots of parks and libraries. There is educational programs at the libraries. Star City Reads works to educate children on the importance of reading.
- Diversity, a willingness to help one another, small town feel but with many cultural amenities.
- We are a community made up of hard working parents trying to support our children and teachers but we need help, someone with compassion, ready to fight so our youth have a chance.
- The diversity of the community has been neat to bring up our Caucasian son in.
- Great outdoor amenities-- park system, lots of playgrounds, greenway, hiking/biking/paddling sports. Opportunity for change and impact. People in Roanoke are poised for positive and community-based change.
- Diversity  Outdoor opportunities  Safe community/low crime rate
- People genuinely watch out for each other and are willing to help each other.
- Excellent cost of living. Many opportunities for outdoor activities (hiking, biking, greenways, etc). Short commute times in general. Tremendous growth in healthcare as well as access to numerous nearby universities.
- Quality of life is fantastic - affordable housing across a number of different, personality-filled neighborhoods. Little traffic. Great downtown - always a festival, an exhibit or other cultural event for the family to enjoy. Incredible outdoor activities of all types. GoFest, Ironman, Holiday Lights at Explorer Park... on and on and on!
- The natural beauty is stunning and the kindness of the people here is equally attractive. Roanoke can seem like a big city at times but also holds a small-town appeal.
- small, very put together in some areas
- I am disabled and a single parent of 4, 15, 14, 5, 7. Most of resources are within walking distance and I live on the bus line, there is a park within walking distance and my oldest son's school is across the street.
- Roanoke City is a wonderful community. It’s a diverse and forward thinking mix of different cultures, focused on our outdoor green spaces and community schools. We have
several neighborhood schools in dire need of funding and services and need someone willing to look outside the box for solutions. Our teachers go above and beyond to support our students and we need a superintendent who will support these amazing teachers above all else.

- Diverse, progressive, reasonable cost of living, value for arts and culture.
- Access to the outdoors and city recreation. Local small neighborhoods. Connected to the city. Variety of opportunities and experiences for whole family. Community is accessible—people are welcomed and encouraged to get involved.
- Roanoke City is a fabulous place to live with a thriving downtown and outdoor activities. With the expansion of Carilion/Virginia growing more families will be moving to this area.
- My husband and I have lived in Roanoke our whole lives. We decided to stay and raise our own family here. Roanoke has a unique proximity to many areas and is the largest city in SW VA and because of that we have a very unique and diverse population. Many people that live here have multiple generations of family members here. Our city has a strong Black, LGBTQ, and immigrant community. We are nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Appalachia. We have strong ties to traditions among all of our communities.

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Our schools have a lot of good teachers and administrators that are very capable of making things happen if given the right opportunities.
- We have excellent teachers that will work tirelessly to get our children to learn. We have great athletic programs, along with fine arts and trade programs and STEM learning. Many parents spend thousands of hours of volunteering and money to supplement our city schools. We have both Alumni from both high schools that raise their families here. There are other families that move back to this region or here for the first time, and all of us want to work together to provide the very best education and learning environment.
- Are schools have very caring teachers who have high expectations for the students. I love that they urge them to reach the higher level, as opposed to being satisfied with reaching the minimum requirement.
- Just about all of the teachers I’ve ever interacted with are truly concerned, cared and committed to their students on every level.
- James Madison Middle School’s fine arts program. We have the strongest theatre program in the division.
- We have hard working Teachers and Staff at each of our school.
- N/A
- Fine Arts Programs: Art and Strings Programs beginning in middle school. Theater, too. Foreign Language Programs beginning in elementary school (teacher-dependent, but mostly good). Governor's School - awesome STEM program, rivaling any college-prep
program, and it's situated on PH campus. Lots of very dedicated, and truly talented teachers.

- Our schools are filled with children who are hungry for knowledge.
- There are many adults that want to help these kids do better and they make personal outside the realm of work sacrifices to make that happen.
- The great thing about my neighborhood that I am hoping the new superintendent will revisit are feeder schools. Schools like Westside Elementary that fed into William Ruffner Middle School (now closed) that fed into William Fleming High School created a unique experience for all. As a parent, I would have loved to pass the legacy on down to my children but cannot because the middle school that I attended is closed.
- Teachers, diversity, advanced placement classes, theatre, variety of clubs
- Passionate teachers, involved parents, good infrastructure.
- Our experience with the public schools have been excellent in our neighborhood elementary level and positive in the middle school years so far. Our principals are energetic, results-driven and truly involved in our students life on and off campus. They care about the character and behavior of our children in this modern tech-focused world.
- AP classes, diversity
- I can't tell you good things like finding what there has been 5 principles at addison jr since the beginning of the year
- Roanoke City Schools have some very caring staff and teachers! We also have some great kids!
- Caring compassionate teachers, very Pm supportive PTA
- RCPS has made amazing progress the last 15 years, with nationally recognized performing arts programs, and deep and lasting partnerships with local arts leaders like the Roanoke Symphony and SW VA Ballet. PHHS orchestra going to Carnegie Hall in April 2020.
- The good thing I have seen in my child is that they challenge the kids and the kids learn to be very independent and advocate for themselves.
- Highland Park - a community of dedicated professionals who clearly care about their students and the students' families
- Most RCPS teachers and support staff are caring people who love what they do - or else they would never have picked this profession. PLATO program, RVGS, RETEC, Amazing things/traditions happening in the 5th grade at Crystal Spring.
- My school Wasena elementary is diverse, is located in the heart of a strong neighborhood. Staff promote kindness as a pillar for education. Staff are engaged with children and support programs the promote health, wellness, enrich development and kindness. It is a great school
- They are full of teachers who care. They go above and beyond what they are required to do. My son's 4th grade teacher is providing tutoring to some of her students after school, no string attached.
• Dedicated teachers who want to educate the whole child, decent music and arts programs.

• Governor's School for math and sciences is outstanding! Patrick Henry High School has an excellent staff and administration. Crystal Spring Elementary is a stellar example of a fine community school meeting the needs of its students.

• RCPS has diverse class offerings for a wide range of interests with many talented devoted teachers. There are a variety of AP and Dual Enrollment classes. One unique and important aspect of RCPS is that you can attend PHHS, Governor's School and ROTEC all on the same campus in the same school year. Our athletics are strong and these kids could be great role models and leaders for others with the right support from above.

• They have potential to change for the better.

• Great teachers, great students, great potential for growth and innovation; amazing opportunity for the right leader to do great things here.

• Roanoke city public schools allows our children to grow in both person and mind. The number of people and teachers and students and friends they meet allow our children to grow as if they are living in a big city in a small town feel. The commitment of teachers to individual students is unbelievable. They affect all of their lives.

• N/A

• There starting to do better at turning around our sporting teams

• Students best interests, good after school options for working parents and summer options. Differentiated learning. Advanced learning opportunities.

• Our schools have top notched educators who care about their students, families, and community. Crystal Spring is a Blue Ribbon school where elementary children feel safe and cherished. James Madison Middle offers students the opportunity to learn and grow with a top notch theater program. Patrick Henry has something for everyone. The Forensics team has won the past five state championships! Excellence in athletics and the arts is emphasized. PH also offers a varied and rigorous AP class roster to prepare students for top notch Universities post graduation. The Ro—Tech program also offers trade training and computer science for any student who has interest. The Roanoke Valley Governor’s School is one of the finest opportunities for students focusing in math and science. It’s is unparalleled by local private schools.

• Plato, Governors school, a lot of nice teachers

• The teachers have the compassion for all students. Listen to the teachers not the principals. They have the resources.

• Wonderful music and arts programs.Governors school. Supportive school board

• Wonderful schools with Wonderful teachers and administrators that care about these kids. The foundation is set just need to strengthen the culture to keep future success

• Most schools have been renovated, several great principals, PLATO program

• 1-High academic opportunities such as DE/AP classes-PHHS  2-Strong Art Program-PHHS  3-Dedicated teachers who work with children w disabilities-PHHS  4-Friendly and helpful front office staff-PHHS
• Parent and teacher communication  Student activities  Staff

• We can definitely use someone who can further implement and put in place successful plans to build a better\stronger city school district.

• We have wonderful teachers that try hard to teach the kids the best they can.

• Kids that are hard working and wanting to learn daily. Teachers are committed to the cause but need support to help the children be successful

• Unfortunately there aren’t many good things because there are limited amount of schools. When Ruffner was closed, it caused an abundance of children of African-American decent to be placed in one other middle school, Lucy Addison. That has been the cause of many issues and the lack of teachers that can relate to the children culturally.

• I am proud of the arts programs in the schools, particularly the Orchestra and Theater opportunities. I like the small, neighborhood-focused elementary schools. The Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Math is a gem.

• Great leaders and teachers

• We have dedicated staff that want the best for our students but do not feel supported by current administration.

• Arts education is strong, honors programs offer a broad selection of courses, and a variety of sports and extracurricular activities are offered at most schools (some more than others).

• Our elementary school has been great. Caring teachers. Responsive to issues. Open door. Diversity.

• Quality teachers!

• Both of the schools that my children attend have excellent principals and caring staff. They both have active PTAs that do so much to improve the school community. I like that the schools are in neighborhoods and we can walk to school if we choose.

• The faculty care about the kids despite any press statements. Some of the most caring and kid centered people I know.

• The schools offer a great program in the arts, and have some excellent teachers.

• Reasonable class sizes, vested/interested teachers and staff.

• From my experience, we have teachers who go above and beyond to help students learn. We are striving together to make it work for the sake of their futures. My children are in elementary school.

• Again I love the diversity that the schools have in NW.

• Love the Pre-K program-- it is a great way to get younger kids ready for school. Would like to have it available to more kids and/or at more schools. Teachers and bus drivers who work with my child are amazing-- they use clear language and show real concern for the short and long term development and care for the kids.

