

**SPECIAL MEETING OF RSU NO. 5 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
WEDNESDAY- DECEMBER 22, 2021
FREEPORT HIGH SCHOOL - LIBRARY
6:30 P.M. SPECIAL SESSION
AGENDA**

(Note: This meeting will not be live streamed)

1. Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at _____ p.m. by Chair Michelle Ritcheson
2. Attendance:

____ Colin Cheney ____ Candace deCsipkes ____ Jennifer Galletta ____ Susana Hancock ____ Elisabeth Munsen ____ Dung Nguyen	____ Jill Piker ____ Maura Pillsbury ____ Michelle Ritcheson ____ Valeria Steverlynck ____ Madelyn Vertenten ____ Brady Grogan – Student Representative ____ Piper Williams – Student Representative
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3. Pledge of Allegiance:
4. Public Comment: (10 Minutes)
5. New Business: (60 Minutes)
A. Consideration and approval to engage with Maine School Management Association for Superintendent search services.

Motion: _____ 2nd: _____ Vote: _____
6. Adjournment:

Motion: _____ 2nd: _____ Vote: _____ Time: _____



Maine School Management Association Director Search Services

Technical Proposal To: RSU 5 for Superintendent Search Services

December, 2021

Maine School Management Association

49 Community Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330

Phone: 207-622-3473
Fax: 207-626-2968
Email: mama@msmaweb.com
Website: www.msmaweb.com



Maine School Management Association

49 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330

Telephone: (207) 622-3473 Fax: (207) 626-2968

Website: www.msmaweb.com

MSMA Superintendent Search Coordination and Consulting Services Proposal to RSU 5

The Maine School Management Association (MSMA) is pleased to have this opportunity to present RSU 5 with a proposal for superintendent search services. MSMA staff is prepared to conduct your search in the most individualized and professional manner possible. Because our work involves providing comprehensive administrative services to boards/committees and superintendents, and directors in this state, we have a vested interest in the success of your search. We want to be certain that you and your new superintendent are an excellent match. The children of your community have the right to expect as much from all of us. The taxpayers of your community have the right to demand it.

MSMA has designed the search service to offer maximum flexibility to the Board and to assure that the Board has total control of the decision-making process. We will do the necessary foundation work to make certain the Board is free to concentrate on the most important elements in a search—interviewing the most qualified candidates and selecting the next superintendent to lead RSU 5.

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Why hire MSMA to conduct your search?

Probably the single-most important decision a school board makes is the selection of a superintendent. Since this decision is so important, the process of selection should be very thoroughly developed and carefully followed.

- ⇒ MSMA is well-versed in all aspects of Maine laws and statutes that impact the selection process.
- ⇒ MSMA can alleviate the time commitment necessary to conduct a thorough search process.
- ⇒ MSMA has a thorough understanding of Maine public school operations.
- ⇒ MSMA uses in-state and national networking.
- ⇒ MSMA employs a comprehensive in-house staff.
- ⇒ MSMA streamlines the Board's selection process providing the search committee secure online access to review candidate materials.

Whether you need advice, counsel, technical assistance, or our complete, comprehensive search service, your MSMA team will guide you through all stages of the search process.

MSMA's Consultant Team

The MSMA staff is a key part of your search team. They are all veterans in the administrative, procedural, public relations, communications, and political aspects of the superintendent and director search process. Our in-house capabilities save you money and time and ensure that you have direct contact and immediate turnaround in all phases of the process.

Our Office:

Maine School Management Association
49 Community Drive, Augusta, ME 04330
Telephone: (207) 622-3473 • Toll free: (800) 660-8484
Email: msma@msmaweb.com • Website: www.msmaweb.com

Areas of Expertise:

Superintendent/CTE Director Search Services
New Superintendent Orientation
Superintendent and Board Professional Development
Strategic Planning
Education and Legislative Advocacy

Types of Search Services Performed:

Superintendent
Interim Superintendent
Interim Business Manager
Superintendent/Principal
CTE Director

MSMA staff will work with your board throughout all phases of a superintendent/director search and will modify the search to meet your specific needs. You get the search services you want—not the search process someone has decided you should have.

MSMA's Consultant Team—*Continued*

Each employee is a full-time employee of MSMA, thus available during regular business hours Monday through Friday. Additionally, lead consultants, Steven Bailey and Eileen King, are available via email and cell phone after hours.

