

SCHOOL EXEC CONNECT

Eden Prairie Public Schools New Superintendent Profile

Eden Prairie Individual Interview and Focus Group Feedback

School Board (Current and Recent Members)

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years

- Financial stability, transparency and accountability, evaluate revenue and see if referendum is needed (5)
- Regain the confidence and trust among the community/staff and board (4)
- Continue the initiatives to support the needs of diverse students (2)
- Settle the boundary issue with board and superintendent (2)
- Develop a strategic plan to set vision for the district (2)
- Improve communications (2)
- Improve achievement for all students, close the gap (2)
- Get grip on our enrollment issue, capture rate and build plan to accommodate the students (2)
- Redefine the environment we provide – add offerings, College in the Schools, magnets – 21st Century learning environment (2)
- Look at facilities issues related to capacity and program (2)
- Become more creative with the delivery of instruction, in part by increased use of technology and by creating partnerships with business.
- Make our mission very clear to everyone (we are not just about “GAP” kids).
- Sell the district successes
- Create a welcoming and open environment in the schools
- Show evidence that we really are addressing the needs of all students
- Hiring the right superintendent
- A Board committed to getting things changed
- Trumpet the district and its successes and quality programs
- Answer questions/concerns regarding how money is spent
- Address the issues with the Spanish Immersion School
- Allow the grieving process to occur with a change of leadership
- Reexamine the K-6 model that is in place this year
- Rebuild the morale of the staff

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- Staff are excellent (7)
- In general, a very supportive, caring community that values education and has pride in its successes (6)
- Students are really focused and ready to learn, bright and motivated (4)
- The opportunity for experiences with diversity (4)
- A great variety of educational opportunities for students (2)
- Strong teaching and learning program, academics (2)
- Reputation as an excellent school district (2)
- District committed to success for diverse students
- Board committed to achieving goals
- This is an excellent place to learn
- Strong extra-curricular and fine arts programs – large student participation
- Strong finances
- Well managed
- Transition plan
- Our strong, highly educated, double income customers
- A very involved group of parents, lots of volunteer help

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- Lack of funding going forward (4)
- The challenge of addressing the needs of diverse learners (4)
- Loss of students to private schools, charters, other districts (4)
- Raising achievement for all students (4)
- Not everyone sees diversity as a benefit (2)
- Not all students are ready for kindergarten (2)
- A sense that we are pitting one group of students/families against one another (2)
- Haven't been able to develop programs for all students and implement them, don't have the infrastructure to do so (2)
- Too much time spent on social issues and not academics (2)
- Resistance to listening (2)
- Do not have a communications strategy (2)
- Need high standards and expectations of all staff and hold them to them (2)
- Deal with some staff dissent and division, walls among groups (2)
- Lack of transparency with the all stakeholders
- A pre-set agenda by some as to what must be done and how to do it. Must change, or a "house cleaning" is needed.
- Changing demographics of parents – more working, segmented, busy

- Only 20% of community has students in school
- Board governance model
- More involvement in schools of our diverse community
- Parents need to feel welcomed
- Some people want to halt change in the district
- Holding staff accountable for success of all students
- Too much social promotion of students
- Internal organization – staff is accountable to board not equal basis with Board
- Need to get legislature to support education financially
- Too much dependence on referendums
- Facilities and capacity as it relates to programs

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- A good collaborator, team player and enjoys doing it with all people (8)
- Someone confident, comfortable and adept at handling diverse opinions, decisions and criticism (8)
- Someone willing to share all news, not just good news, open, transparent (7)
- Someone knowledgeable about finances and creative in finding funding sources (7)
- Understands Board governance and knows how to work with the Board in a constructive manner (6)
- Someone who truly enjoys people, friendly (5)
- Well versed in curricular and instructional best practices, strong academics (5)
- Honest and has strong ethics (4)
- Someone who is knowledgeable about and will foster a celebration of diversity (4)
- Seasoned and experienced in all facets of the district – referendums, declining enrollment, building trust, district in change (4)
- Someone who demands that all staff meet expectations (4)
- Knows how to create and implement a vision and strategic plan, systemic thinker (3)
- Someone comfortable discussing and welcoming challenges (3)
- A strong, natural leader (3)
- Someone who can support and enjoys the success of their staff (3)
- Someone who can hire, support and direct the cabinet in an effective manner (3)
- A very good communicator with all groups in the district (3)
- Someone who can take on the demeanor of a CEO (3)
- Someone who presents the data behind decisions (2)

