



# MISSION SUPERINTENDENT A COMMUNITY COLLABORATION



Durango School District

# Durango Board of Education



**Kristin Smith**  
Board President



**Erika Brown**  
Board Vice President



**Andrea Parmenter**  
Board Secretary



**Rick Petersen**  
Board Treasurer



**Katie Stewart**  
Board Assistant Treasurer/Secretary



# What We Will Learn

Strategies for Including the Community  
in Your Superintendent Search and the  
Work of the Board



## ABOUT US

**95% Graduation rate at Durango High School**

**4 Schools awarded Governor's Distinguished Improvement**

**20% CMAS test scores rank in the top 20% of all Colorado Schools**

**1079 Square miles**

**11 Schools**

**4,200 students**



# Why is Community Engagement Important?



-  Builds trust and a positive reputation
-  Recognizes the needs and expectations of the community.
-  Increases visibility and attractiveness of the district
-  Provides valuable feedback







## Engagement 1

# First Steps

## 1. Hire a Firm or Support Source

- Develop a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy  
Figure out what you want to know and from whom

## Ask the Community

- What qualities do you want in a Superintendent?
- Community Survey in English/Spanish
- 11 targeted Community Focus Groups





# FOCUS GROUPS



**30 minutes each led by 2 BOE members**  
**15 invitees per group**

<b>Principals and Charter School Directors</b>	<b>Elementary School Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>
<b>Board Thought Leaders Group</b>	<b>Middle Schoole Teachers</b>	<b>PTO Leaders</b>
<b>District Support Staff</b>	<b>High School Teachers</b>	<b>School Based Support Staff</b>
<b>Retirees</b>	<b>Former BOE Members</b>	<b>Executive Team</b>





# Table Shout Out!

**Which table has the most distinctive group that they would connect with in the community?**





# RESULTS OF FOCUS GROUPS



**Prior classroom  
experience and  
experience as a  
Superintendent**



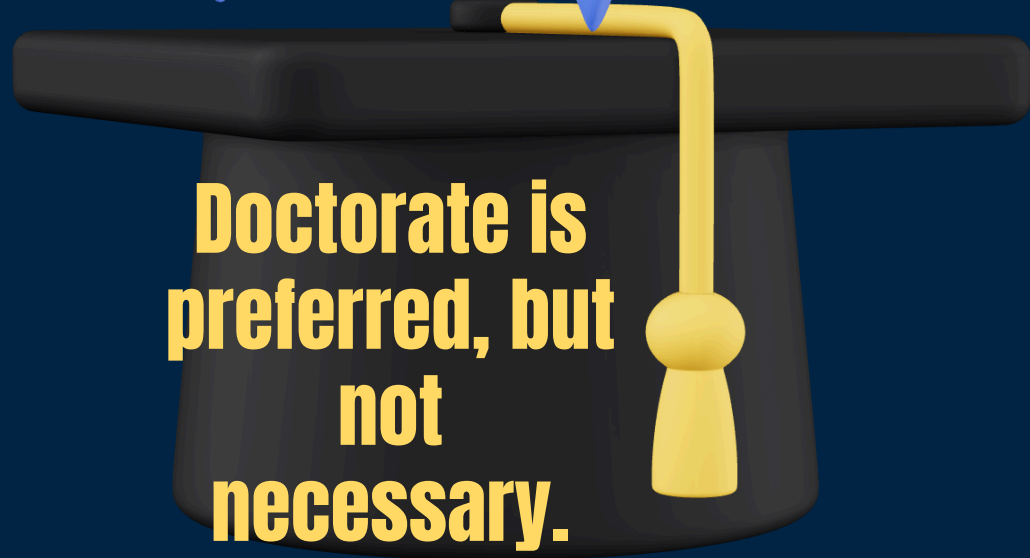
**Data demonstration of  
success in addressing  
ALL students'  
academic  
achievement needs**