MSMA has extensive resources to assist you at every stage, including analyzing your needs, conducting focus groups, developing the process for determining the credentials, background and candidate profile, questions, screening and site visits.

MSMA has been conducting successful superintendent searches for more than 40 years, and our consultants have decades of hiring experience.

Meet our Consultants



Steven W. Bailey
Executive Director

Steven Bailey has over 49 years experience in public education in Maine and New Hampshire. He has been a Superintendent of Schools and Assistant Superintendent in Maine for ten years covering the following governance structures: ADS, CSD, School Union, and Municipal and has participated with many SAD/RSU Boards in trainings and workshops.

Steve holds a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership, a Masters in Education, and a Bachelors of Science in Health/Physical Education. He has taken classes through the Harvard Graduate School of Education focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion

He is Past President of the Maine School Superintendents Association and previously was very active in the American Association for School Administrators (AASA). He was honored as a National Distinguished Principal in 1996 and Superintendent of the Year in 2015. He currently is a member of the National School Boards Association and AASA where he actively participates in the leadership trainings for state executives and School Board officers. Bailey is in his fourth year as Executive Director of MSMA where he continues the strong MSMA tradition of leadership to School Boards and Superintendents.



Eileen E. King
Deputy Executive Director

Eileen King has 43 years experience in public education in Maine and New Jersey. She has been a Superintendent of Schools for 16 years, a Middle School and Elementary School Principal for 15 years and began her career in Education as a High School Spanish Teacher.

Eileen holds a Masters Degree in Education, a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Spanish and has completed over 60 advanced graduate credits in Educational Leadership, Middle Level Education and Business Administration.

She is a former president of the Maine School Superintendents Association, prior chair of its Professional Development Committee and former member of MSSA's Executive Committee for 13 years. She was honored as a National Distinguished Principal in 2000 and Superintendent of the Year in 2009. Eileen is active in AASA, The School Superintendents Association, and represents Maine Superintendents as their Executive Director nationally. King is in her fourth year as Deputy Executive Director of MSMA and Executive Director of MSSA.

MSMA's Consultant Team—*Continued*

Victoria Wallack, Director of Communications and Government Relations

Victoria Wallack came to Maine School Management Association with more than 30 years experience in the newspaper industry, serving as editor and publisher of several newspaper groups in Greater Boston after starting out in the business as a daily reporter. She honed her political skills as editor-in-chief of the Portsmouth Herald covering the first Clinton campaign, and eventually appeared on political talk shows on Boston's Public Broadcasting TV WGBH and NECN. Upon coming to Maine, she started her own news service at the Statehouse in Augusta, reporting on state budgets, the adoption of the Essential Programs and Services funding formula and school consolidation.

She was hired as the communication director at MSMA in 2008 and now serves as Director of Communications and Government Relations for the Association. She regularly does communication and legislative advocacy training for superintendents and school boards. She is a graduate of the Ohio State University School of Journalism and took graduate courses in government policy at the Harvard University Extension School in Cambridge.

Charlotte Bates, Director of Policy and Research Services

JD, University of Maine School of Law

MA, University of Iowa, Child Behavior and Development

BA, Bates College, Psychology and History

Charlotte Bates has been with Maine School Management Association for over 20 years, providing policy and other consultation services to school boards and superintendents; developing MSMA sample policies, procedures and other materials; reviewing and revising school board policies, board bylaws and internal operating procedures, and student handbooks; and conducting policy related workshops. She has completed numerous comprehensive reviews/revisions of school board policy manuals and governance documents and has worked with school boards and their policy committees around the state.

She has served on the Scarborough Board of Education, acting as Vice Chair, Chair of the Board's Policy Committee, and member of its Negotiations Committee, and on the Town of Scarborough's Comprehensive Plan Review Committee. She is also a member of the Government and Public Sector Section of the Maine State Bar Association.

Angie Audette, Administrative Assistant

Angie Audette has been with Maine School Management Association since 1994 providing comprehensive administrative support for MSMA Superintendent Search Services for over 11 years. She plays an integral support role in MSMA Superintendent Search Services researching and developing customized materials including all graphic ads and communicating with search committees and candidates throughout the process.