• Safety  Quality teachers/staff  Parent support  Fine Arts program
• Majority of teachers care about the students. I pressed we have accredited schools. Great fine arts programs at all levels.

• So many opportunities for kids including the arts and music, STEM focus, Rotec program. The preschool and head start program are phenomenal.

• Neighborhood school full of teachers who truly care - we are in 5th and 4th grade and EVERY teacher, EVERY year has given their all to the students.

• The arts program is one of the best we’ve seen. I’ve heard multiple teachers and artists from other districts share how fortunate Roanoke is to have such a vibrant and dynamic arts program. Our teachers are amazing and there’s solid leadership at the schools and in the central office.

• loving teachers

• My children attend Roundhill Elementary and it is a wonderful school. I have no complaints.

• The teachers and staff are our biggest asset. I learn new things about them almost daily that surprise me and humble me regarding how they treat our city students with kindness and dignity. Going above and beyond their job descriptions to provide for the kids.

• Can only speak for PHHS, but it's a fantastic school, terrific academic offering, terrific arts program (reflective of the division's emphasis on the arts), broad athletic offering, terrific athletic boosters and PTA, and an amazing After Prom event.

• Diversity. Strong arts education, especially music. After school clubs. Strong school-staff morale and culture. Strong PTA.

• Although Patrick Henry High School has gone through a way too many administrators over the past year, it has been able to retain strong teachers. I have a child who is currently a student there and one who graduated four years ago. She is attending a top notch university and earned scholarships right out of high school because of her the academic classes she took at PH. Another strength of RCPS schools is the emphasis on fine arts including music, but they also have strong science and math classes. I would like to see the sports programs grow and perhaps recruit stronger coaches in some of the sports. At one point, the superintendent would not allow conditioning in off season, which only hurts students. Thankfully this has been restored.

• Our schools mirror what is happening in our community. We continue to make strides to bridge the gaps and scars of our segregated history. We have improved our graduation rates. And we continue to implement programs that will benefit the families in our district.

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

• The curriculum of the school is based so much on SOL test that the students sometimes miss the opportunity to retain the information long term because it's only taught for test purposes, once the testing is done the students are so relieved to be done they relinquish the information.
• Rebuild TRUST will be the most challenging aspect of this district. Clear and transparent communication with the Want to work With and Support the hard working people of this district. Listen to the parents as we have solutions and want to collaborate to help toward the common goals. The challenge will also be to bridge the gaps of people who have lost the Trust of the central administration as a whole. The new superintendent has much work to do, will need to hit the ground running and work in the trenches of our neighborhoods and not manage solely from their office. Together Everyone Achieves More!

• Many children come from the household where there is not a strong discipline, or consistency. Because of this you have to be willing to have accountability, and strong Consequences. If you are not willing to discipline the district will continue to be out of hand, and it will escalate so that the nonproblematic students, out of frustration start acting out as well. We need a strong superintendent who is willing to enforce discipline.

• The High Schools are too big, we need a third high school. The district needs to stop infantilizing its employees, for example, telling them what kind of shoes to wear. These are adults with college degrees. We do not work in an industrial or medical environment, where that type of issue is critical. Teaching assistants should be regular full time employees with paid leave and benefits. These employees have college degrees and make $16,000 per year. They often do planning and have responsibility for running their own small reading or math groups. They don't even make a third of what teacher's make. It's disgraceful!

• Landsdown Housing District is filled with gangs. It’s infiltrating the schools.

• trust issues, over crowded schools and buses. Lack of Parent Support.

• Behavior with youth

• Current SI is very supportive of the arts and we hope the incoming SI will also be as supportive. Kids thrive when they have creative outlets in school.

• They need to be prepared to fix and clean up the mess the last superintendent left.

• Many but one that stands out to me is respect for his/her employees need to be a priority.

• That many of our schools are not equipped with enough high-quality educators. This is surprising to me since I know so many of my classmates have graduated from Roanoke City Public Schools and have gone on to college and graduated from Teacher preparation programs from college so I do not know what seems to be the issue? Why hasn't _____ or members of the Roanoke City School Board personally reached out to some of these individuals to bring them back into Roanoke City classrooms to help some of these children, like my kids out? These issues need to be addressed immediately!

• There is an enormous shift needed in the culture of Roanoke City schools. Teachers have operated in an environment of fear of the superintendent which has detrimental to everyone. We need a superintendent that respects teachers instead of intimidating them. It will be important for the future superintendent to listen, welcome ideas and gain the trust of teachers.

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It will be important for the future superintendent to listen, welcome ideas and gain the trust of teachers.

- Avoid and reduce over-dependence on technology, maintaining better discipline, improving teacher morale, fixing the bus issue, paying employees decent wages, keeping parents informed, common sense management of school closures due to weather, getting teachers to teach and not show movies in class.

- As in many urban/city school districts, there is a great divide among socio-economic classes emerging together in an educational setting. Elementary age children do not get enough physical education.

- Teachers hate it here

- Finding more things for the youth to get involved in

- There have been a lot of issues with the school bus system in the city. Another very present and negative issue involving Roanoke City students are bullies in the schools. As a very involved parent and prior elementary teacher, I have seen consequences and/or punishment for such actions overlooked for too long and such actions need to be include more

- We the parents care deeply about our schools, are engaged and committed to our collective success, and are positive about the possibilities for continued success with a new superintendent.

- That there is a diverse student population.

- Many of our schools serve students who have to deal with so much. Our students need to know they are loved, they matter, and that we know that many of them carry burdens beyond what a child should. Many of our students need a welcoming school, a calm space, and some predictability in their lives. Our schools can be all of those things with enough support from those in a position to support. Many classrooms throughout the district do model this behavior. Additionally, the superintendent should know that the City of Roanoke's children have a 20% rate of cavities (VA Atlas of Community Health) and a high rate of heart disease. At the same time candy is often used as a incentive while taking away recess is a consequence in many of our schools. I would like to see a vision that comes from the top that encourages whole person wellness so that our students and then may stand a better chance at success in their lives in general.

- More security is needed at the high schools. Only 5 security guards for a 2000 student school community is not sufficient. Teachers should not have to feel the pressure of having to deal with behavior issues in the hallways. They are not paid to do that. They are paid to be happy teachers who care about the quality of education they are producing in their classroom. They are making learning fun and fair. Once again - call realtors in the ROANOKE Valley - see what THEY say about the school systems. Where do they steer you to purchase a house with small kids? — ROANOKE City? SALEM? ROANOKE County? Hiring and retaining teachers is a problem and has been for years. Teachers who leave never have exit interviews. On the other hand, teachers who have stayed for 20+ years are never asked for feedback or guidance as to how to retain other teachers. Teachers want to feel supported not fearful. Hire the best and brightest teachers - and Let them work their magic! If you hire the best teachers, support them - they will take care of the students. Also, it would be nice to see teacher advancement
opportunities where they can remain in the classroom. Students need more guidance through school counselors - especially in HS. They removed the class Senior Scholars where students could have had dedicated time to work on scholarships, essays, college prep, etc... Some students who are transitioning from RVGS to PHHS have no lunch period and are required to eat in class. Every person needs a mind break. Issues with contracted bus system, etc...

- Children are not being encouraged to walk or bike to schools. The city of Roanoke will actively work with the school administration to make safe routes to school a priority for the district. Schools are missing out on the opportunity to engage students in the outdoors, and promote healthy living.

- Elementary schools do not provide enough recess time. It is essential to fidgety little ones to burn off some energy. Middle schoolers are not challenged enough. My 6th grader is in the honors classes and is still reviewing subjects she learned in 5th grade, and it's February. She is not an exception, I hear this from other 6th grade students and their parents as well.

- A current school faculty culture that does not feel supported by central office, outdated ways of communication (no online registration, no text communication, early stages of social media engagement), PE program across the board that looks like it's 1950 (no thinking outside the box about what it means to develop a healthy lifestyle),

- There seems to be a case of the have and have nots and Roanoke could use some work on bridging the racial divide between white and black families in the community.

- While there are behavior issues at the schools, these kids are like any others and want to be lifted up and shown that someone cares. Creating a culture of rising above and beyond bad decisions and being the best you can be is important, no matter what your future path. There is value in ROTEC and the many certifications that RCPS offers. The public and the kids need to know that graduating good citizens is as important as sending kids to college. We need to put high value on teachers and staff that are often overworked and underpaid. This is a calling for them and morale needs to improve. While pay raises are nice, supporting staff emotionally is also very important. They need resources to succeed. The athletic director at PHHS is a placeholder. There are super strong athletics that do not get the support that they need and there is no effort for outreach to the community by the AD. Scheduling of events is random and does not seem to acknowledge the testing calendar. The AD does not encourage school/community spirit. These people can make a difference if properly chosen and held accountable. The school board should be more actively engaged in the community with open conversations when problems arise or even when recognizing something good.

- All the schools on the middle school level especially Addison Middle School need some kind of intervention because of the continued fighting and overall behavior problems of those kids. The teachers need combat training and they need to be firm. Bad bullies and kids who threaten other kids and teachers should be expelled or put in a special class to combat bullying. Perhaps the children should have a guidance period to express concerns and the staff need to address and remedy the problems. Addison especially is not a good school. The bad kids rule and no one is eliminating the problems. Glorifying fights with an instagram page should be investigated. Step in and combat this outrageous behavior. Especially at Addison Middle School. Good smart children don't even want to go to
school. The moral is awful. Change this whole system. The parents are having trouble with the good kids because of this barbaric environment. Fix the problem. Don't forget about the good children. They are having behavior problems as well. They all have a bright future but someone must address the issues not overlook them. Thank you very much.

- Be aware of the inability to retain young, teachers into our schools. The involvement of some parents is not enough to allow the schools to grow. We need to reach out to communities and parents that have children in the schools and do not get involved. It is the only way to allow our students to succeed.