**Cultivate trusting, collaborative  
relationships with diverse  
Durango stakeholders**



**Proven success  
in leadership,  
instruction,  
finance, and  
accountability**



**Doctorate is  
preferred, but  
not  
necessary.**



# Survey Results



**Build a team of respect and trust with the staff at all levels**

**Establish transparent and respectful relationships throughout the community**

**Improve student achievement**

**Assess and improve the overall culture of the district and its relationship with the community**

**Establish clear and accountable relationships with the Board**

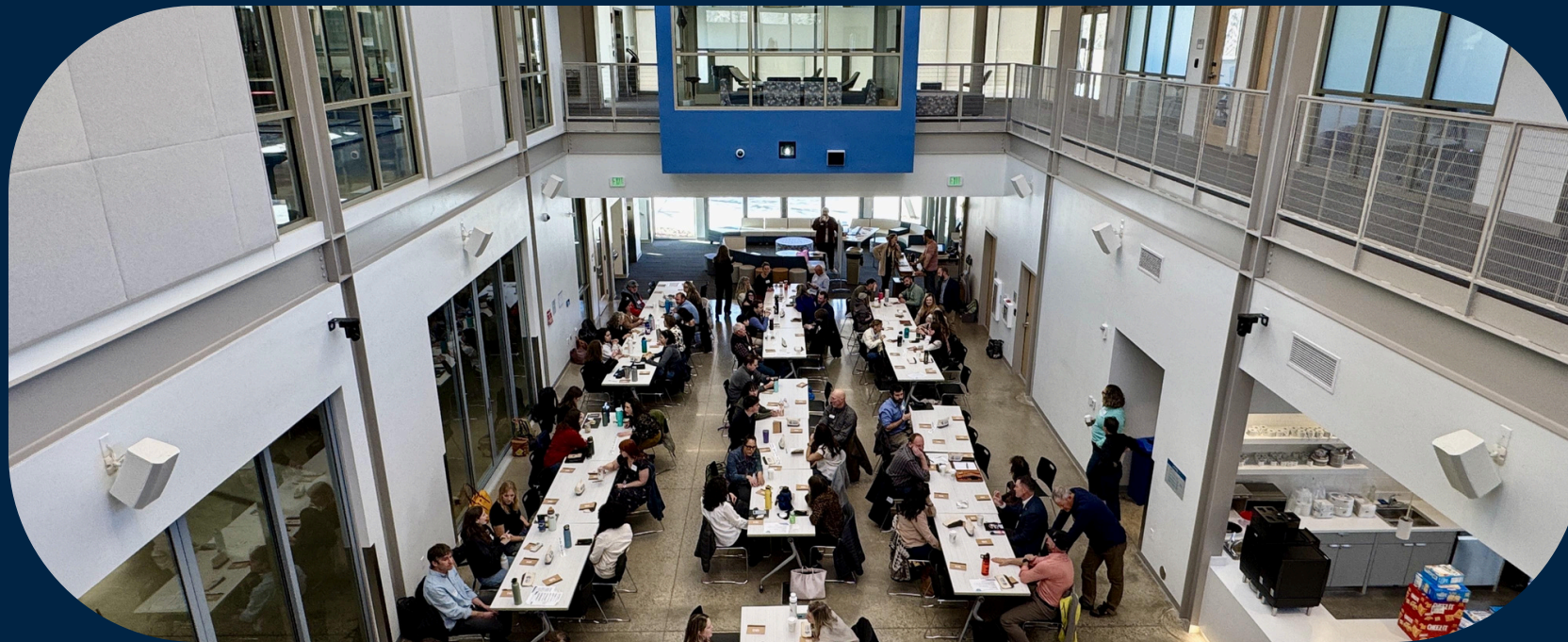
**Improve communication within the district**