Overview of MSMA Superintendent Search Services

A first step in recruitment for a new Superintendent is getting organized and consideration of the following points:

- ⇒ Whether a consultant will be employed to assist the school board in the selection process.
- ⇒ Whether the outgoing superintendent will be involved in the process.
- ⇒ Whether the full board or a subcommittee will be responsible for the process.
- ⇒ Whether others (administrators, teachers, citizens) will be involved.
- ⇒ Whether the school board will be responsible for the candidates' expenses.

The search process can be divided into five phases, with the primary responsibility of the search consultant and the school board/search committee clearly delineated. MSMA Director Search Services available from start (phase 1) to finish (phase 5) are set forth below. MSMA will assist in developing a timeline for the entire search process.

Phase 1 – Leadership Profile Development

A member of the MSMA team would provide consulting services to identify success factors, major issues, and expectations; approve leadership profile and selection criteria; conduct focus groups/surveys and report to the board/search committee; and compile salary and benefit data. We would assist in job description development and preparation of publicity materials.

Phase 2 – Candidate Recruitment

MSMA would create a complimentary graphic advertisement to be circulated to Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents and CTE Directors in the state of Maine and nationally to the 50 state board executives. The vacancy would be posted free of charge on the MSMA website and in the MSSA Newsletter (dependent upon publication date). Advertising options would be discussed with recommendations and price quotes made available to the board/search committee. Arrangements would be made for advertising in other venues by MSMA.

MSMA would provide customized application materials, coordinate nominations and applications and build candidate files. MSMA staff would promptly and efficiently fulfill requests for application materials and communicate with potential candidates throughout the application process. An MSMA consultant would assist in conducting reference checks on applicants.

Overview of MSMA Superintendent Search Services—*Continued*

Phase 3 – Candidate Screening

An MSMA consultant would screen candidates against selection criteria, help to identify semi-finalist candidates, inform successful candidates and schedule interviews. MSMA would assist with delivering semi-finalist candidates to the board.

MSMA would inform unsuccessful candidates, provide orientation for the board and assist with the selection of finalists.

Phase 4 – Full Board Evaluation of Finalists

MSMA would assist the board in preparation for the finalist stage. MSMA staff would schedule interviews, conduct reference checks on finalists, and assist the board in preparation for site visits and final interviews.

Phase 5 – Appointment

In the final phase of the search process, an MSMA consultant would assist with the selection of the new superintendent and announcement of the appointment. MSMA would inform other finalists, assist the board in contract preparation and negotiation of the contract. MSMA would provide support in closing the search and processing materials. Assistance from an MSMA consultant would be available to ease transition to new leadership.

Service fees: \$175 per hour plus the cost of advertising.

Travel expenses of the candidates at both the semi-finalist and finalist levels are the responsibility of the school board.

Travel expenses for board visits to candidates' home districts are the responsibility of the school board.

RSU 5 Superintendent Search Proposed Timeline

MONTH 1

Confirm Job Description
Advertising and/or Brochure Development

Launch of Community/Staff Qualification and Experience Survey/Public Forums
Recruitment and Advertising Begins
Determination of Search/Interview Committee

Search Update
Summary Report of Community/Staff Opinion Survey
Determine Key Qualifications and Experiences of Candidates

MONTH 2

Deadline for Applications in MSMA Office

Presentation of Candidate Pool and Selection of Semi-Finalists by Cooperative Board to be Interviewed

Semi-Finalist Interviews

Announcement of Finalist Candidates

MONTH 3

Candidate "A" and Candidate "B" in District for Final Interviews with Board

Reference Checks and Visits by Board Members to Candidates' Home District

Announcement of Superintendent:

Start Date:

Recent Superintendent Searches Conducted By MSMA

"Conducting a superintendent search is always a daunting task and for our most recent search we decided to hire MSMA to help us with the process. Not only did MSMA guide us in an efficient search, but they also provided valuable insights that improved our decision making. Using MSMA got us more qualified candidates than we have ever had and we completed our search in half the time expected. We will never do another search without them!"