- Innovative and creative problem solver, can implement new ideas (2)
- Nimble and has finesse (2)
- Flexible (2)
- Able to prioritize and has good delegation skills (2)
- Has been in a fairly large district (2)
- Visible, accessible, goes to events (2)
- Able to work constructively with the community
- A hard worker
- Well rounded educational philosophy – academics, fine arts, activities
- Someone who embraces immersion education
- Someone who is a strong supporter of gifted and talented programming
- Someone strong in the use of technology
- A good listener

5. What questions would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- What major initiatives have you put forth and implemented? What were the outcomes?
- How would you do a business plan and account for how, when, where and why money has been spent? What were the results?
- How do you measure your own success?
- What is your communication style and how do you interact with people?
- What would it take to bring up the top achieving 10% of students and how long do you think it will take?
- How do you communicate that we are a top district and people of Eden Prairie should keep their kids in our schools?
- Have you ever terminated a teacher or a principal? What was the process and was it successful?
- What is your Board governance model? What is your view of it?
- How have you managed the relationship between the Board and superintendent and what are the roles of each? What did you like or didn't like? Did you make any changes in this relationship while in your district?
- What is opinion on a longer school day, school year?
- What are the 2-5 things you think are the most important aspects of the superintendency?

Cabinet

- 1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.**
 - Deal with polarization within the community – privileged versus non-privileged
 - Address the achievement gap
 - Address the needs of everyone – can't go back
 - Mend relationships with Board/administration/staff
 - Create an environment of learning
 - Relook at Board governance model – what does it say to the community
 - Create a strategic plan
 - Need an overall vision and how to work together
 - Need to grieve loss of superintendent and direction of the district
 - Need consistency and direction for the district

- 2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals?**
 - Schools doing well – achievement, finance
 - Personalized learning for students
 - Dealing with equity issues - not only talk but action
 - Intellectual challenges
 - Impressive and innovative programs
 - Town is the district
 - Community support and pride
 - Diversity of the community

- 3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers to achieving those goals.**
 - Lack of administration working together – distrust here
 - Loss of faith in school district
 - Board governance
 - Lack of working together for common goals
 - Lack of strategic vision from the Board

- 4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.**
 - Able to deal with diverse perspectives
 - Able to put aside blame and inspire
 - Understand the needs of finance issues
 - Able to clarify the message to the public on declining enrollment
 - Commitment to equity issues
 - Sense of vision to move forward

- Marketing expertise
- Able to build relationships with the press
- Experienced superintendent – able to deal with all issues
- Strong leader
- Capacity to listen
- Advocate with the staff – help them to feel confident
- Acknowledge people for what they do
- Background in understanding issues of diversity
- Enjoys a challenge
- Has own sense of balance in their life
- Sense of humor
- Able to teach people

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

Directors

1. List the three most important goals for the district to achieve in the next three years?

- Finish K-6 transitions and continue to educate community on this issue
- Healing the community
- Operate as professional learning communities for growth in their jobs

2. List the district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- Committed employee group – solid and together
- Principals strong and work together
- Diverse population – nice blend
- Data shows that students are succeeding
- Cutting edge technology district wide
- Efficiency of operations
- Finances fairly solid
- Peace with labor groups

3. List the district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- Make employees part of the decision-making process
- Stretch students for achievement
- Communication to the public – share processes
- Initiative overload
- Develop a long range plan that can be articulated to all
- Micromanaging by the Board

- Board governance model
 - Lack of positive public relations
- 4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.**
- Support local operating groups not management firms
 - Run the district and move it forward
 - Take into consideration work load and see what we can do
 - Promote learning and teaching
 - Able to have communications with staff and hold them accountable
 - Help staff grow professionally
 - Market the good stuff of the district
 - Create partnerships within the district
- 5. What questions/area would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?**
- What do you value most as a superintendent and why?
 - How do you get out and know the buildings and programs?
 - What will you do to market this district? Give us some examples of what you have done in your current district.
 - What is your position on Professional Learning Communities?