**Improve communication throughout the community**



## Engagement 2

# Resume Review Event



## WHO

Invited 26

Participated: 14

1 Teacher  
2 District central office staff  
2 Parents  
1 Teacher/DACC representative  
1 FAC representative  
1 NAPAC parent  
1 Support staff  
2 Principals  
1 Community school leader  
1 BOE Thought Leader member  
1 Student Board Representative







# RESUME REVIEW EVENT

## SET UP

**5 APPLICATIONS  
TO REVIEW**

**LUNCH PROVIDED**

**BOE MEMBERS  
AVAILABLE FOR  
QUESTIONS**

## RESULTS

**DISTRICT AND  
SCHOOL STAFF WERE  
HONORED**

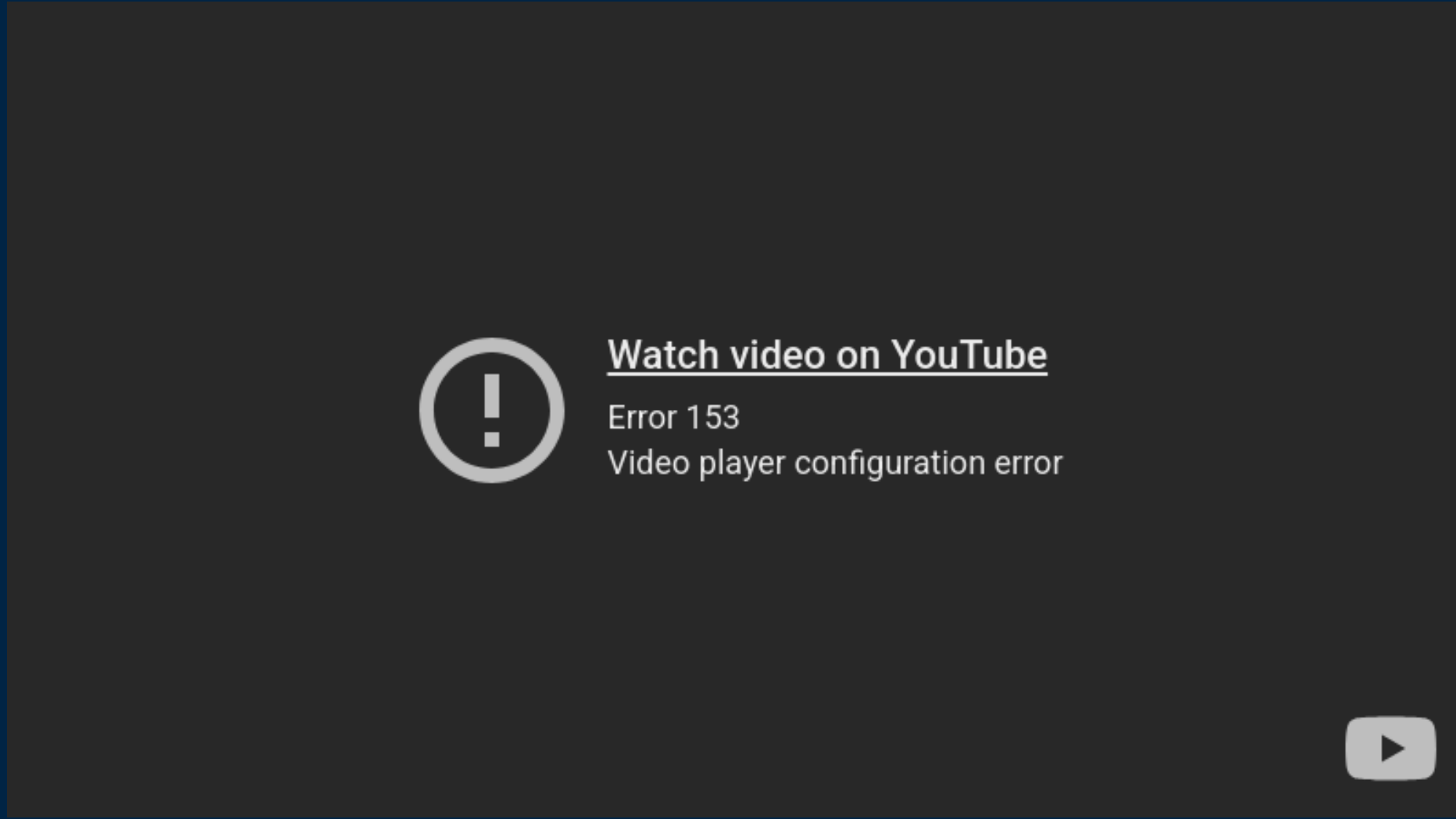
**70 INDIVIDUAL  
FEEDBACK  
FORMS**

**CANDIDATES FOR  
TOP 3 BECOME  
CLEARER**





# The Importance of Ongoing Community Engagement



## **Engagement 3 The Big Weekend!**

# **Final 3!**

**Goal: Engage Students, Staff, Parents,  
and the Community**

**Engagements:**

- **School Tours**
- **Community  
Leaders Lunch**
- **Community  
Interview Event**

**Student  
Voice  
Matters!**







# School Tours



## Objectives:

- Create a way for candidates to directly interact with students.
- Create a way for meaningful teacher and principal feedback.
- Give candidates an experience in the schools: Elementary, Middle, and High School

# School Tour Results



- ☀️ **Student feedback forms give us insight into what is important to them**
- ☀️ **Selected teachers have a chance to give direct feedback**
- ☀️ **Principals of the schools fill out feedback forms**