Fred Grant, Chair, RSU 29

2020-2021

ADS 98
Cape Elizabeth School Department
CTE Region 2
MSAD 17
RSU 29
Sebago School Department
School Union 76 Interim Search

Bangor School Department
Cherryfield School Department
Falmouth Interim Search
RSU 9
Saco Interim Search
South Portland School Department

2019-2020

Auburn School Department
MSAD 49
RSU 21
School Union 69

Herman School Department
MSAD 49 Interim Search
RSU 21 Interim Search

2018-2019

Scarborough
RSU 14
RSU 79/MSAD 1

RSU 3
RSU 58
RSU 87

2017-2018

ADS 93
MSAD 75
RSU 16
RSU 71

ADS 98
RSU 9 (Mt. Blue RSD)
RSU 38
Wincesett

Superintendent Search References

Wiscasset School Department

Michael Dunn, Board Chair

(207) 350-1028

mdunn@wiscasset.schools.org

Full Search, April 2018– June 2018

District Cost: \$4,361.50 (includes advertising costs)

Scarborough School Department

Leanna Kazilionis

(207) 749-8619

lkazilionis@scarborough.schools.org

Full Search, February 2019–April 2019

District Cost: \$5,507.50 (does not include advertising costs)

RSU 29/MSAD 29

Fred Grant, Board Chair/Search Committee Chair

(207) 532-4030

fred@whoufm.com

Full Search, February 2015–April 2015

District Cost: \$3,104.79 (does not include cost of advertising)

MSAD 58

Kim Jordan, Board Chair

(207) 265-5014

kim_jordan@msad58.org

Full Search, March 2019–May 2019

District Cost: \$2,450.26 (does not include advertising costs)

MSAD 23/RSU 87

Shannon Knowles, Board Chair

(207) 884-7108

mkskbk@aol.com

Full Search, February 2019–May 2019

District Cost: \$3,201.88 (does not include advertising costs)

RSU 14

Kate Brix, Board Chair

(207) 892-4629

katebrix@roadrunner.com

Full Search, February 2019–April 2019

District Cost: \$10,344.16 (includes advertising costs)

Winthrop School Department

Susan Belz, Board Chair

(207) 395-5490

sbelz@winthropschools.org

Partial Search, October 2019–January 2020

District Cost: \$1,238.92 (does not include advertising costs)

Harmon School Department

Jesse Keith, Board Chair

(207) 944-5586

jesse.r.keith@gmail.com

Full Search, January 2020–May 2020

District Cost: \$3,249.55 (does not include advertising costs)

Bangor School Department

Tim Surette

(207) 731-6998

timothy.surette@maine.edu

Full Search, January 2021–April 2021

District Cost: \$9,863.35 (includes advertising costs)

CTE Region Two School of Applied Technology

Laura Farnsworth, Cooperative Board Chair

(207) 854-2012

lfarnsworth@rsu50.org

Full Search, April 2021–June 2021

District Cost: \$2,227.15 (includes advertising costs)



Maine School Management Association Superintendent Search Services

Cost Proposal of MSMA Superintendent Search Services for RSU 5

December, 2021

Maine School Management Association

48 Community Drive
Augusta, Maine 04330

Phone: 207-622-3473
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Website: www.msmaweb.com

MSMA Superintendent Search Services

Cost Proposal

The RSU 5 School Committee has undertaken the important task of searching for a new superintendent. It is deemed that the search will be thorough and the procedure efficient. The Committee retains full authority and responsibility for all decisions.

Search services and support may be tailored to the individual needs of the District. Consultation and support may be obtained from the Superintendent Search Service of the Maine School Management Association at the following rate:

Professional consultation and guidance, an adaptable structure, brochure and ad development, and administrative/clerical support throughout the search process:

- ◇ \$175 per hour (plus the cost of advertising)

Additional search-related expenses to be borne by the School Committee include:

- ◇ Telephone, postage, and consumable supplies (at cost)
- ◇ Fee-based advertising (varies, and is to be determined by the Committee in consultation with MSMA)
- ◇ Travel expenses of the candidates at both the semi-finalist and finalist levels
- ◇ Travel expenses for School Committee visits to candidates' home district
- ◇ Consultant travel expenses

MSMA Superintendent Search Services

Cost Proposal—*Continued*

The following estimates are based on the receipt of 15 applications. The “per applications” costs will be adjusted.