Principals

- 1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.**
- Need a strategic plan to establish our goals and what to keep and what to get rid of
 - Deal with achievement gap and related issues
 - Continue equity work that has begun
 - Bring the community together
 - Need to articulate the markers of success
- 2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving those goals.**
- Achievement of students
 - Students live in the world, not a cul-de-sac
 - Stability of building leadership
 - Value added with diverse community
 - Strong staff
 - Body of school district is the same as the community
 - Strong teaching and learning and staff
 - Choice programs

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving these goals.

- Personalization of blame and decisions
- Involving families of color in schools
- Silos in the district and programs
- Board functioning
- Gifted and Talented program and innovations such as STEM
- Women leaders have it tough here
- How will we offer choice programs

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Understand the background on equity issues
- Be an individual to bring community together
- Communication skills to deliver the message to groups
- Able to claim our niche
- Inclusive in decision-making
- Grounded not ego centered
- Solid anchor for the district
- Bring us back together without personal sacrifice
- Able to compromise
- Gender neutral
- Experience in the chair, not a learning place
- Large school experiences because we have large schools
- Principal experience
- Balance autonomy with district needs
- Skilled at understanding multiple perspectives

5. What questions would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

Students

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- Addresses the funding issues
- Address issues created by the boundary changes
- Become more open and transparent in processes like the boundary changes

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- A great diversity of students
- A great array of activities for students

- Teachers and coaches care
- Students really care about academics
- Students here have a passion for what they do
- Almost every student in this school has something they are really good at
- A big high school is an advantage
- Great school spirit
- The community really supports education

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- Many people are adverse to change
- A lot of tests
- Teaching to the tests to be sure the district looks good
- A lack of visibility to students of the Superintendent and School Board—they seem disconnected from the students
- A lack of communication at times (i.e., the extra day for winter break)
- Different groups of students in the two lunch rooms (caused by the fact that one has limited “free and reduced” options)

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Someone who embraces diversity
- Someone who can address the achievement gap
- Someone with strong communication skills
- A team-builder
- Someone who will hold the School Board accountable
- Someone who can pull people together
- Someone who has experience with a large school
- It would be nice if they had experience in Eden Prairie
- Someone who will do something like this, sitting down with a group of students
- Someone open to new ideas
- Flexible
- Someone who can keep us at the fore-front
- Someone strong with technology
- Someone with strong beliefs that guide them
- Someone willing to evaluate success
- Someone able to say no
- Someone effective in influencing the Board and community
- Someone willing to listen
- Someone with a good understanding of different cultures
- Someone who will hear all voices

- A strong work ethic

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- Knowing what you know about our boundary change situation, how would you have handled it differently?
- Where do you see Eden Prairie High School in 5 years?
- How will you pursue attaining goals that are laid out?
- How do you use technology?
- How do you prioritize the use of funds?
- Do you support funding for the arts?
- How will you stay connected to students?

Teacher Leaders

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- Communication for all and it needs to be focused
- Need to deal with recovery period – perceived or real
- Get our reputation back
- Improve achievement and deal with the gap
- Move forward with Spanish Immersion
- Be competitive with choice
- Market ourselves
- Capture students for our district
- Maintain and promote early childhood programs

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- Strong staff ready to move forward – committed to Eden Prairie
- Collaborative, non adversarial labor relations
- High community involvement
- Strong families
- Diverse population
- Strong programs
- Success for all – a learning place
- Professional development
- Professional Learning Communities
- Invested in technology and technology coaches