- Our schools are in need of a strong leader. Have alot to offer to our children however we need a leader who will support the teachers and students.

- Westside Elementary is vastly over crowded. That needs to be a priority.

- Issues that a new Superintendent will face is lack of parental support. 1

- The Superintendent should be aware of safety concerns (guns in schools, bussing with our weather patterns). Another large issue is serving the wide range of socioeconomic levels and educational interests in our valley. There is a wide divide between the haves and have-nots that needs sensitive attention and resources from our school administrators. We also need to pursue excellence in course and extracurricular activities that enable students to pursue their passions while preparing them for success in the job market.

- Middle school should not be a “holding pattern” between grade school and high school. There should be legitimate options for academic rigor or stretch.

- The kids with behavioiral problems are given i pads to play on in 15 min. Intervals and going on field trips and pizza parties while the good kids that are trying to learn are in class rooms. and we wonder why more kids are acting up? Put yourself in their shoes it should be the other way around. Bring in funding to send these kids on trips to learn about REAL AMERICAN HISTORY NOT WHAT HISTORY WE WANT THEM TO KNOW.

- Out of touch school board with old south mentality

- Need a better transportation plan to get these to school on time. The bus issues are the worst issues that everyone is going through. It needs an immediate fix it makes absolutely no sense.

- Work should be continued to improve the graduation rate for all. There should be a strong emphasis on better developing and advertising alternative tracks for technical diplomas. At the same time, honors classes are not challenging enough, compared to other parts of the state. The class rigor for the more academically inclined honors classes should be stepped up.

- 1-Safety concerns-PHHS- need people out front in the mornings and monitoring parking lot. 2-Drugs-PHHS-drug dog to monitor campus and make sure students understand no tolerance policy. Officers present. 3-Poor disruptive behavior-PHHS-kids wandering the halls during class time. Fights. Arguments. Security present. 4-Bathroom situation needs to improve and be closely monitored-PHHS 5- RVGS SENIORS DO NOT HAVE A LUNCH BREAK WHEN THEY COME OVER FROM RVGS TO PH. MAJOR CONCERN! The kids are late to class when they return to PH and do not have a lunch
break. The kids need a brain break and a chance to eat, go to the restroom and regroup with friends for 20 minutes! I HAVE THREE TEENS WHO ARE/WERE (one in college) RVGS and PH STUDENTS. Every student deserves lunch break! 6-The need for more counselors and education to students re: teen stress

- Over crowding of classrooms  Teacher interactions  Trauma in children  Lack of funding and resources

- The racial issues in Roanoke, Va and how the African American community feels about the current racist superintendent. Also the scared culture in the school systems. The teachers are afraid of the administration.

- Kids behavior is out of control and needs a complete overhaul. Disrespectful kids and parents discourage teachers to teach and show up daily. If the students behavior is. Ot addressed things will never get better. Overall teacher and parent relations in at a all time low.

- Where do I begin. It’s a mess. There’s no stability and everyone goes against each other. We need someone that is going to bring in teachers that care for children and teachers of all races. Someone that is going to LISTEN to the teachers and make a real plan that will help all involved. It is important to emphasize that these are our children and whoever is Superintendent needs to relate to our kids and be from our area.

- The new superintendent must offer opportunities for the best and brightest kids, while at the same time making sure all children's needs are met. Too often the kids that fall between the two extremes did not have a place to thrive in RCPS. The staff turnover is a big problem, particularly at PHHS. In 2020, the administration at PHHS is abysmal. Basic tasks like sending transcripts to colleges and notifying students of opportunities are not being met. My two high schoolers regularly have to work around the guidance office at PH because it is so lacking. A recent report card came home without the correct classes listed and some with no grades at all. Even after I met with the principal, no action was taken. The new superintendent will need to articulate a vision for the school system but also put in place capable employees who can carry out that vision. Another need is a Governor's School type program for the Humanities. At the moment top students who are not interested in STEM subjects have no where to go.

- Bus issues

- The power teachers have over their classroom has been stripped away. It has been all about appearances and issues that could give the district a black eye have been swept under the rug and magically disappear in the eyes of the school board

- Schools are not fully supported either financially or with personnel. Schools are not equivalent across the district, but it is clear that certain schools enjoy significant support from PTA funds that others do not have, creating an opportunity imbalance.

- The perception of city schools by those in surrounding areas. I feel we get a bad rep even by ones who have never attended or been part of city schools. Need to remove the stigma that city is "bad". Especially to those new to the valley. Our students, parents, teachers, etc are what make it so great.

- The last superintendent ruled with an iron fist. Most teachers and staff were afraid to speak their minds or suggest much-needed changes. Teachers, and thus parents, lived in a
state of fear. Quality educators were not given contracts. The amount of talent that
drained from this district frightens me and other parents at our schools. If this ship doesn't
get corrected -- and quickly -- most of us will pull our children from the schools. We'll
homeschool, attend private schools, or sell our houses and move to Salem or Roanoke
County. I can not stress how bad the moral is at the educator/staff level. Many are leaving
at the end of this year. We. Are. Done.

- There is a wide variety of school communities in the city. Some schools are in very
  affluent areas and have very involved parents and PTAs. Other schools in the city are
  really really struggling in areas that are economically depressed. Roanoke is actually a
  pretty segregated city and the schools that are struggling are in areas of the city that are
  also struggling to build safe strong communities. I would like to see these struggling
  schools be able to have higher success rates and retain teachers. I do not have a child at a
  struggling school but I hear horror stories from substitute teachers, and teachers that have
  worked at some of these schools. Students are bribed just to walk between classes. I want
to see issues like this addressed and to see collaborative approaches to solve these
problems.

- How to deal with discipline within the school. Ideas for resources and methods everyone
can utilize. Make discipline more consistent from school to school

- This city is very segregated. We have serious racial tensions and inequities. There is a lot
  of poverty and much food insecurity, especially in children. In addition, our language
courses are not strong. Students nowadays need to have a second language to be
  competitive in the workforce and to develop empathy for those different from
  themselves, but our programs do not utilize modern teaching methods and turn students
  off learning languages. Finally, we need to get armed men out of our schools. SROs do
  not make schools safer, and they affect children of color, especially boys, in an unfair
  way. Since we already have inequities in the school system, we should be aware of these
  and take a different, non-violent, weapons-free approach to discipline.

- High turnover in school administrative roles (principals, etc) and parent dissatisfaction
  with issues surrounding transportation and scheduling (i.e. the A/B days).

- We need someone who is experienced, skilled and well-versed on the different types of
  people who live and work in this community. We support each other and want to see our
  youth succeed.

- With the diversity comes challenges and language barriers. This person needs to know
  how to navigate this variety.

- Want healthier options in the school meals-- less processed, less sugar, more vegetables
  and fruit. Would really like support for Farm to School initiatives within the cafeteria,
school gardens, and curricula. Kids need to know where their food comes from-- to be
  connected to food production, cooking, and eating.

- Multiple principles at Addison Middle this year  Poor superintendent support of faculty
  A lack of discipline at the middles and high school levels resulting in violent behaviors
  The Fine Arts program is a fantastic opportunity for students of all socioeconomic levels
  in the district  Rezoning has allowed schools to be more “neighborhood schools”

- There is too much violence in the middle and high schools. Discipline has taken a
  backseat so that graduation rates stay high. There has to be a better balance.
• There are still so many low income and underserved students that need as much advocacy and help as possible so we can continue programs like free lunch, free preschool, after school programs, etc.

• Homeless student population is concerning; level of violence if high school is worrisome

• teachers and principals should feel empowered and supported to make the right decisions. The superintendent needs to be forward thinking and capable of anticipating challenges and adapting to them while implementing a vision that helps all students and teachers to succeed.

• a lot of fights in high schools, vaping in high schools

• The bus transportation has been my major concern this year. The school year is almost over and my children are still arriving late to school most mornings. And the bullying on the bus, I understand a bus driver's job is extremely difficult and they must focus on the road but these kids are old enough to know how to behave on the bus and the bus should be a privilege and I think the city needs to crack down on rules on discipline on the bus and apply a dress code in all schools.

• We have a homeless population and those kids need special care and support. We have English second language kids that need special support. There are children without winter clothes that our teachers and parents work to support. Those kids are important to our fabric of our city, I truly believe our strength lies in our diversity.

• Keep strong academics, be sensitive to equity across schools and races, ethnicities and genders. Do not mess with our arts programs, but more robust support for athletics would be nice.

• Aware of the large social economic gap between some schools. There is a need for higher standards regarding nutrition. There is a need for teachers and schools to LIMIT screen time at school. Parents want kids outside more—not necessarily two recesses, but high standards for getting outside.

• The first big issue is retaining quality teachers and administrators. RCPS has lost many excellent leaders to other school systems where they are thriving. I teach in a system that has benefited from these strong leaders, but I want them to stay with RCPS and not be fearful of their leader. I would also like to see the new superintendent to be well educated in the area of diversity and equity for students, as well as look closely at how the Title 1 funds are spent. Our system buys quality resources that benefit the teachers in the classroom so that they can use the resources to be effective teachers. Additional staff helps, but not if they aren't qualified. Also, with equity and teachers should not be buying their own supplies and copier paper, and yes this happens. I would like to see a focus on standards based grading on the elementary level and reading classes in middle school and high school with reading specialists.

• A new hire will face significant barriers if they are not from our city and/or they chose to not learn and fully understand our history. Each district in our city is unique and will have different needs. We are an extremely segregated city, not only by race but also by class. Many families feel as though they have no voice and the schools place a higher level of accountability and transparency on parents than they are willing to place on themselves. Our trust has continued to be broken. The employees of our district need support. The children and parents need support. We need to heal and we need more
investment in our people. Investing in the PEOPLE in our schools is crucial. We need counselors not cops to heal. We need community BUILDERS that are trained in child development AND trauma, not security theater that produces criminals. We need a district that provides jobs that people are proud of because it supports our schools. Not outsourced for profit companies that care about their own bottom line first.

