

Pflugerville ISD Superintendent Search

Focus Groups

February 13, 2024

Group #1

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

I. Strengths

- Diverse culturally
- Lots of committed educators
- Great campus leadership
- Fine arts
- Inclusive
- Family feel, accepting
- Collaborative, schools work together
- Active and engaged community
- Safe
- Growing
- Small town feel
- Family oriented
- Room for additional growth
- Pride
- Open to change
- Community engagement
- District of Innovation
- Special ed programs
- City and District work well together
- 69 languages and dialects, diverse
- CTE programs
- Growth
- Facilities are good
- Campus security is good
- Strong community support for schools
- Clubs and activities for students, options
- Relationships between students and teachers

II. Challenges

- Safety is going to be important
- Diversity between schools, some are more diverse than others
- Large class sizes

Student behavior and discipline
Finances, State funding
Traffic, particularly at end of school day
Kids not in school, wandering around
Keeping great teachers
Making public school great option, competition with other school options
Professional training and support for teachers
Supporting new teachers
Teacher retention
Population realignment, growing on East but declining on West
State mandates
Need experience with legislature
Need to realign campus boundaries as population shifts
Widening on racial/cultural achievement gap, particularly since Covid
Attracting and retaining teachers
Continuing to support special needs kids
High school discipline, kids are out of control
Consistency in training and professional development for staff
Retaining great teachers
Student discipline is impacting teacher retention
Giving more authority and control back to campuses and principals
Staying student focused
Rising cost of living in District
Finances, budget cuts
Need for student behavior support on campuses
Big issues that kids are dealing with outside of school
Growth is uneven
Remaining an attractive option for educators
Need supports on campuses for young teachers

III. Professional Characteristics

Educator
Campus leadership experience
Experience with finances
Teacher, boots on the ground experience
Texan preferred
Texas has unique finance and accountability systems
Experienced superintendent
Someone in early stage of career
Superintendent experience
Legislative experience would be great
Business experience

Fast growth experience
Experience managing slowing of growth
Successful superintendent experience
Finance experience
Not a stepping stone person, someone who will stay for extended period
Experience with newcomers to US
Successful experience with behavioral issues
Someone who will put down roots in District
Campus principal experience
Good, solid teaching experience
Okay with non-Texan
Experience with technology, stays current
Doctorate preferred
Able to look at system objectively and evaluate what changes need to be made

IV. Personal Attributes

High intellectual and emotional IQ
Communicator
Community oriented
Can deal with younger parents who are more social media oriented
Service and volunteer spirit
Strong moral values
Listens to learn and understand
Compassionate
Kind
Sense of humor
Visible on campuses and in classrooms
Honest
Truthful
Vision, Visible, Vested
Builds rapport with staff
Great relational capacity
Brave, able to make needed changes
Understands cultural and demographic aspects of District
Attends and is visible at student activities
Effective communicator with all constituencies
Parent
Collaborative, both inside and outside District
Transparent
Family oriented
Innovator
Understands cultural diversity

Group #2

10:30 a.m. – Noon

I. Strengths

Community support for District
Commitment to excellence, high expectations
Handling growth well
Diversity of District
Engaged community
People come here because of schools and diversity
Equity in District
Location in Central Texas
Diversity
Ability to grow
Lots of different classes and opportunities for students
Resilient, ex. Covid
Diverse
People work well together and pull together
Team building on campuses
Financial resources are used well
Smaller town feel, even as area has grown
Strong culture
Student centered
Higher median income of residents
District helps attract people to Pflugerville
Welcoming culture
Law enforcement
History and culture of area and communication
Very good communication to parents
CTE programs
Community supports and helps schools
Support for bond issues
Growth
Proximity to great tech and Fortune 500 companies

II. Challenges

Growth is stressful
Need for facilities as District grows
Reallocating resources – growth isn't uniform across District
Need for comprehensive CTE center
State funding

- Cost of living, housing costs
- Affordability, Pflugerville isn't an inexpensive place to live anymore
- Managing growth, bond issues, taxes
- Attracting and retaining teachers
- Teacher burnout, worse post-Covid
- Retaining teachers
- Teacher pipeline is in trouble
- Teachers and staff can't afford to live in Pflugerville
- School boundaries, need for adjustments as demographic shifts occur
- Attracting and retaining teachers, salaries and benefits
- Student behavioral and discipline issues
- Charter schools are competing for kids
- Safety, school shootings, keeping schools safe both outside and inside
- Finances, new teacher can't afford to come here and live here
- Facilities, needing to maintain buildings and grounds, need for custodians and maintenance support staff
- Need for more communication, particularly about boundary changes
- Transportation
- Unfunded mandates from legislature
- State funding
- Both East/West divide by IH-35, North/South divide by Hwy 130, managing physical divisions
- State funding is insufficient, impact of charter schools
- Charter schools growth
- Need for basic foundation/life skills courses and training for students, ex. financial management
- Transportation, need for drivers
- Being competitive with surrounding districts and private businesses in terms of salaries and benefits
- PfISD touches 5 cities