3. List the district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- Improve teacher pay
- Competitive class size

- Get capture rate up
- Competition with other options – private, charter, other districts
- Make sure immigrants stay in school
- Special education issues re: Level III and IV
- Space allocation and capacity/school balance – discussion of capacity not race
- Teachers do not always feel heard – not asked or to be in on the front end
- Too many initiatives – cant’ do all well
- Look at literacy block
- Stability of the district administration
- Need creative ideas on full day every day kindergarten

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Rebuild trust – get investment of community
- Deal with the achievement gap
- Bring in new ideas
- Work with district administration
- Surrounded by good people and seek out the good in them
- Able to educate the Board on issues so mistakes are not made
- Understanding of special education and special programs
- Approachable
- Good decision-maker
- Cutting edge ideas and able to push
- Great communication skills and keeps staff in the communication process
- Thick skin to do what is right
- Able to work together with people
- Strong leadership skills
- Vision for education and the district
- Been a superintendent
- Advocate for staff
- Work with Board governance
- Able to have a conversation on capacity

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- What would parents/staff say about you?
- How would you deal with conflict and collaboration?
- How would you bring people along in the process?
- How would you involve stakeholders?
- What is your view on what happened here? What do you know?
- What are things you like to see in this new position?

- What are your weaknesses?

Teachers

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- Building trust with the staff and community
- Maintaining enrollment
- Inviting the students back who have left the district
- A need to share information much more freely
- Survey families who have left to see why
- Continue our efforts to close the achievement gap
- Need more attention to achievement other than closing the gap—the “all students” message needs to be reinforced with the community
- Get the staff and community to believe their input is important and value.
- Addressing the funding/class size issue
- We have a great story to tell, but we must tell it
- To re-build our reputation—we need more openness with the community.
- Make the environment “safe” for expressing true feelings

2. List your district’s three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- High powered, energetic, motivated staff (2)
- Staff willingness to learn and continually improve (2)
- The community values education
- Strong professional development for staff
- Strong instructional technology
- A staff that appreciates feedback through the Q-Comp program
- A new leadership team ready to grow with a new superintendent

3. List your district’s greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- Lack of funding
- A few moral issues that stem from a lack of funds
- Top-down management
- Too many initiatives, a lack of focus
- Lack of communication that, at times, leads to misperceptions
- Lack of inclusiveness with staff
- Committee work needs to be re-built—people have felt manipulated in getting to a pre-determined outcome.

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Someone knowledgeable in closing the achievement gap
- Someone who can find creative revenue sources
- Visible
- A strong, principled leader
- An excellent communicator
- Someone who invites other people's opinions
- Someone willing to admit mistakes
- Flexible
- Approachable
- Someone who, when you interact with them, makes you feel better
- A genuine, "real" person
- Someone with classroom experience
- We need a "buck stops here" style, more like John McBroom.
- Someone with strong marketing skills
- Someone who understands and values early childhood education
- A "trust-builder"
- Visionary
- Someone who will empower others
- A collaborator

Support Staff

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- Funding – look outside the box to do different things in finance
- Listen to all people
- Bring back respect and community support for schools

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving those goals.

- Great teaching staff and administration
- Schools are good
- 95% go onto some form of post secondary
- Facilities are good – well maintained
- Good technology and there are people to help
- People work well together
- Parent support especially the silent majority is supportive

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- The pocket of negativity – staff and community can we get over it again

- The School Board division with individual agendas
- Board governance – not being directly involved in management
- Funding

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Leadership
- Honesty
- Taking what people say and doing what is right for kids
- Able to build a strong team from cabinet and throughout the district
- Trusts people
- Holds people accountable
- Able to delegate
- Not be from too small a district but someone for which it is almost a lateral move

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- What are the characteristics you look for when building an administrative team?
- How do you work with a challenging Board?