Meeting with District planning to conduct a search

Complimentary

Planning

Preparation of Superintendent Search timeline, activities and calendar

Complimentary

Committee Workshops: (typically spread over three (3) workshops—1.5 hours each)

_____ Confidentiality training for all involved in the Hiring Process

- Maine and Federal Laws that address Equal Employment Opportunity as well as how to avoid discrimination of protected classes
- Policy and job description review, including the following policies, if approved district policies
 - Recruitment and Appointment of Superintendent
 - Evaluation of Superintendent
 - Equal Employment Opportunity
 - Confidentiality in the Hiring Process
 - Recruiting and Hiring of Administrative Staff
 - Recruiting and Hiring of Administrative Staff, Administrative Procedure
 - Job Description, Superintendent of Schools

_____ Interrupting Bias in the Hiring Process: (MSMA and Consultant) (\$1,000.00)

- What’s getting in the way of an Inclusive Hiring Process?
- What is Bias?
- Can I get rid of my Bias?

_____ Onboarding Your Superintendent. (MSMA and Consultant)

_____ Transition Planning. (MSMA and Consultant)

MSMA Superintendant Search Services

Cost Proposal—*Continued*

The following estimates are based on the receipt of 15 applications. The "per applications" costs will be adjusted.

Forums (In-Person Event)

_____ Community: 1.5 hours (\$262.50)

_____ Staff: 1.5 hours (\$262.50)

_____ Student: 1.5 hours (\$262.50)

Listening Sessions (Remote listening activities designed to maximize participation from a wide range of participants)

MSMA staff will conduct listening sessions with a variety of stakeholders (School Boards, district staff, community members) to collect data on the characteristics and qualifications that is desired in the next Superintendent of Schools. (\$175/session)

_____ Please identify the number of Listening Sessions you would like conducted. Each session is approximately one hour long.

Survey

_____ Development of survey questionnaire: 1.5 hours (\$262.50)

_____ Collation of survey results: 5 hours (\$875.00)

Advertising/Recruitment

_____ Job Description development with samples: 1.5 hours (\$262.50)

_____ Brochure Development: 2.5 hours (\$437.50)

_____ Development of online and print advertisement and posting both online and in MSSA News: 1.5 hours (\$262.50)

_____ AASA Premium Job Flash package + Diversity Upgrade: \$848.00

_____ EdWeek Online: 30 days online TopSchoolJobs.org \$495.00

_____ Graphic advertisement development, electronic circulation to Maine Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, CTE Directors, Special Education Directors, Curriculum Coordinators and the 50 state board executives and NSBA Network
Complimentary

Application Process

_____ Custom application materials development: .5 hours (\$87.50)

_____ Correspondence with candidates – responding to application requests: \$43.75 per application (\$656.25)

_____ Secure webpage creation: 1 hour (\$175.00)

_____ Redaction/scan-upload/link each application packet to secure webpage for 15 applications at \$87.50 per application (\$1312.50)

MSMA Superintendent Search Services

Cost Proposal—*Continued*

The following estimates are based on the receipt of 15 applications. The "per applications" costs will be adjusted.

Application Process (continued)

_____ Processing applications: 5 hours (\$875.00)

_____ Background Check service: \$150/candidate (cost may vary per individual)—typically for finalist(s)

Interview Process

_____ Development of proposed interview questions, and scoring rubric: 2 hours (\$350.00)

_____ Development of reference check questions: 1 hour (\$175.00)

_____ Scheduling of interviews and correspondence with candidates selected and not selected: \$43.75 per application (\$656.25)

Onboarding Follow-up

_____ Setting the Stage for Success: 1-3 consultation conferences w/Superintendent, Board Chair, School Board (typically 1 hour each)

Total \$ _____

RSU5 SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH TIME LINE (12.1.14)

November 23, 2014	Advertising
November 24, 2014	Begin Recruiting
December 10, 2014	School Board Workshop (Action: Appoint Search Committee Members)
December 10-18, 2014	Focus Groups (See Attached: confirmed)
December 30, 2014	Deadline for Applicants' submissions
January 6, 2015	Search Committee Orientation (6:30 PM, location TBA)
January 7-9, 2015	Search Committee Reviews Applications (RSU5 Central Office, various times)
January 12, 2015	Search Committee Selects 1st Round Interviews
January 20-21, 2015	Search Committee: First Round Interviews
January 28, 2015	School Board/Search Committee Executive Session (Select Second Round Interviews)
February 4-5, 2015	School Board: Second Round Interviews
February 9-10, 2015	School Board: Reference Checks
February 11, 2015	School Board: Select Finalists
February 17-19, 2015	Finalists Visit District
February 23-26, 2015	Site Visits
March 11, 2015	School Board Selects Superintendent (Executive Session)
March 25, 2015	School Board Elects Superintendent
July 1, 2015	Superintendent Assumes Office