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

- A heart for the children of the community, a passion for the proper educating of our children not just good test scores for funding purposes.
- Honest, Genuine, Friendly, Approachable, Open, Good listener, Clear Communicator, Collaborates, Diverse, Consistent, Consistently Fair, Healthy, 40-59 age group, Commitment, People person, loves students, Open, Ethical, A servant leader.
- They must be supportive of all students. I also would like to see someone who is just as focused on celebrating successful students as working to bring up the under performing students. Also, we need a superintendent who is not scared to have strong discipline that creates a safe environment for teachers and students.
- The new superintendent should be somebody who is truly willing to listen to the district's employees. This person should be creative, forward looking, flexible and inclusive.
- Caring about students and teachers instead of personal power. Leading with love instead of fear. Understanding that the superintendent WORKS FOR THE SCHOOLS, the schools do not work for the superintendent. Openness and honesty instead of the current atmosphere of secrecy and deception. Someone who can replace the current toxic culture of fear, suppression, and threats with one where teachers, in particular, are valued and supported. Someone who believes the teachers are not all "short sticks." Someone who does not blame teachers for poor outcomes, and instead understands that the teachers are doing the best they can in a severely dysfunction system, and takes responsibility for fixing it. Read Si Dogood on FaceBook for more suggestions.
- A person that is use to a Urban and diverse community
- Understanding, firm, knowledgeable in the area of attacking problems early with the youth
- Evidence of strong administrative skills, as well as experience and success working in a district with a lot of diversity, both racial and economic. Also, someone with an interest in building up the middle schools. In my opinion, our elem and high schools are great, but middle schools need academic boosting. The class offerings are fine, but the curricula need improvement to truly prepare our kids for high school and beyond.
- Our new superintendent needs to be compassionate, fair, and look after the best interest of our children.
- I'm not qualified to answer. A few that come to my mind though would be patience with uncouth parents(we have a few) and a willingness to talk and listen. Someone who understands the community(probably the most important).
- Someone who supports school personnel at all levels and takes a bottom-up approach - Takes into account parent concerns when making budgetary decisions that affect student success - An individual who is looking to turn STEM efforts into STEAM efforts because the arts are important as well - An individual with an emphasis on African American History and the arts

- Good listener, motivator, leader without a condescending approach towards teachers, visionary that seeks to make Roanoke City Schools the best that they can be

- Organizational and leadership skills, compassion, energy, commitment to growing the whole child, not just focused on test scores, knowledgeable about child development.

- Forward-thinking, putting our students first, willing to support both STEM programs, arts, music and physical education. Ensure that city schools are as good or better than neighboring suburban county schools.

- Good observation skills to see where these kids will end up at.

- I believe the new superintendent needs to be someone that doesn't squirm at and/or avoid conflict or differences of opinions. Someone that has a sincere and compassionate love of children. Someone who knows and understands that students, and their families, bring all different types of needs and strengths and would know how to tap into those strengths in hopes to elevate a lot of the common need. Someone that expects the best out of a student and can give and will reward them for their efforts. A person that knows the absolute importance of educating all different types and needs of children and learning styles.

- Insightful, progressive and open minded willing to hear from the community and truly consider ideas

- Good team-builder, ability to make tough decisions for the sake of the students, an excellent listener. We need someone who will continue the vital support for the arts, and for the amazing music, theater, band, chorus, dance, and visual arts programs currently in place.

- They should be able to work within a diverse community for students with a range of needs.

- A clear vision that incorporates the humanity of our teachers, our students, and their families. This vision would then be clearly shared with the community so that we can all take part.

- An Honest candidate who is looking at ROANOKE - not 10 superintendent jobs. Someone who is not threatening. Someone who will visit the schools and classrooms. Really visit. Not stop by for a 1 hour meeting with the principal. Someone who knows students names. And cares. Someone who can build up and keep alive the following values: JOY, COURAGE, EXCELLENCE and EQUITY!

- Fundraising and national grant administration experience. Knowledgeable on how to get funds to improve age Transportation access to schools ex, National Safe Routes To School, America Walks

- Willing to be a public figure active in community life - shows dedication to the community and makes teachers and families feel supported, awareness and skills in
leading an urban school district that struggles with diversity (nothing but white faces at the middle school honors science fair), high standards for education while at the same time creating alternative paths for career development (without compromising academics for those on college path)

- Track record of student focused interventions, innovative thinker in terms of creating programs and curricula that engage students and involve 21st century skills, intense focus on the integration of technology in the curriculum.

- This person needs to be actively involved in the community. They should attend and see what is going on at sporting events, concerts, plays, etc. They need to know, care and work for change when problems are identified. By being present and firm yet receptive to feedback, teachers and staff will feel supported. They need to engage the community in school spirit/support/outreach. This person should strive to recruit and RETAIN the best teachers possible, but this is going to require a culture change.

- Must put in place a combat training for staff. The schools are full of fights and horrible bullying. The teachers need combat training and behavior training for bad kids. They have to be a true leader and lead. The middle schools especially Addison Middle are failing and if nothing is done. I believe there will be national scrutiny coming this way. Straighten the schools. Children should not rule Addison Middle School. The Principal and teachers should be the Authority. Lead the way, don't get out of the way!

- The new superintendent should have a diverse background in large schools especially at the high school level. They should have the ability to interact with both students and parents as well as all staff. They need to be able to listen to all concerns.

- Someone who is willing to dedicate them-self into our children and community.

- Someone who is from this area and knows what we need

- One that will take no nonsense. A strong disciplinary.

- Good communication

- The new superintendent needs to be a friendly outgoing person who is empathetic and has an ear for parent’s and student’s concerns. The superintendent should be a goal oriented person who wants to better themselves as well as our school district so we continue to excel.

- I think external perspective on offerings for our schools and students - strong academic background

- LISTENING COMPASSION CARE ABOUT STANDARDS OF LEARNING LIKE THE COUNTY SCHOOLS HAVE IN PLACE AND FOR GOD SAKE TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO GET THE KIDS WHO ARE DISRUPTIVE OR AS THEY ARE CALLED ANGER BEHAVIOR STUDENTS OUT OF OUR SCHOOLS ON SUSPENSION.AND GET THEM REAL COUNCILORS.

- Being able to bridge gaps between many groups of people. The concern for educating a whole child as opposed to just obsessing about test scores.

- Compassion, understanding of the demographic of the children in the area.
The superintendent should be someone who can better prepare and encourage students to be prepared to enter our workforce. This would be someone sensitive to the financial challenges facing many households and making sure the schools help kids be ready to learn. At the same time, the superintendent should make sure the schools are also capable of preparing the most gifted students to be prepared to succeed compared to students from other parts of the state at our colleges and universities.

Open minded and flexible  Trustworthy  Active Listener  Able to manage a very diverse student population including homeless students and high risk needs  Understand quality 1:1 staff are crucial for SPED classrooms  Has plenty of training re mental health and well being of teens-anxiety and depression rates are on the rise  One who understands the sensory system and need for movement activities and brain breaks-need tools in the classrooms

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Team player  Great communication  Appreciate staff  Approachable  Bringing jobs back to the schools instead of outsourcing

Someone who cares about low income families and is passionate about Education for low income children in the city.

A person that can work with black and brown people. A person that can keep black and brown teaching talent in this city. Because our kids need to identify with their teachers.

Be about change. Come in ready to make a difference. Support or teachers and students.

Understanding, honest, diverse, someone with thick skin that can take on all situations and TRULY LISTEN to the community. My recommendation is a strong minded Black male or female that is from our community.

The new superintendent should build a solid foundation and then recruit and retain top employees to make sure every child is served. He/she needs to be decisive but also a good listener.

Great leadership skills  Ability to work across racial and socioeconomic lines  Need to challenge top students more  Fight for increased wages for reaches  Aim for no violence in the schools

Support their teachers. Support their principals and not rule but fear and intimidation. Support new teachers. Do not say that you will place new teachers in a position to succeed then turn your back on them, giving them zero support and mentorship.

Strong skills in system management, personnel development, and social outreach. They should have a vision for creating a school system that leans into tomorrow rather than yesterday. They should be willing to explore radical ideas for improving opportunities for all students. They should have a strong understanding of the day to day challenges that face the teachers and staff across the school system.
• Willing to listen to all sides. Willing to compromise when needed. Always have the students best interest in mind. Compassion. Energetic and outgoing. Visit the schools frequently and listen to the staff and students. Show you care and are willing to make a difference. Keep the arts and music.

• KIND! Does not rule by fear. Inclusive. Open to new ideas. Appreciates parent input. TRANSPARENT WITH COMMUNICATION. MUST LOVE THE ARTS. Keep our arts programs strong. RECESS for younger students. Does not argue with IEPs. (It's a huge problem at the moment.) Just somebody who is qualified and can be respected.

• The superintendent needs to be a creative and collaborative person that works well with others and is able to receive input from school staff, researchers, parents and others in the community and use that input to help improve struggling schools and retain teachers in the city. We would like to see policies put in place that reflect guidance from the American Pediatrics Assoc within the city schools to limit screen time, limit sugar, and increase outdoor time and creativity. If the school is not setting an example, and kids are not getting an example at home, how will things improve?

• Approachable, flexible, shares ideas does not expect everyone to agree but to figure out compromises when needed, good communicator

• This person needs to know how to address the inequality in our schools. We also need to improve the quality of our courses and course offerings.

• Someone who is caring and understanding. Someone that knows that every child is different and needs to be approached in different ways. Someone with good communication skills. I want to be informed of everything do not assume that someone knows someone something because you know it.

• Experience, better “people” skills, a willingness to listen to the teachers and parents, low tendency to take a unilateral approach.

