

# **SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROFILE**

**Bethel Local School District**

**February 11, 2019**



**Prepared for the Board of Education**



By  
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## **Bethel Local School District** **Superintendent Search Profile Report**

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This report presents the summary of findings from the Superintendent Search Profile forums conducted by K-12 Business Consulting, Inc. (K-12), on February 7 and from 92 written search profiles submitted from various stakeholder groups. Once the Board of Education selected K-12 to conduct the superintendent search, a Search Profile Assessment document was created to solicit input from various stakeholders in the community. The Board and administration developed a broad list of community stakeholders to solicit input from as well as a general community wide invitation to meet with K-12 staff members Deb Campbell and Karel Oxley to discuss the characteristics in greater depth. Any stakeholder who had a desire to express an opinion was welcome to submit a search profile and personally meet with K-12 at the open forums that were held at the Elementary Auditorium and Bethel Hall on February 7, 2019. The information obtained through these sources, and summarized below, should be used to assist the Board in identifying characteristics requested of superintendent candidates.

The Search Profile Assessment form was made available to the district staff, identified stakeholders, plus all individuals who attended the focus group sessions. In addition to the 92 individuals who returned written online search profiles, there were 77 individuals who participated in interviews and community forums facilitated by K-12. The results of the written Search Profile Assessment forms are included in this report along with several comments received in face to face discussions held at community forums.

In accumulating the data used in this report K-12 sought opinions, recommendations and general comments with respect to preferred candidate characteristics, traits, qualifications and personal demeanor, as well as district strengths, weaknesses, issues and concerns which may have a bearing on future leadership strengths for your next superintendent. At the request of the Board, K-12 sought the views of a broad range of individuals represented in the district to assist in the search process. It was determined that K-12 would report the findings to the Board without revealing the identity of any citizen or staff member who provided information, thus equipping the Board with unbiased data to use as it proceeded to define the search profile for the next superintendent.

A Search Profile Assessment form was used to provide a framework for reporting the information compiled by K-12. Broad themes were highlighted in each question area into eight response groups (support staff, teaching staff, administration/central office, students, community/parents, elected officials and the school board). Under each question in the report the response group's common themes were identified. The first category titled as "Consistent" are comments which were frequently heard from all or nearly all eight of the response groups. Comments heard less frequently or only heard in a specific response group are listed only under that response group. The responses noted under "Consistent" for any of the response groups are noted with the highest frequency first then descending to less frequently heard. It is important to note that the data compilation is not a scientific sampling, nor should it necessarily be viewed as representing a majority opinion of those interviewed in the response group.

K-12 would like to commend the Board of Education for its efforts to include many stakeholders of the school district in the development of the superintendent search profile. Many respondents expressed positive feelings about being involved in this process and the opportunity to help shape the Bethel Local School District. We would also like to thank Mr. Brennon Hatterly, CFO/Treasurer, and Mrs. Della Felton, Administrative Assistant, for the professional way all arrangements were made, including mailing invitations and Search Profiles, as well as contacting and scheduling the focus groups that made this profile possible.

## **STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT**

**Question #1: What do you consider to be the two or three most significant strengths of the district?**

### **CONSISTENT THEMES**

- We have a close-knit community that is supportive of all aspects of the educational environment.
- Bethel's staff is dedicated, loyal, hardworking, caring, and goes the extra mile.
- Our students perform well academically and are motivated to learn.
- The schools are the focal point of the community – “the heart of it all”.
- Our growth and diversity can be a strength as we continually evaluate our programming and ways of doing business.

### **BOARD**

- We have a community that realizes the importance of its school district and wants to be a part of the school.
- Bethel has a talented student body that has had much success in different areas for many years.
- Our excellent teaching staff is caring and willing to go the extra mile.
- Our growth and diversity can be a strength as we continually evaluate our programming and ways of doing business.
- We have an excellent staff at all levels who go the extra mile for kids.

### **ADMINISTRATORS**

- The most significant strength is the parental and community support of education. Everyone supports the whole child and the forward-thinking approaches to the necessity of teaching 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning skills.
- Hardworking, dedicated staff, including administrators, teachers, and support staff.
- Bethel enjoys great parental support in our schools.
- There are high expectations for student performance and learning.
- Students are motivated and want to succeed.

### **TEACHERS**

- There is a tradition and pride in this school district with a great deal of community involvement. People care about our kids.
- We have an experienced and committed group of teachers, administrators, and staff.
- The school is the heart of everything.
- Strong academic program offered by strong staff to students who are willing to learn.
- Bethel has a good reputation because education is a priority in this community.
- A flexible school environment allows students to participate in multiple extra-curriculars at the same time.