III. Professional Characteristics

- Successful superintendent experience
- Bilingual
- Open to non-superintendent
- Superintendent experience
- Experience with legislature
- Successful experience with growth
- Okay with non-superintendent
- Superintendent experience
- Secondary principal experience
- Pflugerville ISD should be a destination

- Successful superintendent experience
- Experience with diversity
- Strong negotiation skills
- Superintendent experience
- Track record of high student achievement coupled with low teacher turnover
- Experience and understanding of finance
- High school experience, at least deputy level
- Experience with diversity
- Not north of Oklahoma
- Both elementary and secondary experience
- Doctorate not required
- Longevity and stability in previous positions
- Family person, knows and likes kids
- Experience with managing budget challenges
- Someone who is truly student centered
- Someone whose own children are in the District

IV. Personal Attributes

- Smart
- Empathetic
- Understanding
- Willing to collaborate with organizations
- Passionate
- Relationship builder
- Compassionate
- Visible on campuses
- Team builder
- Courageous, able to make tough calls
- Receptive
- Good social skills
- Won't back down, voice in Capitol for community
- Visible on campuses
- Realistic
- Supports teachers and principals
- Decisions not guided by emotions
- Approachable
- Visible on campuses
- Motivator
- Authentic
- Flexible
- Considerate
- Interacts with full community

Open-minded
Communicator

Group #3

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

I. Strengths

Diversity
Understanding cultural differences
Tradition of innovation
Willing to take a stand, do what's right
Respect for students
Historically strong educational performance
Community involvement
Talented teachers
Great programs
Economically diverse student population
Progressive and innovative, ex. teacher incentive allotment
Pride in community history
High level of community support
High standards and high expectations
Every school can be successful
District "grows its own," develops talent
Progressive
Growing
Leadership listens to staff and parents
Close to great technology companies
Fantastic educators
Optimal size, not too small/not too large
Economically most people are in the middle, not at extremes of wealth
Diverse culturally and in other backgrounds
Speed of growth creates opportunities
Top notch educators
Strong school leadership
Community supports bonds and taxes for schools

II. Challenges

Growth
Need for new schools and infrastructure
Diversity (both a strength and a challenge), no majority ethnic group

- Student discipline and behavioral issues
- State funding
- Disconnect between leadership and teachers feeling valued
- Campus personnel don't always feel trusted
- Cost of living, housing costs
- Diversity takes a lot of work to manage
- State-level culture wars
- Communication gets harder as District grows
- Curriculum that matches the world we live in
- State funding
- Meeting needs of different campuses, being equitable with resources
- Competing with charter schools
- Retaining and attracting educators
- SBOE, not banning books
- Charter schools, competition
- Lingering hurt in elementary campuses that were proposed to be closed, disproportionately Title I schools
- Need to promote great things in PfISD
- Bridging East/West divide
- Utilizing all of the talents in the District
- Retention of teachers and staff at all levels
- Drugs and substance abuse
- Allocating funds in the most effective ways
- Listening to teachers
- Telling the PfISD story, breaking through the "white noise"
- Recapture, state funding
- Special needs programs and teachers need support

III. Professional Characteristics

- Understands Texas school finance and accountability
- Experience working at campus level to improve performance
- Growth experience
- Experience with legislature
- Doctorate not required
- Campus level experience
- Superintendent experience preferred
- Experience juggling revenues and expenditures, someone who can do math
- Educator
- Experience collaborating with other governmental entities
- Experience in a similar district
- Successful experience in a diverse community
- Willing to embrace change

Innovator, demonstrated experience
Experience with business outside education
Successful in larger diverse district
Bilingual would be helpful

IV. Personal Attributes

Amiable, likeable
Respected and admired
Diplomacy on a genuine level
Inclusive
Collaborative
Consistent
Able to connect at all levels
Tolerance
Confidence
Kind
Strategic
Empathy
Respectful
Good listener
Decision maker
Tech savvy
Able to make decisions under pressure
Polite
Relational
Compassionate
Honorable
Looks for diversity of thought
Invested here, not a job jumper
Change agent
Integrity
Visible
Present
Positive