• Background in childhood education and knows the business side as well. Knows the different type of experiences of people of many cultures. Willing to take a personable approach to showing support for teachers, other staff members and understand how important stability is not only for students but for the parents and teachers who make up the community

• Bilingual, someone comfortable with various socioeconomic areas.

• Open-minded, stronger listener, critical thinker, innovative. Support teachers. School and education as an integrated part of the community and not a stand alone.

• 1) A proven track record of leading not only an inner city school system but a school system of extreme difference in socioeconomic levels. 2) Demonstrating the ability to lead and support faculty/staff to meet all these levels, resulting in growth and achievement for all 3) A proven track record of maintaining order and safety in schools

• History of improving discipline. Recognize the importance of the fine arts. Proven experience with a school district that has multiple socioeconomic groups and cultures.

• Innovative, experience with students of a lower income setting, someone who will continue to advocate for art and music in schools as well as the other subjects. Someone who will continue to grow programs already in place.
• Honor histories and cultures across the valley while ensuring consistency and fairness across the school system

• A good listener with varied tastes and interests in athletics and the arts. Someone who wants to come here and achieve great things, not just pad his/her resume.

• thick skin

• I'm unsure of.

• I think this job will be demanding emotionally and would hope our new superintendent would have empathy in spades and help preserve our diversity. I hope our new superintendent will look to our teachers for direction on the best way to address issues and look out for our teachers interests to combat burn out.

• Holds front line educators in the highest regard, not as pawns to be shifted about and blamed and discarded.

• They must value students learning 21st century skills, getting mental health support, less screen time in the classroom, improved nutrition, less privatizing like bus transportation, and have a high quality to hire strong principals, especially some with urban education experience. Must be willing to lead the city to make effective and research-based changes.

• The candidate must be educated and has served in a system that values diversity and equity. Poverty should not be a barrier and the students deserve a level playing field. RCPS needs a forward thinker and someone who embraces alternative testing such as PBAs (Performance Based Learning) and alternate testing, especially with the state's growth model. RCPS has wonderful teachers who just want to be given an opportunity to actually teach and not just make the kids learn the material for a test. Several superintendents in this area are embracing this way of learning. Knowing the states focus of the five Cs for the future of our students should be an underling theme in a school system.

• We need people that are willing to put in the work. Gain and build trust through honesty, transparency, time, and effort. People that will work to do better and listen instead of shifting the blame. We need solutions, accountability, transparency, honesty, with a commitment and investment IN our community.
Students
Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Our community is very friendly and has a pretty strong sense of identity.
- Roanoke is a growing urban center in the Blue Ridge area with developments made in small businesses all the time.
- Big, funny, leadership, churches, nature
- school system is out dated
- Nothing it’s boring
- A lot of diversity in race, culture, language, etc.

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Many schools have a lot of support for the arts, such as theatre, music, et cetera.
- Our schools provide a wide variety of electives and opportunities for a diverse group of people.
- Interesting, lots of friends, lots of opportunities
- schools system is out dated
- Nothing it’s boring we do nothing fun
- Tries to get students where the need to be to succeed

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

- While these might be exclusive to Patrick Henry High School, it’s still important to note that the student body here would benefit from a much more progressive approach to education. Many attempts to make the school system more structured or rigid either fall flat or backfire, and generally feed into the distaste that many have towards school. It’s important that this is addressed with the students’ well being and input as a priority.
- Several programs such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes have doctrines that are anti-LGBTQ, and have no place in a secular school district. Furthermore, we do not receive enough government funding, and resources should be used well.
- Fights, drugs, alcohol
- school system is out dated
- the school is boring so you might get bored
- You will be representing schools and thousands of students. You should be very connected and present when dealing with issues. We need someone who is motivated to improve our schools and the district.
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 should be someone who is open-minded, who looks for input from both adults and students alike, who is more than willing to challenge the current standards in place. They should be someone who would want to be around and/or work with kids and teenagers and consider them just as important as anyone else. They should have an appreciation for not just sports or just arts but for anything a kid could pursue at school. All in all, they should be someone that students and faculty respect out of admiration rather than fear.

- They should be open to change, especially those which are not in their control, and respond and adapt to those changes as they see fit.

- Stern but loving

- Young (er)

- School system is out dated

- We need more fun stuff and why did we have school on February 7, Friday, 2020

- Patience, good with diversity, strives for excellence, understanding of how different backgrounds affect upbringings
Teachers

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- We live in a beautiful area-- mountains, lakes, valleys, and so many recreational opportunities. The city itself is advancing in the areas of arts and hospitality. The people of our area offer a rich diversity in culture, background, and spirit...

- Roanoke is for outdoor lovers. Grandin Village as well as Downtown Roanoke have enough things to do by still maintaining that small town feel.

- Roanoke has a lot of activities for young children and families. Roanoke has a nice arts scene (music, theatre, dance). Roanoke is an outdoors community (hiking, biking, lakes). The community is also diverse.

- Low cost of living. Great place to raise a family. Lots of outdoor recreation.

- Diverse

- The community is diverse and resilient.

- The William Fleming high school community has deep and long relationships to the greater Roanoke community. Many student families and administrators and teachers have connections that go beyond the classroom. People are connected through long time friendships (or feuds), churches, sports, music and art, and businesses. The health of these relationships are essential to building a better school climate. These relationships have a huge impact on our success with students. For example, a student who’s family goes to church with an administrator will be much more responsive and respectful to that administrator than one who doesn’t have that connection. A teacher who understands the complex situation a student may be coming from is 100% better equipped to provide the right kind of support for that student. This is a town with roots, and those roots make a strong network upon which to grow. It’s essential that anyone coming in from the outside become immersed in the community and try to understand the connections that connect this community and make it thrive.

- Our community is linguistically and culturally diverse. Furthermore, the immigrants in our community are hardworking and upstanding individuals.

- It is a diverse community with bright students.

- Roanoke is a very diverse city. The new superintendent should be representative of the population of the city and have experience working in a diverse urban environment.

- Many parents desire communication from teachers as a way to support their children's education.

- The community is very "artsy". I love the mountains & the mild winter weather.

- Beautiful, small enough for you to know your neighbors

- The pride people have in living in Roanoke. They are very proud of it and are grateful for the things Roanoke has to offer.

- Diversity, acceptance of cultural
• Roanoke is located in a beautiful place. There is a lot of beauty here. There are parents and community members who want to see their children succeed. These people are intimately invested in the success of our schools. Our students’ failure, our failure, is a shared burden. Our success is a shared success. Oh yes, Roanoke has a myriad of problems that affect our district. School does not happen in a vacuum and our students bring their baggage into the classroom every day. But there are people, businesses, and organizations who actively work to ensure our students have the support they need.

• Outside activities, great restaurants, museums, theater, concerts, festivals

• Our community is diverse, values the arts, and is located in the beautiful Blue Ridge mountains.

• Hard working people, friendly and outgoing. Typically big city accessibility with a small town feel.

• Roanoke is a growing and diverse community with many opportunities.

• Supportive; and strives to be the best. Open minded and willing to work towards the best interest of all stakeholders involved to make a difference.

• We are very culturally and ethnically diverse

• Diversity; schools; commitment of local government; faith-based support network; support of the arts; ability to adapt; downtown revitalization; social services; natural beauty of the surroundings; healthcare; VA Medical Center; Berglund Center

• Beautiful area, investment in the arts, local festivals and businesses are strong points, benefits of a city and rural setting, airport, amtrack, diverse, celebrates various cultures represented in the city population.

• Our community is becoming more and more diverse. We are a thriving city with fine arts, music, parks, recreational facilities, and other venues. We are surrounded by the blue ridge mountains which typically protect us from extreme weather. We are a larger city but with a small town feel.

• Roanoke city is very diverse and has many innovative teachers and families.

• Resources available to parents, Rescue Mission, food banks, etc.

• There is a lot of outdoor activities, great restaurants and unique things to do.

• We are concerned about every student succeeding. However, we should want them to succeed in classes and society so we really need to push for their success in school. This way they acquire the necessary skills they need to succeed outside of school as well.

• It’s small, quiet, no traffic! I find Roanoke to be stress free

• Diversity

• Our community is very diverse.

• Extremely diverse, hard working

• -good community support -neighborhood schools -diversity

• There are a surmountable amount of resources in Roanoke city to help our students; and it doesn’t have to all come from the school system.
• very active downtown and outdoor recreation areas. close drive to many different areas.

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

• Teachers and staff work together to support students in their educational journeys. People choose to work for RCPS and stay because they want to make a positive impact on children's lives and our futures. We advocate for our students and we strive to reach them in creative and culturally responsive ways.

• I believe that Roanoke City Public schools have some of the hardest working teachers in the state of Virginia. Each teacher truly cares about his/her students and does what is needed to help them be successful, caring, hard working adults.

• The schools have multiple pathways for students to pursue.

• Lots of opportunities for students.

• good leaders in most of the schools

• My school has a great balance of work and fun. The kids are expected to do their best and work hard, no matter who they are. Teachers push them to succeed, and they do. They are also allowed to be kids, have fun, and celebrate their hard work. The teachers are expected to do their jobs well, and we aren't micromanaged. My school has a good understanding of how to meet the needs of a diverse group of students and how to teach with patience. The teachers here are excellent at their craft and care about their students.

• William Fleming has an amazing fine arts program that has been supported in a tremendous way. She understands the important habits of mind that are developed through the study of Theater, music, dance, and visual art. The art wing is often the favorite place to be for our students. Our fine arts department loves to nurture those with natural talent, but we focus on building skills in all students. We are dedicated to teaching every student to grow and find their strengths through their study. We have kids who struggle in other areas in the school who actually stay in their seat and complete work in fine art classrooms. It often provides the sweet taste of success for students who don’t usually get to taste it. I believe that a little taste of success encourages students to believe that if they set their mind to it, they can be successful in any classroom. Sometimes they just need to get a taste of it to get them going. Also, Fleming is a supportive and loving community. I love my students and coworkers and they make my life pretty fun.