RSU5 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

FOCUS GROUP REPORT

TO: RSU5 School Board of Directors
FROM: Ron Barker, Search Consultant

RE: Superintendent Search Focus Group Report

DATE: January 5, 2015

Between December 10, 2014 and December 18, 2014, I conducted eight focus group meetings involving school board, teachers/ non-teaching personnel, administrators, students and parents/community. The following summary report includes the observations and perceptions of the focus groups and additional comments by the attendees.

The members of each focus group were open about their concerns and their hopes for the future. It is also evident that there were shared priorities from group to group.

A total of 85 people were involved in the focus group sessions, and I am very appreciative of their interest and enthusiasm.

The following reflects the various categories for the 85 focus group participants. Several fell into more than one category.

58 - Residents of either Durham, Freeport or Pownal

35 – Teachers/support staff in the RSU5 schools

27 - Parents of students currently enrolled in the RSU5 schools

14 – Students from Freeport High School

14 - Administrators in the RSU5 schools

11 – School Board members

The following is a summary of response statements based on four questions:

Question 1 - What makes RSU5 unique?

- Great sense of community
- Great parent/community involvement
- Nice socio-economic/geographic mix
- Good facilities
- Financial support for schools and school projects
- Opportunity to build something here by bringing the three communities together
- Positive relationship between students and staff
- History as an RSU – growing pains
- Vibrant and supportive business community
- The responsibility students have for their own education
- Interesting demographics
- Columbia University literacy program
- Staff added during recession
- Per pupil cost is favorable
- Strong arts program
- Rural community and suburban diversity
- 50/50 vote on Freeport withdrawal
- Kind, caring communities that are not materialistic
- Supportive and involved parents
- Potential
- Support for co-curricular programs
- Socio-economic and cultural diversity of students
- Community feel and involvement
- Great location (Portland, rural, ocean, L.L. Beans)
- Ability to house unique district programs in various schools
- Middle school choice for Pownal students at either DCS or FMS
- Connectivity between teachers and students
- Teacher accessibility
- Very personal district where students are known and supported
- Quality instruction
- Lack of pressure
- Enjoyment of differences
- Freeport HS is located in the center of town
- Inclusive
- Relatively modern school buildings
- Revenue stable communities
- Perfect size – not too big or too small

Question 2 - What are the strengths of the RSU5 schools?

- Great sense of community and family within each school
- Caring and dedicated staff (creative/professional)
- Student centered schools and philosophy
- Community support of schools
- Good quality staff
- Parents who are involved and supportive
- Good students that are known by the staff
- Mostly nice facilities
- High priority placed on things that foster student passion (Arts – both visual and performing)
- Resources committed to professional development (Columbia U., strategists)
- Size of schools allow staff to respond to student needs
- Administrative team (people of integrity that work very well together)
- Small class sizes
- Supportive business community
- Students that are ready to learn
- K-5 students based close to home – nurturing environment
- Special education programs
- Music programs – coordinated throughout the district
- Pre-K program
- Co-curricular programs
- Open-minded community
- Welcoming schools
- Personal and caring approach to education
- Socio-economic diversity
- Supportive – rather than competitive approach to education
- Ready for a positive change
- Students are both academically and athletically motivated -sports, theatre, academic teams/clubs
- Excellent leadership at the school level
- Curriculum development
- Students motivated to succeed
- Parent volunteers
- Staff that works well together across grade levels
- Life skills program in a small school setting that builds independence
- Staff that has mutual respect for each other
- Innovative/collaborative teachers
- Writing and math centers at the high school
- Morse Street school apprenticeship program
- Humanities and language department at the high school
- Little or no bullying in the schools – nice people
- The arts program (local resources and people that assist)
- Honors program at the high school
- Amazing and supportive faculty that support each other
- Critical thinking/test score

Question 3 - What priority areas and emerging issues do you feel the new RSU5 superintendent needs to invest time and energy toward developing and addressing in the first two years on the job?