## **SUPPORT STAFF/CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF**

- Dedicated, caring, and loyal staff.
- A community that is involved and supportive of the school.
- People come to Bethel and stay. There are generational families here.
- We have a stable financial forecast.
- Our high school building is state of the art.

## **COMMUNITY/PARENTS**

- There is a sense of community in our small school atmosphere. The close-knit community is involved and active with our district.
- We have a staff that is great and caring. The teachers have high expectations.
- Bethel has great students!
- The district has good test score and many academic opportunities.
- Our schools are the focal point of the community. It is the heart of the community.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS/KEY STAKEHOLDERS (Booster leaders, etc.)**

- We have a very positive academic reputation and people move to the northern section of Huber Heights just so their children can attend Bethel.
- Teachers are very dedicated to students and they know students personally.
- Students can participate in multiple extra-curricular activities at the same time.
- Our new high school is state of the art.

## **STUDENTS**

- We have a close-knit community that stays connected to the student body and supports the youth.
- Bethel has passionate, helpful, dedicated teachers.
- Everyone knows everyone.
- Students like and respect Mr. Swope (We love him)!
- Bethel has a good reputation, strong academics, combined with athletics, the arts, and support for all extra-curriculars.

## **IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING DISTRICT**

**Question #2: What do you consider to be the two or three most important issues facing the district?**

### **CONSISTENT THEMES**

- Rapid growth has caused the following issues: space, funding, staffing, learning resources, class size, and equipment.
- There is tension and lack of trust between various faction of the school and the community.
- There are differing philosophies regarding how the district should move forward to meet student needs.
- We need to embrace the new-found diversity and determine pathways to positively deal with the changing culture.
- The district needs a vision and long-range plan for the future.

### **BOARD**

- Our diversity and growth present challenges such as space, finances, and changes necessary to meet the demands.
- Effective communication with our community so the community understands the need for additional resources.
- “New” and “old” factions of the township need to be brought together in order to move our school district forward.
- We need to address the high level of mistrust between the administration and the community.

### **ADMINISTRATORS**

- Rapid growth of our district’s enrollment has caused challenges with space, learning resources, adequate special services, and staff.
- There is no current strategic plan to bring community, staff, and students together with a common vision for the district.
- The tension of “us vs them” has carried over from previous contractual issues, and there is a lack of consistency in securing and keeping administrators.
- Building leaders feel that they do not have the support of the Board of Education to make decisions in their building.
- We need to learn to communicate with a diverse population.

### **TEACHERS**

- We have a need for a facility to meet the needs of a growing population as our current facilities are out of space.
- Class sizes are large in the elementary with no funding to support smaller class numbers.
- There is a need to understand the language and cultural tradition of our changing community.
- Negativity and lack of trust needs to be addressed.
- There is a lack of collaboration and communication with the students, staff, parents, and community.

## **SUPPORT STAFF/CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF**

- We have rapid growth therefore we need to address space issues, staffing, and equipment needs.
- There is a lack of overall plan for Bethel Schools, so long-term decision are sometimes causing problems due to a lack of vision.
- Board members need to learn their role and the chain of command to renew trust within the system.
- There is a very negative impact from social media posts that needs to be addressed.
- An inability of some administrators to build unity and cohesion with staff and the community.
- Support staff does not feel appreciated by the Board of Education.

## **COMMUNITY/PARENTS**

- Our rapid growth is causing overcrowding in classrooms and on busses.
- We have a new-found diversity and need to have guidance on how to deal with this.
- The elementary have large class sizes and no funding or space to alleviate the problem.
- There is an “old” Bethel vs. the “new” Bethel, and it is causing division in our community.
- We need a leader who is respected, transparent, has integrity, can build trust.
- Our leader needs to be fiscally responsible and understand funding challenges.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS/KEY STAKEHOLDERS (Booster leaders, etc.)**

- There is an overcrowding of our schools, classrooms, and busses due to the rapid growth.
- Special needs students are not being identified and served as needed.
- We are confused about the budgeting process for athletics, arts, etc. and feel there is a heavy reliance on the Booster clubs to provide resources.
- Concern for addressing the need for additional space with compromising the choir and music area.
- The Board needs to clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Facilities need to be utilized more fully such as the “state of the art” kitchen.