• The schools offer a variety of electives in the arts that begin in elementary school, such as strings and band.

• Teachers work hard to help the students. We know that we need to approach some students differently based on their trauma and needs, but do what we can to help them to the best of our abilities. My school has many resources available to us and allows the science department to teach current science technologies in the classroom.

• We have great teachers, and administration who try their best. We also have a diverse student body.

• For the most part, RCPS offer an inclusive environment. Faculty and staff are mostly welcoming and concerned for the education and the well-being of the students. They
understand the challenges of working in an urban school district, but they respond to those challenges with commitment and dedication.

- Many administrative teams are strong and have been together for several years now. Teachers care about their students and want to teach creatively in order to have students pass their SOLs, while having fun learning the content.
- Parental support, teachers who work hard and care for their students
- The teachers are passionate, dedicated, and absolutely top notch!
- Arts - music, dance and painting/ creating
- Forest Park Academy. It helps students and increases the graduation rate.
- We have amazing students. We have students who are gifted, creative, intelligent, who hunger for recognition. They crave an opportunity to express who they are. They struggle with marrying where they come from with who they are expected to be. Many of them have to work twice as hard because they do not enjoy the same privileges at home as some of their peers, and they do this. They work hard. We have teachers who arrive early and leave late, who spend hours agonizing over their students' academic achievement. We have support staff who, day in and day out, give their all so that the students can have the support they need to be successful. We have creative minds and willing hands. We have the potential to be amazing. There are so many amazing ideas. There are so many people who can make this district great, if only their voice was allowed to be heard.
- Student teacher relationships, buildings well maintained, support from peers
- Our schools are innovative and dedicated to the success of all learners.
- Great team building abilities, working together to build student learning and competency.
- Some schools with RCPS have a diverse, experienced and professional staff. Many more, do not due to high turnover and/or administration difficulties.
- Striving to ensure all students succeed. To follow their dreams; but to work hard to achieve those dreams. Willing to compromise to ensure the best favors the student and the stakeholders.
- We have a qualified staff who is emotionally involved with each student.
- commitment to all students; dedicated instructional staff; the majority of our facilities; collaboration with the local community; acceptance and instruction of ELL students; leveraging community resources such as job internship and work experience opportunities; resiliency of both students and staff; success of Forest Park Academy; the mission statement of RCPS; outside Intercept behavioral counselors in our school; high school clubs and athletic teams
- Investment in the fine arts programs, large and varied choice of electives and extracurriculars for students, diverse student population, online presence that celebrates and promotes student successes in all areas not just sports.
- Our schools are full of teachers that work hard everyday to encourage, prepare, and care for our students. We have several strong administrators who are responsible, caring, and take time to see that their students, staff, and parents feel respected, cared for, and prepared for the future.
• Our schools provide a wide range of rigor through our Arts.
• trauma informed, high standards. Clear consistent rules for all students.
• We have an excellent Fine Arts program.
• We have really great teachers and staff in RCPS. Every person in this system wants students to succeed. They try their best to help everyone they meet. We have great facilities in RCPS and it helps provide a positive space for students to learn and be themselves.
• It is very diverse. Patrick Henry High School includes ROTEC (Career and Technical Education) and Governor's School (school focused on students who excel in Math and Science)
• Dedicated teachers
• City schools have quality teachers who work very hard.
• The teachers and admin are some of the hardest working in the district and have to be with the amount of trauma, low socioeconomic status and academic needs they serve. There is a true community and love for the students.
• -hardworking staff -well trained staff -diverse students -differentiation strategies are implemented
• Roanoke city schools are very competitive in salary.
• strong teachers and assistants more potential that can be tapped

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

• PASS laptop program has not been equitable in its current form. Not all students have laptops, and there are not enough laptops for all teachers to have for classrooms and accommodate testing needs. Further, teachers were not allowed to hold students accountable-- require students bring them, thus killing the program and limiting our resources. Rules and policies-- teachers have no authority to enforce any sort of accountability. Students are not penalized for excessive absences, hall wandering/skipping, multiple tardies, cell phones/electronics, profanity, disruptions, etc., etc. But these are just a handful of our wonderful student groups... unfortunately, when students see there are no consequences, the results are toxic. Teacher/staff morale-- it's a constant battle. Most teachers are working double the contract hours and continually asked to do more with less... True recognition and gratitude goes a long way. Pieces of the puzzle are missing-- several positions integral to student growth and staff development have remained mysteriously vacant for years (or revolving). New positions seem to be invented administratively... which is initially helpful... but lines are blurred and many people in authority seem unclear as to who is responsible for what. Discipline- - Fear of bad press has influenced our scorecards for far too long. Graduation rates-- Yes, there have been dramatic increases... but are students graduating truly prepared for the next level? Early reading intervention-- we need more!!!!!!!! Fine Arts and Elective programs-- we need more... what we have is great, but we need to offer more! Buses-- never should have been outsourced. The instructional time alone missed when students
are still not arriving to school thirty or more minutes late in February is insulting... not to mention the inconveniences for parents and children. Back to absences-- Truancy officers/ Intervention specialists are working, working, working... but it is not enough. Once again, because there are no true consequences (truancy charges are rare in comparison to the actual absentee rate), students are missing 30 or more days and still expected to pass/graduate. Substitutes-- should not have been outsourced. There are not enough qualified substitutes to fill the necessary positions... and the ones who are qualified are over-worked and underpaid. Teachers are coming to school sick because they know their coworkers will miss planning to cover their classes. Instructional aids-- overworked and underpaid as well. Testing and data-- There is too much testing for the sake of data. This data, sadly is largely invalid because students are tired of testing and there are not enough staff or rooms to properly accommodate all IEPs and LEPs for every required test. Teachers should be allowed to benchmark and use the data to drive instruction... not repeatedly miss instruction for the sake of inaccurate data. Administrators-- need to be seen! Students, even the ones who pretend differently, respect consistency. If they can't see you... they don't know you and they don't respect you. We have trauma... we have bad things happening all the time... but we need our schools to be safe, respectful, and caring learning environments. Again, we are here because we choose to be!

- I think most schools in most districts struggle with discipline. It’s hard to enforce appropriate discipline when some parents are not supportive and when the VA DOE has requirements/limitations of their own.

- Roanoke is segregated and the needs of large communities are being ignored. There is an issue with retention of quality staff. The overall reputation of central office staff is negative (fear of retaliation, closed door). There is a huge communication issue between central office and staff, as well as central office and parents.

- Low morale- Veteran teachers who have left feel much less micro managed and are able to “teach” in surrounding districts. They are also respected much more in other districts at the Central level. The City seems to jump on many band wagon in education and expects immediate implementation yet tends to jump ship and start something else from year to year.

- That teachers are professionals and need more time together. Not just PD days where there is some kind of training, but time together to truly collaborate and implement new ideas. This is what the corporate world does. Why should it be any less for us as teachers? Teachers also need more breaks in the year. These days should be scheduled at the end of every grading period so that teachers have a designated time where they know they will get rest as well as the team time together.

- First - because the student population is so diverse, there isn't any kind of "one-size-fits-all" for instruction. Second - testing provides valuable data, but too much testing keeps us from teaching well. I'm a specialist, so I am testing with almost all grade-levels. During testing, I barely get to teach for weeks at a time. Third - several teachers in RCPS are commuting to work in schools they love. When making calls about the weather/school closings, it is very challenging for us when a call is made at the very last minute or a call isn't made well.
• Noel C Taylor alternative programs must start taking students with IEP’s. We have students who are not learning and not going to class at our high school who cause a lot of disruption and absorb a huge amount of administrators time and security manpower. Many of these students cannot be sent to a smaller, alternative program where they would actually succeed because they have an IEP and Noel C doesn’t have a sped teacher. That is a ridiculous situation. There is no reason in this day and age that Noel C can’t employ a sped teacher. Also, the process for getting a student to Noel C is long, ridiculous, and difficult. This has got to be rectified so we can get kids who aren’t succeeding in the larger school environment to a place where they can succeed. I taught at Noel C and there were many days I literally had 0-3 students. They want to keep their student numbers light. Also, You have to work to understand the community and get involved with the community. Roanoke is a small city but we have big city problems. No one who comes here should assume that because it’s a small city the drugs, violence, poverty, and domestic stress of larger cities isn’t something that needs to be taken seriously. Also, there are many, many layers of red tape that make discipline difficult. Allow kids to be suspended! Provide better behavioral interventions.

• The graduation rate is inflated because students aren’t held to equal standards. Also, the schools are unable to maintain discipline because they are not allowed to expel students. Testing irregularities are common because administrators don’t take SpEd or ELL seriously. Outward appearance and inflated numbers take precedence over quality education. Class sizes are huge because some schools lack the staff to accommodate the school population size— Woodrow for example has many classes of 35+. Also, if we are going to accommodate all types of learners, we need more opportunities for trades classes, such as the kind offered at ROTEC. We try to fit square pegs into round holes by forcing all students be one given type of learner, or exhibit a narrow range of intelligence. Rather than inflating grades and manipulating scores to get students to graduate, we should offer them an education that matches their goals, skills, and intelligence.

• The pass laptops need a fix. Students take them home and don’t bring them back on a regular basis so we can’t use the 1:1 needs to the best of our abilities.

• There are many many students coming from traumatic experiences. There are anger issues and large scale of disrespect in schools so we truly need some consequences for them that will make a difference in their behavior.

