

Stakeholder Input Report for

Valdez City Schools

Valdez, Alaska

submitted by

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November 2024



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**Valdez City Schools
Valdez, Alaska
District Stakeholders Report**

November 2024

Executive Summary

During the months of October and November 2024 consultant Steve Lowder conducted interviews with students, staff, Coast Guard families, and community members. The following is a generalization of the response and themes of those meetings.

What's good about the community:

In general Alaska is seen as a different place. Valdez is truly an American small town where people don't lock their doors. VCS is fortunate to be funded by the oil revenues from the city. It's a very tight knit community where most everyone is engaged in community activities and events. Everyone knows what is going on with other community members. Kids feel safe here.

What are the good things about the District?

The District is well funded, which may be problematic because of the number of initiatives that can defuse and slow forward progress for student achievement. The District has always maintained their facilities to a high level, but this has slipped in recent years. The District has a strong and dedicated staff, who want the best for the students and community. The parents are engaged and supportive of the schools.

What issues will the next superintendent face when they enter the District?

Student achievement is stagnant and while there are many initiatives, there is a lack of focus and leadership. Accountability is inconsistent and meaningful professionally supportive evaluations are rare. The District doesn't have a strategic plan to guide their path forward. This will be problematic for their next accreditation. Communication is

inconsistent and often spotty at best. The next superintendent will need to build community and an esprit de corps among not only staff but community partners. Many feel that VCS has lost its once cutting-edge image in the State but that it has all the necessary resources to rebuild. The District and community desires that the next superintendent has the skills and ability to bring people together and develop consensus around a new vision of the future. In collaboration with staff and stakeholders charts a clear path for the necessary changes and rationale and reasonable implementation plan.

What characteristics and experiences should the next superintendent have to be successful?

A clear communicator with superior speaking and writing skills. Someone who is approachable, friendly, outgoing, and has a heart for making a difference for students and the community. A person who engenders trust and is committed to living and working in Valdez. A person who is willing and able to dedicate years to being an active participant in the community. A visionary who knows how to develop collaborative goals and has a track record of successful track record of implementation. An individual who will take the time necessary to get to know the community and staff before making significant changes. A knowledgeable educator who holds themselves and others to high stands of accountability. The next superintendent must understand the history and context of the community and its dynamics. They must have the ability and desire to reach out and develop strong and welcoming relationships with the military and their families.

*Survey Monkey Results for
Valdez City Schools
November 2024*

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

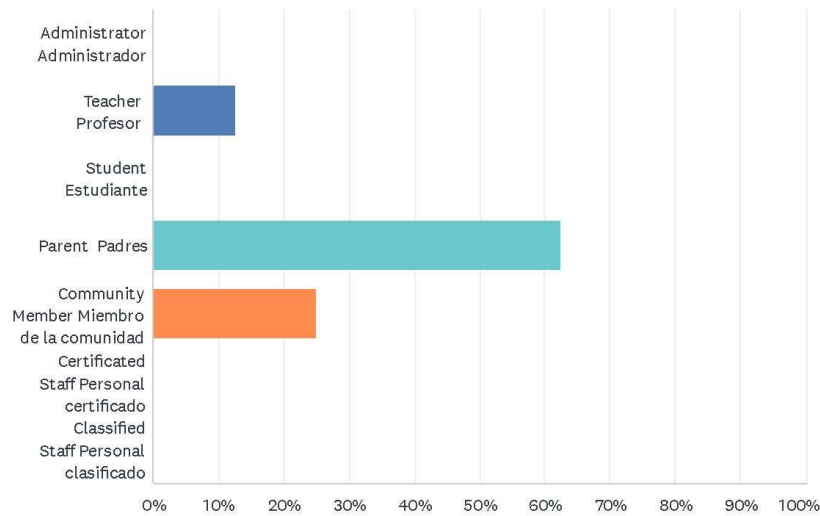
8 responses

Stakeholders Input Form--Valdez City Schools, AK Formulario de aportaciones de las partes interesadas -- Escuelas de la ciudad de Valdez, AK

SurveyMonkey

Q5 Please indicate the stakeholder group you represent: Indique el grupo de partes interesadas que representa:

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Administrator Administrador	0.00% 0
Teacher Profesor	12.50% 1
Student Estudiante	0.00% 0
Parent Padres	62.50% 5
Community Member Miembro de la comunidad	25.00% 2
Certificated Staff Personal certificado	0.00% 0
Classified Staff Personal clasificado	0.00% 0
TOTAL	8

Q1 Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)Cuéntenos las cosas buenas de su comunidad. (Esta información se utiliza para ayudarnos a reclutar candidatos de calidad).