Early Childhood Family Education Parents

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- Continue emphasis on ECFE
- More educational opportunities for parents
- Focus on the whole family
- Work on equity and cultural issues
- Make changes work – slow down and understand them – don't make more changes now
- Identify core policies and values
- Do programs well

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- Student success
- Culture of success in all activities
- Something for every child
- Lots of parent involvement
- High expectations
- Highly educated parents

- Community pride
- Technology in the classroom
- Professional development

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- How do we communicate to all people in the district so they understand who we are as a district
- Having more people standing up and say the facts
- Maintaining success for all students
- Too many initiatives and no time to process
- Time for staff development for teachers
- Make students ready for kindergarten
- Poverty and poverty rate rising
- Access to programs not fair

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Understands the benefits of an ECFE program
- Overall big picture person
- Strong communication skills to let people know plans and what is going on
- Support the staff
- Understand immersion programs
- Strong leader with a plan and able to communicate it
- From outside the district, viewed as biased
- Lots of experience
- Confidence in their abilities

5. What questions/area would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- What experiences or knowledge do you have in all ranges of the bell curve?
- How do you assist all students?

English as a Second Language Parents

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years?

- We need a school for adults in Eden Prairie – we are made around and now we have no space – need consistent space
- We need to be more literate in English – we are willing to do so – need space for learning
- We can help children

- Children need more help in school and in after school programs to help with homework and raise their academic scores
- Need more help at the adult school
- Need to have kids go to school
- Mad at change – important issue in district – the redistricting issue
- I lost my job – how will you help me find a job
- Need more classes in computers and reading
- Need adult transportation and job center for adult education
- Need to look at how other districts provide the breadth of services for ESL and learn from them

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- School is good for our children
- Good parent/teacher conferences
- Good communications

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- No day care so if we had that we would get more adult students
- Some special education classes need to be expanded – pull out for some kids is hard – move pull outs so not always at the same time

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Strong leader who is fair
- Nice
- Understanding
- Understand how important our community is and how important school is to our children's future
- Puts time in to help with programs

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- What will you do for us?
- What is your program/plan to develop education in Eden Prairie?
- What kind of support do you need to achieve your goal?
- Have you ever worked with Hmong, Somali and Hispanic parents and how much do you understand the community?
- How would you help us with our problems?
- Have you ever worked with other service agencies to bring more collaboration or co-location in school sites to benefit the access to services?

- What do you want to bring to the Eden Prairie school district for the next 4-5 years?
- What difference will you make if you come here?

Hispanic Community

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next here years.

- Continue to integrate minorities into all schools so gap of learning can be closed
- Look at NWEA scores – minorities are still lagging – work more with them
- Restoration – a lack of understanding of why some changes were made – shook up a lot of people – heal
- Create a new sense of community
- Minorities treated equally
- Ongoing early intervention for special education to increase success
- Must inform people as to what, if any, changes will be made in the redistricting that was just completed
- Create a more welcoming environment so all people feel a part of the community
- Communicate with the different groups in this community and listen to their concerns to facilitate positive change and acceptance

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- Partners in preschool – to give kids what they need
- Overall academics we are well known for
- One of the best cities in the U.S. to live in – well organized
- Good sense of community
- A diverse community who are valuable to achieving district goals
- Teachers are very well qualified
- Know for sports but need to see more minorities involved

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- As students get older the supports for them are not enough and they get lost in the shuffle
- Acceptance of diversity and integration
- Bring up academic levels and close the achievement gap
- Manage the funding and finances
- Lack of state funding
- Need to assure decisions are made with the students in mind

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Caring and open minded
- Strong leader who will continue mission of the district
- Natural and genuine leader
- Extremely good communication skills
- Understand and listen to parents of all the community
- Lead district to higher levels
- Address the needs of all employees
- Able to build strong partnerships and build bridges
- Good charisma
- Be willing to listen to individuals and work with people to help them meet their child's needs
- Open and accessible

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- How familiar are you with the district and what do you see as the most important three goals for the district?
- How will you go about achieving district goals? What is your timeline?
- What makes you think you are a good candidate for this job?
- Why do you want to work in Eden Prairie?