## **STUDENTS**

- Our schools and busses are overcrowded from the rapid growth.
- There is a lack of diversity in our students and staff.
- We have eliminated student traditions such as all school pep rallies.
- Teachers are not appreciated and are unhappy.
- The cell phone policy is too strict.
- Bethel district has become divided over the past few years.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW SUPERINTENDENT**

**Question #3: Please tell us your two or three characteristics that you think the Board should look for in a new Superintendent.**

### **CONSISTENT THEMES**

- A respectful leader who is an open communicator with strong interpersonal skills.
- A visionary who can develop a long-range plan with the input of all stakeholder groups.
- A person who is engaging, interactive, and visible in the school and community.
- A leader with a fiscal background and common-sense approach to spending.
- The new superintendent needs to have high integrity and remember to put students first when making difficult decisions.
- Someone who has a collaborative, uniting spirit that builds a positive culture.

### **BOARD MEMBERS**

- Open communicator who has strong collaboration and interpersonal skills.
- A person willing to accept the community as it is while developing a collaborative long-range plan for the district while being an effective CEO.
- Visionary leader who can expand facilities to meet the needs of students and enhance student learning.
- Able to deal with labor issues as they arise.
- Good listener who can take responsibility for mistakes and verbalize what they have learned from the mistake.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

- Strong educational leader with background in solid instructional practices and curriculum knowledge.
- A leader with strong communication skills.
- Someone with influential qualities that attract others to follow their lead and vision. The leader should be able to lead us through these changing times.
- A person who can keep their focus on what is best for students.
- A leader who can delegate responsibility and trust people to get the job done.

### **TEACHERS**

- A leader with high integrity who is respectful of students and staff.
- Someone who is fiscally responsible with a common-sense approach to spending.
- Innovative leader who can help us set a vision and move the district forward.
- A person who is engaged and interactive with staff and students.
- Someone who values people and can work to incorporate good ideas into a broader vision.

## **SUPPORT STAFF/CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF**

- Someone who appreciates all extra-curricular activities including athletics.
- A leader who can listen to dissenters and have the flexibility of attitude to change direction if the information presented is feasible and will unify the community.
- A person who is welcoming and inviting with empathy for people.
- A leader who is open-minded and understands the dynamics of the district.

## **COMMUNITY/PARENTS**

- Someone who stands their ground and puts students first without yielding to individual agendas.
- A leader who is a great communicator and can gain trust to unite the staff and community.
- A person who respects and trusts teachers and staff to do their job. He/she values the time of others and considers himself/herself a member of the team, not just the leader.
- The new superintendent has a strong vision that is developed with the input of stakeholders. The leader will follow through on the long-range plan.
- Someone who is visible at school and community functions and is approachable.
- A person who is fiscally responsible.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS/KEY STAKEHOLDERS (Booster leaders, etc.)**

- A leader who can emphasize the need for a chain of command when decisions are made.
- A new superintendent that has the support of the Board and can make wise decisions.
- Someone who can help the district reinstate the traditions and fun times that help to build community and relationships.

## **STUDENTS**

- A leader who cares about kids, is interactive with us and knows our name.
- Someone who is respectful of school traditions and will learn about those traditions before they begin his/her work here.
- A person who is very involved in the school and community.
- A leader who is hard-working, approachable, effective at communication and a good listener.
- A superintendent who puts student safety first.



**SUPERINTENDENT CHARACTERISTICS BY RANKING**

**1 = MOST IMPORTANT TO 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT**

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>BOE</b>	<b>ADMIN</b>	<b>TEACHERS</b>	<b>SUPPORT STAFF</b>	<b>PARENTS &amp; COMMUNITY</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>
Ability and willingness to deal fairly with faculty, staff, students and parents	2	4	1	4	1	1
Effective at creating and implementing a vision for the district	3	2	8	1	2	5
Expertise in design and implementation of instruction and curriculum	10	3	9	7	8	10
Effective with both written and verbal communication	5	7	6	5	9	7
Successful experience as a superintendent	6	6	4	2	6	4
Experience with socially and economically diverse student populations	7	8	10	8	10	6
Fiscal management expertise	9	9	3	9	3	9
Effective organizational and management skills	8	5	5	6	7	8
Personal involvement and interest in the community	4	10	7	10	4	2
A leader with strong interpersonal and public relations skills	1	1	2	3	5	3