- Visibility in the schools and community
- Re-establish a positive and supportive relationship with the staff and education association
- Learn about the school system (listen and ask questions)
- Insure a common and unified vision for the district and towns
- Bring the three communities together in a spirit of good education for all the students
- Create a unified vision for the RSU and articulate this vision to all stakeholders
- High school construction project
- Simplify the mission and strategic plan with a focus on student learning
- Work closely with the RSU5 School Board to create trust and a common vision/focus
- Try to get more investment in the RSU from residents in all three communities
- Insure that contracts/salaries for staff are in-line with area school systems
- Proficiency based diploma
- Perception of RSU5
- Update and simplify the strategic plan
- Funding (communicate needs to communities)
- Work on retaining students and staff (create more opportunities for students)
- Making our schools more competitive (improve student achievement)
- Increase professional development for teachers
- Create conditions for successful curriculum delivery
- Develop a strategic plan that allows us to compete with area schools and charter schools
- Improve the culture at FHS and across buildings
- Common core standards related to instruction and assessment
- How special education is utilized district wide
- Create a more positive culture between towns
- Advocacy/leadership for special education and related services across the district
- Create a vision for the future of the RSU that establishes common ground
- A plan that brings the three towns together and honors unique needs and interests
- Pownal needs a full time principal
- Engage students, staff and communities
- Listen to all sides during teacher contract negotiations
- Establish realistic and attainable goals with consideration of constituents
- Lead the school leaders
- A good observer and listener
- Communicate goals and needs of the district clearly and effectively to garner support
- Need more academic rigor, more 1 on 1 attention and more differentiated instruction (especially at FHS)
- Looks at alternative ways of educating some youngsters

Question 4- What won't work in the RSU5 school system?

- A top down model of running the schools – top down leadership
- Poor people skills
- Weak leadership
- Perception that one town is “the favored child”
- Starting all over again – need to build on what's in place and successfully working
- Someone that is not a good listener and does not possess a collaborative leadership style
- Trying to change everything to be just like it was where they came from or to a cookie cutter model
- A leader lacking good communication skills
- Someone that is not approachable
- Continued status quo
- Lack of 2-way communication with staff, parents, community members, etc.
- Lack of opportunities for parental and community feedback on school-related issues
- Lack of funding for staff development
- Looking at our towns as individual units rather than the three towns as a whole
- One size fits all – staff development, decision-making, varied situations
- An “office dweller” - not connected with students, staff or the school community
- Making drastic changes too quickly and not explaining why these changes are necessary
- Someone that is not visible in the schools and doesn't value the opinion of students and staff
- A person who is so focused on his/her own mission that he/she doesn't appreciate what is here
- Trying to put more and more money into the schools without looking more creatively at ways we can save money and use resources more efficiently
- Trying to keep up with our neighboring communities financially with more resources beyond that of ours
- Someone who does not encourage teacher and administrator leadership in our schools
- A leader who doesn't work cooperatively with or inspire the school board
- A manager and not an educational leader
- A leader that never questions the state Department of Education or it's directives/direction
- Someone that runs our schools with a business model mindset
- A person who believes that test scores tell the entire story of a district's success or failure
- Someone that is heavy handed in dealing with people

The last exercise involved all focus group participants completing an "attributes/qualifications" form. They ranked their four top priorities from a list of thirteen attributes/qualifications that research indicates are found in an effective superintendent. Ideally, you would like to see your superintendent possess all or most of these qualities.

The following reflects the attributes/qualifications in rank order:

1. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Recognizes the importance of both stimulating and reflecting community needs/wants regarding education
- Demonstrates the ability to involve the community in developing and implementing goals
- Views the community/school relationship as a partnership

2. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- Commitment to supervise and evaluate school programs in the spirit of continuous improvement
- Understanding of educational practices, research and national/state/local initiatives
- Ability to frame issues for discussion and reach timely decisions to implement positive change

3. LEADERSHIP

- Able to motivate, lead, guide and direct people
- Committed to implementing the Mission and Vision Statement of the school department

4. COMMUNICATION

- Able to communicate clearly with staff, parents, students and community (both verbally and in writing)

5. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Visible in the schools
- Aware of current issues and activities in the schools
- Shows an interest in community affairs

6. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

- Excellent people skills
- Ability to recruit and retain high quality staff
- Strong personnel management practices and understanding of collective bargaining issues

7. SCHOOL FINANCE/BUDGETING

- Strong working knowledge of school finance, including budget development and management
- Ability to effectively communicate with the school board, staff, community and local municipal officials
- Clear understanding of federal, state and local funding issues

8. CURRICULUM

- Strong commitment to leading the effort to define and deliver an effective, consistent curriculum Pre-K to 12

9. ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Uses a systematic approach to managing and improving the schools
- Excellent organizational skills, working knowledge of school law, and a proven ability to resolve organizational conflicts

10. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Committed to and fosters continuous staff improvement
- Emphasizes both system wide and individual development

11. SUPERVISION/EVALUATION

- Understands the importance of accountability for staff and self
- Uses an evaluation process that establishes clear performance standards and follows through to resolve performance issues

12. SUPERINTENDENT/SCHOOL BOARD RELATIONS

- Understands that the superintendent is responsible for successful management of the schools under school board policies and is accountable to the school board
- Supports and facilitates the work of the school board
- Maintains open communication with the school board

13. SCHOOL FACILITY MANAGEMENT

- Good understanding of facilities management, including development of long-term maintenance plans and budget/planning for future needs

The focus group participants could also comment about a specific attribute that they felt was important to them but not included on the form. Listed below are their comments:

-Integrity

- This is a very warm, personal community where students are given lots of responsibility and freedom. We need someone who will support and encourage that.
- Someone with a proven record of positive thinking and bringing people together. A leader that can rally people with conflicting opinions to work together.
- Someone with a big picture attitude – a visionary, not a micro manager who gets hung up on minutia
- Personable, trusting and respectful to others
- Experience as a teacher and administrator
- A creative thinker – can think outside of the box – who also let's teachers/staff be creative and stay excited about their jobs
- Someone who wants to be here for awhile
- Someone who likes kids and has an honest hope for their future
- A person who is flexible and has adaptability and compassion for human situations – ie., not a big “policy person” – someone that sees the grays – NOT just black and white.
- Needs to understand our towns and lead all of us to better empathize with other who disagree
- We need to get beyond the us/them attitude and work across town lines
- A person that one size does not fit all
- Strong support of knowledge about special education and an advocate for these students' needs
- Doesn't overextend staff with multiple new practices in one year
- Someone who wants a professional challenge

These are the top five (5) attributes/qualifications listed by the various stakeholder groups:

ADMINISTRATION:

1. Community Relations & Leadership (TIE)
3. Communication, School Improvement, & School Finance/Budgeting (TIE)

PARENTS/COMMUNITY:

1. Community Relations
2. Leadership
3. School Improvement
4. Communication
5. Personnel Management

SCHOOL BOARD:

1. Leadership
2. School Improvement
3. Community Relations
4. Curriculum
5. School/Community Involvement & Personnel Management (TIE)

STAFF:

1. Community Relations
2. School/Community Involvement
3. School Improvement
4. Communication
5. Personnel Management & School Finance/Budgeting (TIE)

STUDENTS:

1. Communication
2. School Improvement
3. School/Community Involvement
4. Curriculum
5. Community Relations & School Finance/Budgeting (TIE)

Summary

Based on the feedback from all eight focus groups, the ideal profile for the next Superintendent of Schools in RSU5 might look something like this:

An educational leader, with prior teaching and school administrative experience, that is committed to excellence in education and continuous school improvement. He/she would be a motivator, a good listener, and have a collaborative leadership style. This person would also possess excellent people skills, be a strong communicator with all constituent groups, and be visible in the schools and at school/community events.

The next superintendent must be a positive thinker and someone that can lead the development of a workable and meaningful strategic plan for the school district. The creation of this plan should involve educators and stakeholders from the three communities and reflect the needs/wants regarding education in RSU5. It should further build on the existing strengths of the school system and establish goals and procedures for implementing positive change in areas identified as needing improvement.

An important goal for the next superintendent should be to insure a common and unified vision for the district, one that will bring RSU5 and its three communities together in a spirit of cooperation and excellent education for all of its students.