Open Community Meetings

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- Attract and retain more students (2)
- Restore the good feelings toward and image of the district
- For people to get along again
- A return to the "positive"
- Negative feelings toward the Spanish Immersion program need to be changed. It's a lightning rod for negative feelings. The issue is not the program, but how it was brought in.
- Continued financial stability
- Need to change from an "opaque" environment to a "transparent" one
- To know more about the drug situation in Eden Prairie—there is an issue, but people are not open about it
- An administration that is willing to address challenges
- Better communication
- Sharing the data behind decisions

- Having the leadership team reflect the diversity in the community
- Giving teachers more of a voice
- Determine if the transformation plan has met its goals
- A plan for the Spanish Immersion program at the high school
- More information on the use of financial resources
- The need to build/restore trust

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- Teachers are excellent (2)
- Visible, accessible, goes to events (2)
- Great level of "volunteerism" in the community(2)
- Great energy and goodwill in the community—"This is a great town."
- A very "family focused" community
- Parents passionate about their children's education
- Great community support
- Strong ECFE program
- Eden Prairie is a nationally competitive community.
- A highly educated community
- High school achievement
- A very open community—very few residents actually grew up here.
- The community is eager to embrace a new leader.
- Excellent principals
- Community members you can draw on
- Our kids are great!
- Excellent facilities
- Great economy of scale

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- Lack of trust between the district and community
- Lack of state funding
- Need better decisions and /or communication on how money is being spent
- We are about "built-out" and not adding many new students.
- Lack of a vision people can really get behind
- The number of students leaving for open enrollment and private schools
- One-way dialogue
- A lack of information . . . and the void gets filled
- Working with a new, rather inexperienced School Board

- The governance model the Board works under causes a perception problem

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- Someone with a good handle on the finances (2)
- Transparent (2)
- Accessible (2)
- An education leader (2)
- Someone like a CEO who can create a vision/direction and gain community support for it. (2)
- Someone who understands the dynamics of the demographic changes facing Eden Prairie
- Someone who takes a collaborative vs. confrontational approach
- Someone who puts children first
- Thick skin . . .but not too thick
- Someone who cares about what people think
- Visible
- Common sense
- Someone who will surround themselves with people who complement his/her strengths
- Someone who can collaborate with the Board and inform them when necessary
- Someone who bases decisions on best practices
- An advocate for education
- An advocate for Eden Prairie at the State level
- Creative
- Flexible
- Visionary
- Someone who realizes the need to be grounded and connected in the community
- The ability to make good decisions without outside consultants—we have spent hundreds of thousands on that.
- Appealing and charismatic
- Someone who looks to the teachers for what works
- Get Dr. McCoy out of retirement
- A good communicator
- Someone experience in leading a diverse environment
- An experienced person
- Someone with a regular classroom background
- Someone who can inspire staff

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- Questions on equity issues
- What is your experience with the Somali community?
- What is your understanding of our Board's governance model, what is your experience with it, and what do you think of it?
- Questions that have the candidate provide evidence that they have done it before.
- Questions about our Board's governance model
- How do you shorten Board meetings?
- Why do you want to come to Eden Prairie?
- How do you feel about the School Board accountability page on Facebook?
- What is the role social media plays in leading the school district?

Non-certified Staff

- 1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.**
 - Restore funding
 - Regain the support of the community
 - Restore staff moral—the issues that divided the community also divided the staff.
 - Restore pride in accomplishments
 - Keep class size reduced
- 2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.**
 - Great teachers and administrators
 - The schools are very good
 - Students are very successful
 - Excellent facilities
 - Excellent technology
 - In general, the community is very supportive of the district
- 3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.**
 - Overcome pockets of negativity
 - The School Board
 - A very over-confident, know-it-all public
 - Funding
 - Using funding as an excuse for why things cannot be done
 - A feeling that, when a committee is formed, the decision has already been made

- 4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.**
- Someone with political savvy
 - An “outside-the-box” thinker
 - Good listener
 - Can work with the Board on keeping them in their role
 - A strong team-builder
 - Someone who can delegate and trust
 - Experience in larger districts
 - An outsider—Eden Prairie has been somewhat “incestuous” with a lot of promoting from within
 - Someone who can address the bad feelings without losing the good parts of what is being addressed with the achievement gap
 - A good listener
 - Someone who does not let good get in the way of great
 - Someone who can gain the respect of students, staff and the Board
 - Someone visible in the schools and community
- 5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?**
- What characteristics do you look for when you build an administrative team?
 - How do you work with a challenging School Board?