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Small town USA	11/5/2024 10:33 AM
2	Small, closeknit, everyone knows everyone, need to be ok with being rural and cut off from the "real world"	11/4/2024 3:44 PM
3	The entire community joins together to help and/support each other when there is a need.	10/28/2024 9:50 PM
4	We have a lot of capable, intelligent people. The new superintendent should have a track record of accessing the historical knowledge of the community.	10/28/2024 4:28 PM
5	A place where children can be kids for a bit longer than the lower 48. Bullying is so much lower, the kids are more known as a whole by the teachers. A great place to raise a family.	10/28/2024 12:12 PM
6	There's endless outdoor recreation opportunities.	10/28/2024 11:55 AM
7	Close community with strong opinions and mostly respectful dialogue. Comes together in hard times. Well funded.	10/28/2024 11:12 AM

Q2 Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)Cuéntenos las cosas buenas de sus escuelas. (Esta información se utiliza para ayudarnos a reclutar candidatos de calidad).

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Teachers have the students at heart	11/5/2024 10:33 AM
2	Strong certified staff with some longevity. Admin is in a good place right now. We have money, but it isn't always spent adequately.	11/4/2024 3:44 PM
3	We used to have school spirit and kids actually wanted to attend	10/28/2024 9:50 PM
4	The school district a lot of capable, intelligent people. The new superintendent should have a track record of accessing the historical knowledge of the the school district they serve.	10/28/2024 4:28 PM
5	The restrictions that other communities have are limited due to the difficulty of accessing our town. You can eat with your kids and take treats to their classrooms. You have friends watching out for them in the schools.	10/28/2024 12:12 PM
6	We have some amazing quality teachers and our resources seem endless!	10/28/2024 11:55 AM
7	Well funded. A number of teachers that care. Passionate.	10/28/2024 11:12 AM

Q3 What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.) ¿Qué problemas debe tener en cuenta el superintendente cuando entre al distrito? (Esta información se comparte con los candidatos finales).

Answered: 8 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Teachers union controlled	11/5/2024 10:33 AM
2	Classified staff specifically have been burned by the previous super. There have been In the last 7 years, Valdez has gone through 4 main supers and 2 interim supers. There's not a lot of faith in the position right now. Some of that is to blame on this search firm sending bad candidates, some of that is on the previous board (which has had significant enough turnover to be in a much better place right now).	11/4/2024 3:44 PM
3	There is a HUGE gap between the haves and have nots. Parents tend to spend money and not attention.	10/28/2024 9:50 PM
4	We are a somewhat divided community...except we're not really sure where we're divided. We've employed quite a few superintendents over the years.	10/28/2024 4:28 PM
5	Title IX handling needs a revamp. Many holes in the reporting and investigation process that leaves the district open for a lawsuit.	10/28/2024 12:12 PM
6	The "good old boys". Sometimes someone new coming in gets road blocked by "the way thing have always been done."	10/28/2024 11:55 AM
7	The superintendent should be well versed in policies, procedures, laws, and best practices related to provision of special education services under IDEA.	10/28/2024 11:47 AM
8	Board, admin, and teachers are often not on the same page. We think we're pretty great but our test scores are mediocre at best. District needs stability and someone that will get everyone rowing the boat in the same direction.	10/28/2024 11:12 AM

Q4 What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.) ¿Qué habilidades, cualidades o características debe poseer el nuevo superintendente para tener éxito aquí? (Esta información se utiliza cuando seleccionamos candidatos potenciales).

Answered: 7 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	listen to everyone	11/5/2024 10:33 AM
2	Someone who listens to the needs of the community - our schools belong to the city and are community commodities. Our families travel a lot for doctors, groceries, and vacations. Someone who can communicate frequently, eloquently, and effectively. Someone who puts kids first, and the wellbeing of employees second -- above fiscal savings.	11/4/2024 3:44 PM
3	The best Superintendents gets in the trenches...learns names, becomes involved. Anybody remember Lance Bowe?	10/28/2024 9:50 PM
4	If the candidates are not from Valdez, or have a past (successful) history in Valdez, then they should at least be from Alaska. They should be experienced as a superintendent, preferably in more than just one district. It'd be good if they had fairly current teaching experience, as well. It seems that we often get superintendents who have far more admin experience than teaching experience. Teaching now is more challenging than it was, even as recently five years ago.	10/28/2024 4:28 PM
5	The superintendent needs to have a solid base home life. They need the ability to check out and recharge. The community has been fatigued with the frustration of school and curriculum problems, discipline/harassment mishandling. To make things functional the super needs to be positive, and able to recharge after dealing with many frustrated parents.	10/28/2024 12:12 PM
6	Communication skills are top priority! Being able to positively direct staff and parents.	10/28/2024 11:55 AM
7	A communicative leader. Someone that can effectively stand up for and up to staff to achieve a common vision. Not looking for some dreamer to make huge immediate change but rather incremental change over time.	10/28/2024 11:12 AM