

JE Consulting

Making a Difference.....

One Student at a Time

To: Regional School District 17 Hiring Committee – Superintendent of Schools

From: Dr. Joseph Erardi

Re: Community Profile / Community Engagement

Date: July 3, 2021

Engagement and Collection of Information

JE Consulting gathered information from multiple stakeholders from May 31 – July 2, 2021. There were nine separate meetings held during this five-week window which included meeting with the school board, every school community, central office, parents, and administrators. In addition, during the window of advertisement, an online survey was live on the Regional School District 17 website attracting over one hundred and fifty responses from multiple stakeholders (parents, community members, staff, board members).

In summary, well over 300 faculty/staff/community members attended a virtual session, completed a survey, or spoke directly to the issue via electronic mail or phone.

Findings

The Regional School District 17 community has prioritized the following **skills** as essential needs for the new superintendent:

1. A superintendent who has a deep and celebrated **understanding of PK-12 teaching and learning**.
2. A superintendent who values, recognizes, and champions best practice in all aspects of the work within the district; thus, through her/his professional daily performance, enhances **climate and culture** within the organization.
3. A superintendent who is committed to leading and supporting the **diversity, equity, and inclusion** work and appropriately leads this focus area for the entire Regional School District 17 school community.
4. A superintendent who makes himself/herself available to all stakeholders and fosters a **communication protocol** with staff, BOE, and parents that is embraced and understood by all in the community.

5. A superintendent who understands the complexity of regional challenges and can lead both communities with confidence in both the **fiscal and political** frame.

The Regional School District 17 community has prioritized the following **character traits** as essential needs for the new superintendent:

1. **Honest all the Time:** A leader who can make difficult decisions always in the best interest of the learner.
2. **Calmness Under Pressure:** A leader who represents the school board, district, and community with integrity and class.
3. **Strong Moral Compass:** A leader who has an unwavering ability to do what is right all the time.
4. **Well Versed and Well Rounded:** A leader that is true to their word and one that understands the balance of work and family.
5. **Strong Listening Skills:** A leader who genuinely is interested and respectful to the opinion of school and community stakeholders.
6. **Self-Motivation / Internal Drive:** A leader who continues to pursue personal and professional growth and development and someone who has the ability to “play that forward” to the school community.

Those who participated in the data collection believe that the greatest **successes** within the Regional School District 17 district are:

1. The **PK-12 student experience** that a learner receives throughout their R17 journey.
2. The **staff** (defined as all layers within the organization) who comprise the R17 district.
3. The **genuine (fiscal, political, parent) commitment** that both communities have to public school education.
4. The **safe and nurturing environment** that exists for teaching and learning throughout the district.
5. The R17 school board, despite fiscal constraints, philosophically and financially **supporting the arts, athletics, and numerous other co-curricular activities**.

Those who participated in the data collection believe that the greatest **challenges** within the Regional School District 17 district are:

1. **Maintaining / Enhancing the level of excellence** within the district due to the pandemic and the multiple learning platforms that were in existence for over a year.
2. Finalizing a plan that **galvanizes all stakeholders** around the return to the 2021-2022 school year.
3. Retaining key staff members (**administration and teachers**) as salaries within contiguous communities are highly competitive and attractive to the R17 staff member.
4. Creating a consistent and sustainable PK-12 program around the **social and emotional** needs of the child.
5. Maintaining and/or enhancing professional development and student opportunity with instruction around the focus areas of **diversity, equity, and inclusion**.

In addition, those who participated in the focus groups and those who shared additional comments on the survey believe the following is important for board consideration within the hiring process:

- The new superintendent strongly endorses and supports **all focus areas** (world language, unified arts, performing and fine arts, athletics, etc.).
- The new superintendent makes a **commitment** to Regional School District 17 and plans to stay in that role for many years.
- The new superintendent spends a considerable amount of time assessing **school climate** and then puts together planning to enhance the student and staff daily protocol.
- The new superintendent leads with a **quiet confidence** and a strong **personal credo**.
- The new superintendent looks at what makes the Regional School District 17 **unique** and sees the character of the towns as an enormous strength for the district.
- The new superintendent is **accessible, user-friendly**, and does not level staff by title or job description.
- The new superintendent spends a considerable amount of time **listening and learning** before launching any additional programs.
- The new superintendent fully understands the **complexity** of the present teaching and learning environment within the pandemic (post-pandemic) before creating any change to daily practice.
- The new superintendent empowers her/his leadership team with **inspirational and timely professional development**.
- The new superintendent is **visible** within the school community and the community-at-large.
- The new superintendent can **retain, lead, and inspire** the present R17 staff.
- The new superintendent embraces the opportunity to work in **partnership** with appointed and elected officials.
- The new superintendent is clear, concise, and unwavering with **decision making** to all stakeholders.
- The new superintendent **leads hard work** by working harder than all other staff members.
- The new superintendent has an inner strength to always do what is **right for children**.

Respectfully,

Dr. Joseph V. Erardi, Jr.