PTO Presidents

- 1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.**
- The need to strengthen our elementary system—there is a fear we have stepped backwards
 - The need to institute a “customer focused” approach
 - Closing the achievement gap
 - Addressing the perception that the only area of emphasis is the achievement gap
 - The need to develop a message on addressing the achievement gap that stops people from leaving. Conn McCartan is an example of someone that does that.
- 2. List your district’s three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.**
- Very supportive community (2)
 - Very strong elementary schools
 - Passionate parents
 - Great teachers

- A lot of community pride
- Great mix of cultures in the community
- The size of the High School provides many opportunities

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- A lot of confidence in the district has been lost
- A perception of "they will be fine" regarding higher level students
- The negative perception of the Spanish Immersion School—it's a hot, touchy subject. Some see things that were promised that did not happen. Others see special treatment because of the Superintendent's focus.
- A sense that, "if you question anything, you must not be a true supporter."

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- A good communicator
- Collaborative
- Someone not afraid to be out there answering questions
- Someone who will bring business concepts and make decisions based upon data and has a good implementation plan.
- Someone who has experience closing the achievement gap by bringing the lower students up, not bringing the top down.
- Someone with very strong marketing skills
- Someone who will live in the district.
- Someone with a "fresh look" and no current connections to the community
- Thick-skinned, but not insensitive
- Accessible
- Someone who will collaborate with the teachers.

Community Leaders

1. List the three most important goals for your school district to achieve in the next three years.

- "Mend the fences" from the boundary change process
- Overcome the negative publicity of the past year and a half
- Reestablish the faith that the Eden Prairie district is excellent and their children should be here
- Returning to a focus on excellence . . . tell the good story there is to tell
- More openness about how things are decided

- Work towards acknowledgement and acceptance of the new diversity in the community
- A plan for the future designed to address the issues facing the district
- Meet all learners needs regardless of ability
- Re-building trust
- Reducing the controversy around the Spanish Immersion School
- Need an outreach program to families that have left the district

2. List your district's three greatest strengths/attributes for achieving these goals.

- A growing community—the population is projected to grow another 20%
- A great quality of life . . . #1 city in America in Money magazine
- A wide variety of cutting-edge business
- A highly educated population who want wants their students to succeed
- As many jobs here as people who live here
- High level of community involvement
- Excellent students
- High functioning parents
- Great park system, trails, opens space, etc.
- Outstanding teachers – impressed with quality and enthusiasm
- Community support – concern for school and that is why they raised concerns

3. List your district's greatest challenges/barriers for achieving those goals.

- The need to re-build trust before going to the voters
- Overcoming the negativity around redistricting
- Lack of funds for the schools
- Increasing diversity and lack of understanding of why we need to do certain things to help them succeed
- Too much focus on Spanish Immersion
- Too much NCLB type issues and what we are doing for my kids
- People are not confident that we are educating their children

4. Describe the three most important characteristics/skills the next superintendent needs to possess to be successful.

- An excellent communicator (2)
- Returning to a focus on excellence . . . tell the good story there is to tell
- The ability to develop trust
- A collaborative style

- “Super” fiscally responsible
- Astute at surrounding themselves with good people
- A team builder
- Excellent people skills and able to bring staff together
- Leader who can bridge the rifts
- Great delegator

5. What questions/areas would you like the Board to ask the candidates as they select the superintendent?

- Give an example of how you built a strong leadership team.
- Give examples of how you have creatively used resources.
- Give an example of how you built a strong collaborative program.
- Give an example of something you did that did not go well and how you resolved it.
- Will you become an Eden Prairie Rotarian?
- When faced with a potentially divisive issue, how will you proceed?
- Did you ever find yourself in a position of great negativity regarding the district? What did you do to turn it around?
- Who cares about my kid? Your response to this question?
- How do we educate the have and have nots to the betterment of the world?