• Discipline has gradually decreased in the school system. The district seems afraid to enforce the very same rules written in the school code of conduct. Issues such as cell phones and electronic devices, dress code, disruptive and destructive behavior and blatant disrespect towards adults are widely accepted on the basis of students’ socio-economic background. This lack of consistency affects everyone, and it puts not only the academic success of the students at risk, but also their safety. Lower expectations for students in minority groups is a civil rights issue and it is a form of discrimination. 2-Attendance rules are also largely ignored. I fear that we’ll get to the point where we will be in the media spotlight due to granting high school diplomas to so many students who have missed a great number of seat hours. 3-The needs of Sped and ELL students, particularly at the secondary level are not being properly addressed. Caseloads are too big and teachers don’t have enough time to provide the differentiated instruction students deserve. Also, in the case of ELL students at the high school level, the district isn’t providing a program that is appropriate for students with interrupted education, which is
the case of the majority of ELLs who enroll at age 14 and above. These students are at a
great disadvantage with their American peers to complete the same graduation
requirements. The district should offer an alternative program that is oriented towards
Adult Ed, like other districts in the state do.

- Lucy Addison Middle School is in dire need of reform if renewed accreditation is
desired. Discipline has been a huge problem this year and teacher turnover is high.

- The high school population is too large; there needs to be a 3rd school. There are student
fights on a daily basis. Students are not held accountable. Teachers are unfairly held
accountable for students' behavior.

- bus issues, overcrowding at some schools, some schools have a large turnover, Addison
M.S. needs leadership

- There is an established culture of fear in which teacher and administrators fear for their
jobs and are terrified to speak out against anything that needs to be brought to light.

- Integration of cultures

- 1. Gangs are prevalent  2. Fights occur daily or weekly at our schools  3. Students don't
  seem to care about education  4. Many of our students are poor or homeless. Many are
  not.  5. HIGHLY diverse student population but not very diverse teacher population

- While there are amazing things happening here, this district is broken in many ways. As
an outsider to the community and the district, I have a unique perspective. I came into a
district that values assessment above authentic education. This cheats the students of an
opportunity to have a voice in their education, to make it relevant to their lives, and to see
the value of learning outside of the classroom environment. Here I have seen lower level
classes full of students of color, while honors and upper level courses are full of students
who are white. I’ve seen teachers verbally and physically assaulted, and yet nothing has
been done for them. I’ve seen teachers and support staff beg for support, but be left on
their own. I’d like to see this change. I’d like to see this district, with it's amazing teachers
and beautiful students propelled into the future armed with the skills to tackle any
challenge they face, answer any question they are asked, and turn their community into
an inclusive, progressive sphere. Our new superintendent needs to understand that we are
not there yet, and that we are bogged down in a numbers game, complicated by behavior
concerns and poor staff retention. It is a disservice to our students to let the behavioral
problems continue. They will not be successful in the real world, and in that we will have
failed them. We cannot hope to correct these problems unless we can name them, accept
them, and work as a team to fix them. Our community is segregated by race, wealth, and
education. Our students are the product of generations of inequity, but we can be the ones
who give them the power to change it. Being an educator is like being a parent hundreds
of times over. You ache for your kids, you take pride in their accomplishments and weep
when they fail. You counsel and you love, but you shouldn’t have to do this at the
expense of your own wellbeing. We need to love our students, but we also need to love
our teachers. So many have already walked away, and the year isn’t even over. We need
our superintendent to love the teachers just as much as they love the students.

- Technology is there, but lacking at the same time.  Discipline seems it given the back
burner over looking g pretty from the outside and covering up what actually needs to be
dealt with.
• We need to address the issues related to teacher retention.

• The feel of the school system is hostile. I have been employed by RCPS for a few years and employees seem hostile and angry. The reasons are diverse and impact their desire to remain in the system. It seemed asking for help from a hostile school administrator was a problem.

• Building trust within the district, the departments, the community and the students. Ensuring all stakeholders voices are heard; and not feared to share their ideas, their thoughts.

• We need more discipline in some schools and a smaller student to teacher ratios. Class sizes are an issue with many schools.

• The need to expand enrollment in an alternative school or possibility of opening a second alternative school that would include special education students who need smaller class sizes to excel. The negative impact on teacher morale of frequent turnover of school administrators. Teacher turnover at the high school level. A general lack of confidence in the district office's commitment to its human capital. Top heavy leadership which does not appear to be collaborative with the stakeholders. Lack of visibility of the superintendent at the individual school level.

• Overcrowding at high school levels, which affects discipline and class scheduling, need for more support staff especially counselors, and also non-teaching staff to monitor hallways provide support during classes. Attendance at the secondary level.

• We also have a middle school that needs a strong administrator with ties to the community to bring it back from the brink of disaster. Our high schools need to see major changes in dress code, attendance requirements, and behavior as soon as possible. Population at the high schools is increasing but the number of teachers and aides is not. Some teachers have 15 SPED students with no aide to help; physical education classes have as many as 40 students per teacher.

• Teachers do not feel supported. Students run the school, discipline does not exist. Teachers are leaving in drones. Teacher to student ratio are increasing at a rapid pace. Many of the teachers are just trying to survive with the lack of law and order in the schools. Not just minor behaviors teachers are getting hit, cussed out, and principals do not answer the phones or provide any assistance on how to manage these behaviors.

• Inconsistencies in policies and regulations across schools within the district. Rezoning would help with some of the behaviors being shared among the district. Continues to have late busses, students missing 1st period classes.

• Teacher retention is a problem. Lack administrative support and fear of negative repercussions when reporting problems are two reasons for the teacher retention problem.

• Keeping accreditation is important but we need to focus more on helping students pass classes and encouraging them to come to school without inflating grades or just passing a student to send them on. Discipline is also a big issue. We need a discipline matrix or something along those lines for all schools so that we can provide appropriate discipline for student's actions. We have a lot of trauma in our school system so we really need to be able to build relationships with students. Cell phones are a huge issue in schools. They
distract students and can result in inappropriate behavior in school. An overall cell phone policy could really benefit students.

- **Culture and mindset of Roanoke City!** Roanoke City is very small-minded and it shows in how the students act as well as the parents. If you are someone who has been able to get out of Roanoke and come back, you will soon realize Roanoke is years behind the curve (like 10-20 years behind the rest of society) I would love someone who isn't a Roanoke resident so this individual is unbiased and won't give into the whims of South Roanoke residents. I would love for a Superintendent to be firm on their beliefs and really care for ALL students, not just a select few that make Roanoke City look "good." Roanoke City isn't a college-going atmosphere, but it is slowly changing. I would love for our students to be able to visit more colleges and attend more college fairs outside of Roanoke that will help to open up these students minds of their possibilities. PSATs should be a given to students every year, without having to pay. Right now, 150 students who pay $20 can take the PSATs each year. I wish Roanoke City was Google-centered and the students had access to Chromebooks, but Roanoke City is behind the times with technology (currently using Dell laptops and students are banned from access GMAIL in school). PAY!!! Staff is not adequately paid for their duties in the schools and it's really a shame. Students deserve so much more than they receive, but pay is a huge barrier and realistically, talented staff leave and look elsewhere because survival depends on pay. Graduation rates aren't accurate.

- Special education...not enough teachers or training

- Not all schools are treated fairly. Some schools receive lots of resources and updates and others do not receive any. For instance some schools that already have a PTA that purchases everything the school could need, received money from the district for AstroTurf. Meanwhile other schools do not have enough desks, have chairs from the seventies, not enough laptops for all grade levels, and have not been slated for any improvements at all. Some schools that are receiving building improvement are already new and are simply getting updates because they have trailers. Not to mention the fact that for some reason, 700 students, all of low SES and of color are grouped into one school. Why are the schools so segregated in this day and age?

- Broken morale People in positions that they are unqualified for

- Roanoke City Schools has a huge equity issue. You have schools like Crystal Spring, Wasena and Grandin Court who have the support of the district and PTA’s that help buy AstroTurf and technology for their schools. They also have matching furniture, a clean school and adequate resources. On the flip side, you have schools like Westside, Hurt Park and Lincoln Terrace which are dirty, full of mismatched and broken furniture, are lacking technology resources. The current superintendent has done nothing to improve this equity issues and does not value all of our schools. This is a huge issue for the success of our students. There is also a huge culture of fear and retribution that had been created by the superintendent. Consider the turnover rate for Central Office Staff, Administrators and teachers. The new superintendent would have the power to create a new culture in this district. The veteran staff desperately want to see positive change as do the community members. A cleaning of house in the central administration building would go alone way with building trust with staff and families.
• The turnover in RCPS is high and seems to be increasing every day; from schools to central administration staff people are leaving at an alarming rate. All staff members are overworked and not heard with their concerns. Teachers are overwhelmed with testing requirements and not fully supported by central administration with any of their concerns. There is tremendous "lip service" but no true support. Staff morale (teachers and administrators) is at an all time low and needs to be addressed immediately to retain staff and maintain consistency for our students. Schools are encouraged to work together yet are pitted against each other when test scores and discipline issues are compared - this does not make for a unified school system nor does it foster team playing. Actually it discourages it. Although professional development opportunities are provided and allow teaching staff to learn and implement current educational pedagogy, teachers are using this training to succeed in other systems when they leave RCPS due to lack of support.

• Nepotism and cliques that often times shuts out the outsiders.

• Teacher and employee morale is at an all time low. Teachers are being micromanaged and all the fun has been taken out of teaching. We need to bring back the days where teachers where given a little freedom to repeat a lesson if the kids did not understand instead of moving at such a fast pace. This is creating behavior problems in children that are struggling. If we are trauma informed district then we need to train (really not just talk) teachers because we are the front line. We are not getting the necessary support and these kids that are throwing tantrums daily are disturbing their learning, others and they are causing their teachers to burn out quickly and not be able to continue to teach. We are struggling as a whole. Teacher safety needs to be addressed, whether it be in the classroom or coming to and from school during weather related delays and closures. To make elementary teachers work a full day and give middle and high a day off was unnecessary and something should have been done to compensate the elementary teachers but instead they flat out said nothing would be done. The low morale is one reason teachers leave and the no support in our classrooms is another. We need to retain and boost morale!!!