- ☀️ **The candidates can share about what they have seen in their interviews and community engagement**



## **Program Description:**

**Invite all the Community Leaders and all District Executive team members.**

## **Objectives:**

- **Have the community leaders ask the questions**
- **Have community leaders fill out feedback forms**
- **See how the candidates respond to questions on the spot**

# **Community Leaders Lunch**







# Community Interview Event

## Program Description:

A time for the community to watch a live interview of the candidates.

## Objectives:

- Broadcast far and wide to get a lot of community, parent, and staff engagement.
- Give the candidates a chance to introduce themselves to the community.



# Superintendent Selected!







# Measuring Success



## Parent Survey 2019

School treats my  
student with respect:  
71%

## Survey Data 2025

School treats my  
student with respect:  
95%

## Teacher Survey 2018

Leaders Support for  
staff: 86%

## Teacher Survey 2025

Leaders Support for  
Staff: 99%

## CMAS MATH 2019

31.1 %

## CMAS Math 2025

38.4%

# Conclusion

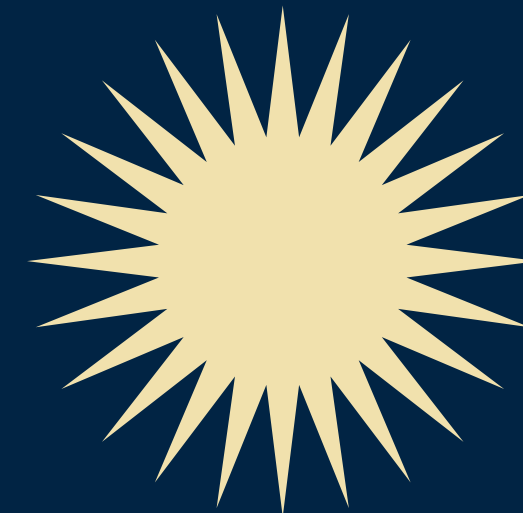
**Strong community involvement in the Superintendent search process creates mutual benefits and leads to a substantial positive impact**



**EmpowerED Digital  
Superintendent  
of the Year**



**Dr. Karen Cheser**







# Contact Detail



**[schoolboard@durangoschools.org](mailto:schoolboard@durangoschools.org)**



**[www.durangoschools.org](http://www.durangoschools.org)**



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