## RANKING OF TOP AND BOTTOM FIVE (5) IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS ALL GROUPS

<b>RANK</b>	<b>TOP 5 CHARACTERISTICS</b>
1	Ability and willingness to deal fairly with faculty, staff, students, and parents
2	Effective at creating and implementing a vision for the district
3	A leader with strong interpersonal and public relations skills
4	Personal involvement and interest in the community
5	Successful experience as a superintendent

<b>RANK</b>	<b>BOTTOM 5 CHARACTERISTICS</b>
6	Fiscal management expertise
7	Effective at both written and verbal communications
8	Effective organizational and management skills
9	Expertise in design and implementation of instruction and curriculum
10	Experience in socially and economically diverse student population

### SUMMARY

The information gathered through surveys and interviews bears strong similarity across all groups with respect to the Bethel Local School District's strengths, issues and concerns facing the district, as well as the characteristics desired in the next superintendent.

Clearly, all groups and individuals expressed that Bethel's *greatest strengths* include district's (A) The close-knit community that supports all aspects of the educational environment; (B) The loyal, dedicated, caring, and hard-working staff; (C) Students who perform well academically and come to school ready to learn; (D) A district who's schools are the heart of the community since there is no town to call a gathering place; (E) The rapid growth (approximately 100-150 students per year) which opens the door for increased opportunities for students. In short, the Bethel Local School District has an exemplary reputation and is held in high regard in the Dayton area. The district has many reasons to be proud of the schools and the community.

The *top concerns* facing the Bethel Local Board of Education and the new superintendent in the future – all of which surfaced repetitively through focus group sessions and from the written Superintendent Search Profiles that were submitted individually – included: (A) The rapid growth which has caused issues with classroom space, funding, staffing, learning resources, and class size; (B) There is a tension and lack of trust between the school and the community; (C) Philosophical differences on how the district should deal with growth and the actions necessary to gain acceptance for a plan moving forward; (D) Helping the school embrace the new-found diversity and determine pathways to deal positively with the changing culture; (E) The district needs a vision and long-range plan for the future.

It is important to note that the district is well-respected in the area and that families want to move here for the academic and extra-curricular activities. Bethel Local Schools afford students the opportunity to participate in multiple extra-curricular events at the same time which shows a collaborative spirit with the leaders of those extra-curriculars activities which is sometimes rare in a district.

The district also has wounds that need to heal from difficult negotiations and a new high school building plan that was presented during the levy as a one floor plan and then changed without extensive community input. The new leader will need to understand these dynamics and develop an inclusive plan to move forward.

It was difficult to capture all the characteristics that respondents were looking for in a new superintendent. It is certain that no one person could possibly embody all that was mentioned for attributes of the next superintendent.

In reconciling the many concerns and *characteristics sought in a superintendent* for the Bethel Local School District, the vast majority respondents expressed the need for the person to have these characteristics: (A) Ability to be an open communicator with strong collaborative and interpersonal skills; (B) A person willing to learn and accept the culture and develop a long-range collaborative plan for the future; (C) A visionary leader who can expand facilities to meet the needs of staff and students and enhance the learning environment; (D) Someone who is able to deal with labor issues and give a voice to the Support Staff who are not a part of an organized labor association; (E) Someone who can listen and take responsibility for mistakes and express what was learned from that process of solving issues.

The new superintendent should be visibly active in the schools and the community, serve as a role model personally and professionally to students and staff, be sincere, approachable, and exhibit trustworthiness and integrity. The fact that Bethel Local schools will continue to grow and become more diverse will take added attention from school personnel for the community to keep that “small-town” feel that everyone embraces.

We believe the Bethel Local School District is approaching an important period of transition in the years ahead. Difficult decisions will be required of the new superintendent to balance stakeholder expectations of a high performing district while keeping a realistic eye on available resources. This individual will need to possess effective communication skills, establish a vision and long-range plan collaboratively with all factions of the school and community. A skillful superintendent will have the opportunity to help the district navigate through challenging issues, and the district must do so if it is to thrive and continue to build on student success and continue to engender community support. We will look for this key set of skills, and ones that complement each other, in candidates for the next superintendent.

The Bethel Local School District is a close-knit community that is full of pride about their school district’s academic and extra-curricular successes. We believe that the right candidate for superintendent will recognize the opportunity this environment has for them to really be involved in making a difference in the lives of children. We believe we will find the right candidate(s) who have the attributes outlined herein, possess the skills and energy needed to address the issues and concerns expressed by respondents, and who will be happy to be a part of the Bethel Local School District community.

Respectfully submitted:

K-12 Business Consulting, Inc