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

• Our superintendent must sincerely consider the needs and preferences of all stakeholders - students, parents, teachers and staff, community, etc.-- and make decisions accordingly.

• Having an open door and truly listening to employees, parents and students. Doing what it takes to maintain teachers, principals, etc.

• Active Listening Skills Empathetic Experience teaching in an urban school division Resourceful (knowledge of grants, programs, etc. to provide additional support for the students and families) Outcome-oriented Proactive Transparent (open lines of communication) Innovative problem solving skills

• Be respectful not intimidating. Be able to stand up to helicopter parents and support teachers.

• being professional in speech - not talking down or cursing at employees, open to a team (servant) oriented way of leadership
• An understanding of how to meet needs of a diverse population, trust for teachers and staff, financial wisdom

• Strong character, supportive of teachers and admin, raise the expectations for students and parents being active participants in education, continue the support for strong fine arts programs

• The new superintendent needs to have integrity and a passion for learning, whatever that looks like and despite what the numbers may say. He or she needs to be honest and humble so that the community will respect the new superintendent.

• The ability to change if a plan isn’t working (all that needs to be done with the pass laptops is to allocate them to every classroom rather than every kid take it home to not be used). I want the superintendent to care about staff safety during weather - many times we haven’t closed when everyone else around has. Many teachers do not live in the city and struggle to get there these days.

• They should be compassionate, open minded, courageous, and have experience in urban education.

• The new superintendent needs to be bold, an unafraid of enforcing the school code of conduct and advocating for students and teachers’ rights. Sometimes that may involve standing up to guardians who don’t want to be held accountable for their role in their child’s education. Students are more than sources of data. They are human beings who will need to be active and successful members of the community. To do that, they need and deserve a high-quality education. If nothing is expected of students, they will believe they are not capable of rising to the expectations we have for them. Everyone deserves the opportunity to rise to an expectation.

• Grit, stick-to-it-iveness, knowledge of and experience in other urban districts

• We need a much younger superintendent with new ideas! Fresh blood.

• listens to community, supports teachers and principals, strong leadership skill, willing to delegate instead of micromanage

• The new superintendent MUST establish a rapport and trust with teachers and building administrators. There is a deep sense of distrust and fear between the superintendent and school staff right now. They must be approachable and willing and ready to spend time in classrooms as well as with teachers to begin to build that trust.

• Open minded, community awareness, creative for collaboration

• 1. Be able to change the culture of aggression and violence to one of support  2. More support for teachers  3. Secure larger funds for schools and staff pay  4. New ways to motivate students  5. Increase ways to promote non-traditional teaching methods  6. More and better technology in schools

• We need someone who is socially cognizant, someone who understands the inequities in our community. We need someone who is creative, forward thinking, compassionate, and a team player. We need someone who can adequately represent the diversity our district so readily advertises, but understands a school of mostly black children does not equal diversity. We need someone who looks at the banner "narrowing the achievement gap," and recognizes the blame that places on students for their success. We need someone who
recognizes a lack of opportunity, the unequal distribution of resources and fights to even the playing field. We need someone bold enough to make the best decision for everyone, even if some people are overly concerned with the effect on their own interests.

- Honesty, joining in with the community at school and community events.
- The Superintendent should be approachable and familiar with our division.
- Ability to surround themself with competent people that they can delegate responsibilities to, so that micromanagement becomes a thing of the past.
- Communicate. Walk your talk. Don't play up things and then forget to follow through. Build trust in the professionals that work for RCPS. Treat us as professionals.
- Communicate well with all stakeholders; walk the talk and create a vision that inspires all to be the best they can be. Encourage; collaborate and build trusting relationships at every level to ensure the district succeeds at every level of learning.
- We need a superintendent who is willing to listen to and show appreciation for a hardworking staff. We also need a superintendent who will immerse themselves into our community.
- A servant-based leader who is visible and adept at forming and leading teams; not afraid of collaboration and allowing skilled individuals to exercise authority on his/her behalf; someone who values experience but is a visionary that can manage change; someone who fully accepts responsibility for the direction of the district; a listener and motivator; someone who values diversity in all its aspects; a consensus builder between the schools and the community; an instructional leader who self-educates themselves on best practices in the classroom and recognizes outstanding educators more than once a year, or every five years; someone who is resilient in their professional and personal life.
- Value the arts and extracurriculars, not just sports. Good at building relationships. Understands the challenges of a classroom as a teacher and has empathy for others. High expectations for students. Puts the needs of students, parents, and teachers before personal agenda. Dedicated to making the school environment functional, safe, respectful, and welcoming.
- A strong superintendent has the following three qualities: - Is highly visible: Instead of calling a particular principal to their office they visit the principal at his or her school. They take time once a week to be at a school for intake or dismissal. They stop by the lunch room and sit with students for casual conversation about the school. The more visible they are the more respected they will be. - Sees education as a calling...not a job or even a career. The best teachers in our city see their placement this way. They are more than teachers - they are parents, teachers, grocery getters, counselors, and caretakers. - A strong leader is willing to take chances, shake things up, do things differently, set the standard in new ways, and listen to their teachers ideas for how to solve problems they face everyday. They are willing to break the mold to become a true model for other school systems.
- Someone who supports teachers and values the importance of relationships (ie appropriate class size).
- Kind and compassionate, yet stern and not a push over. Knowledgeable on school law and new insights on how to improve/overhaul the City.
• Fairness. Willingness to look for unique solutions for problems. Willingness to be involved with students and student success on a daily basis. This means real involvement, outside of sitting in an office.

• They need to think about every student, teacher and staff member in the RCPS system. They also need to support all subjects, the arts, core subjects and ROTEC classes. All of these classes are important to our students and we need the support from the community to keep all these classes which makes RCPS so unique. They should want to advocate for all these things within the community and even the state. The superintendent should want to visit schools and get to know students, teachers, and staff. A personable superintendent is someone that shows how much they appreciate the work RCPS staff does on a daily basis and shows students that there are even more people there to support them.

• Unbiased Culturally sensitive and competent Willing to learn Roanoke City and provide necessary solutions to change the culture and mindset that has plagued Roanoke City for years Inclusivity Puts employees first and uplifts their staff by putting our needs before others (mainly, parents) Approachable Is willing to get to know staff at the schools and listen to staff concerns, same with students and parents

• Involvement in all areas...be visible in the schools

• Impartiality, the ability to treat all schools equitably. A superintendent that is able to see that certain schools do not have the resources that others do and works to make it fair. And someone that cares about the staff. They complain about high turn over but do nothing to make staff want to stay. I hope the new superintendent shows that they value the hard work teachers do by providing adequate support and resources.

• Needs to be someone local who knows what has been going on

• Honesty. A strong sense of ethics The desire to want to forge a new path forward for Roanoke city that supports staff and students in a positive way An awareness of the needs of the district and the current poor feelings staff and families feel towards a majority of the Central Office Staff A willingness to eliminate negative leaders that currently hold positions

• A new superintendent should be able to listen and be willing to implement immediate changes to retain teaching staff and administration. He or she should possess confidence to make the changes necessary in central administration to bring RCPS back to a level where people want to work and live in the system.

• A passion for diversity and equity in educators and in the schools.

• Compassion, recent experience in an inner city system. Ability to clean house and restructure to make needed changes city wide. Ability to listen to staff and make a difference.
Summary of Paper Survey Stakeholder Responses

There was a total of 274 stakeholder responses submitted on Paper Surveys. The responses were as follows:

Spanish input forms – 6
Students – 123
Parents – 75
Teachers – 22
Classified – 5
Multiple stakeholder groups – 42
Community Members – 1

Total: 274

Common Themes from Paper Survey Responses

1. What are the good things about Roanoke and your community?
   - A good place to live and work
   - Good jobs
   - Social Activities
   - Outdoor activities
   - Traffic is light
   - Perfect size city
   - Festivals
   - Mall
   - Diversity
   - Quiet Community
   - Friendly
   - Good people
   - Inclusive
   - Eclectic
   - Churches
   - Community works together
   - Cleanliness
   - Hospitals
   - Public transportation

2. What are the good things about the Roanoke City Public Schools?
   - Project based learning
   - Fantastic Teachers/Principals
   - Adequate funding
   - Staff cares about students
   - PTA’s
   - Activities/Events
3. What are the most significant issues the next superintendent will face as he/she comes into the district?

- Not being fair to people who don’t have a strong voice to speak up
- Trauma Training
- Fighting/Drugs in schools
- Too much emphasis on SOL’s
- Racism
- Homeless
- Poverty
- Rules are not enforced
- The published graduation rate is False
- Too much smoke and mirrors
- Administrators, teachers and parents are tired of the Central Office rhetoric
- Teacher morale is very low
- Insubordination of students
- Violence and anger issues
- Lack of respect for faculty/staff
- Bullying
- Class sizes are too large
- Teachers do not feel supported
- Transient district

4. What skills, qualities, or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

- Respect for all people
- Experience in a diverse district
- Kindness
- Leadership without intimidation
- People Skills
- Strong Leader
- Familiar with RCPS
- Patient
- Hard working
- A good listener
- Supportive
- Innovative
- Frequent School visits
- Visible
- Address Bullying
- Dedicated
- Open-minded
- A good decision maker
- Addresses Safety Protocols
- Honesty, Honesty, Honesty
- Communicator
- Organized
- Respectful
- Addresses Discipline Issues
- Mobile phone issues in schools
- Provides Professional Development
- Visionary
- Risk-taker
- Creative thinker
- Approachable
- Love for others
- Respect
- Patience
- Appreciative
- Establishes a positive climate