

Superintendent Search in Your Future?

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Preparing for the superintendent search

(or...setting the stage for successful leadership transition)



**We set the stage by
discussing and
answering a series of
critical questions.**



1. What is/are our reason/s for considering a search?

2. Is our position public knowledge?

3. Should/Can we do the search ourselves?

4. What is our timeline and process?



5. Is the board aligned related to our current landscape?

6. Do we agree on the key/critical requirements and experiences for all candidates?

7. Do we have the necessary internal support/resources?

8. What happens after the search? (or...how do we help our new superintendent succeed?)



LET'S GO!



1. What is/are our reason/s for considering a search?

- a) Our current superintendent is retiring or has taken another position
- b) Our current superintendent is not doing an adequate job
- c) We have a split board. Some of us like our superintendent; others don't. But we're not getting anywhere right now.
- d) We have an internal staff member who could be an excellent superintendent and they are being recruited



2. Is our position public knowledge?

- a) First rule with big or difficult news:
 - Tell it first
 - Tell it fairly
 - Tell it factually
- b) If not, let's agree on how and when to message
 - Consider communications support
 - Make sure all parties are aware
 - Agree on feedback practices



3. Should/can we do the search ourselves?

- a) Yes. But a search, done well, is a complex process, taking several months and involves a tremendous amount of logistical coordination and communication.
- b) Hiring a search facilitator allows the board to continue to do its district work.
- c) Hiring a search facilitator isn't free.
- d) Working with a search facilitator (well) requires trust and commitment between that person and all board members.



4a. What is our timeline?

- a) A full search takes 80-100 days. This can flex according to the board's need but is a good general guideline.
- b) Work backward. When do you want the new superintendent to be in-district?
- c) Consider overlap with the outgoing superintendent. Do you want that?



4b. What is our process?

a) Whether or not you hire a facilitator, the search requires multiple important steps:

- Planning and benchmark setting
- Alignment of board expectations
- Building the ideal candidate profile
- Marketing and recruitment
- Focus Groups/questionnaires
- Communicating with potential applicants
- Collecting application materials
- Analysis of applications and selection of candidates for interview
- One or more rounds of interviews
- Reference and background checking
- Board deliberation and negotiation
- Appointment and announcement



5. Is the board aligned related to our current landscape?

- a) Currently, what are our biggest challenges or ‘gaps’?
- b) If we each made a list of our five biggest “wants” or “needs” for the district, how similar would they be?
- c) Would the central office and other staff agree with our take?
- d) What skills does our current superintendent have that we really appreciate?
- e) What is something we must see in a new superintendent?
- f) Does the new superintendent need to be “best” at leading people, managing budget, leading advocacy or building community investment?



6. Do we agree on the key/critical requirements and experiences for all candidates?

- a) Do we want an experienced superintendent?
- b) Do we want Colorado experience?
- c) Do we want a traditional public school educator?
- d) Do we have educational expectations?
- e) How “on the nose” does a candidate need to be in comparison to our district?



7. Do we have the necessary internal support and resources?

- a) Do we have or will we need an interim?
- b) Whether you work with a facilitator or not, staff member/s in the district will be needed to assist with communications, logistics, data.
- c) Where will pieces of the search take place?
- d) How do we want to manage community feedback/focus groups?
- e) How do we want to work with potential internal applicants?



8. What happens after the search? (or...how do we help our new superintendent succeed?)

- a) Introduction to the staff and greater district community
- b) Workshop (call CASB) to level-set expectations and communications practices; agree on norms and protocols
- c) Transparent sharing of any non-negotiables
- d) Public and internal recognition of the board and superintendent as a dynamic partnership and team
- e) Creation of or introducing superintendent to strategic plan and current progress
- f) Discussion of superintendent goal-setting and evaluation as part and parcel of and aligned with the strategic plan





What questions do you have?

Thank you for being with me
today.

Have a great CASB
conference!

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