



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FROM SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FIRMS

The Board of Education of Piedmont Unified School District (PUSD or District) seeks proposals from education executive search firms or individuals to provide consulting services for a national search for a superintendent.

SECTION I: PURPOSE

The District is beginning its search for a qualified candidate to become its new Superintendent of Schools effective January 1, 2027. In order to ensure an orderly transition, the PUSD Board of Education wants to publicly announce the new superintendent by December 9, 2026. To help in the search for the most qualified candidate, the District is seeking to retain the services of an executive search firm or individual with experience in the recruitment of superintendents for high-performing school districts.

SECTION II: BACKGROUND & DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENTS

Piedmont is a small city of approximately 11,000 residents and is surrounded on all sides by the city of Oakland.

The District includes a team of over 380 experienced and dedicated teachers, support staff, and administrators and a general fund budget close to \$62 million in support of 2,499 students at six sites: three elementary schools (TK-5), one middle school (6-8), one comprehensive high school (9-12) and one alternative high school (9-12). PUSD's Board of Education is committed to excellence in education for every student. We aim to ensure every student thrives not only academically, but socially and emotionally as well.

The District also includes a WASC-accredited adult school that offers both diploma and fee-based programs and that shares space with the District schools for evening and weekend classes.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- ❖ 95% Graduation Rate
- ❖ Over 95% of PUSD students pursue a college education
- ❖ Top Statewide Ranking: PUSD is ranked #3 in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics on 2024-25 CAASP test scores among unified school districts in California
- ❖ Northern California Leader: The District achieved the #1 ranking in Northern California for both ELA and Math CAASP 2024-25 performance.
- ❖ AP participation rate of Piedmont High School is 85%
- ❖ District Ranking: #1 Best school district in Alameda County
- ❖ #11 Best school district in California
- ❖ Schools to Watch Designation for Piedmont Middle School
- ❖ Top 3 Unified School Districts in California on State Test Scores

Additional information about the District is available on the [District's website](https://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/): <https://www.piedmont.k12.ca.us/> or you may contact Rosalina Barrios at rbarrios@piedmont.k12.ca.us.

SECTION III: SCOPE OF WORK

The District Board of Education will work with the selected consulting firm or individual consultant to develop a superintendent search process and a timeline for the search activities. At a minimum:

- Conduct interviews with District stakeholders—including Board members, teachers, staff, students, student families, support groups, City of Piedmont officials, and Piedmont citizens—to develop a leadership profile and search criteria/position description that the community considers requisite for success and will be used to assess candidates.
- Demonstrate a candidate identification process that identifies a pool of highly qualified and competent candidates reflecting a familiarity with our educational community’s needs.
- Develop a search plan, timeline, and application process.
- Solicit applications statewide and nationally.
- Conduct reference and background checks, including credential verification, employment history and professional reputation.
- Advise the Board regarding identification and assessment of candidates, including collecting all relevant background information on potential candidates so that strengths and weaknesses can be assessed.
- Perform initial screening/assessment and interviews to assist the Board in identifying the initial candidate pool.
- Provide counsel to the Board throughout the search process, including assisting the Board to prepare for interviews (e.g., interview guidelines and protocols, suggested questions to elicit informative responses, etc.).
- Maintain strict confidentiality throughout the search process as directed by the Board.
- Advise the Board on a compensation package that facilitates successful recruitment.
- Assist with logistics of finalist interviews.
- Communicate with all unsuccessful candidates.
- Conduct the search in compliance with state and federal requirements.
- Provide regular updates to the Board and maintain flexibility to adapt the process to meet the needs of the District.
- Ensure a satisfactory conclusion to the search.
- Assist the Board in developing a transition plan for the new Superintendent.
- Perform other Superintendent search related assistance the Board may require.

SECTION IV: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Search firms submitting proposals may furnish other information in addition to the required “Statement of Qualifications” listed below. PUSD is interested in securing the services of a search firm which has demonstrated expertise and success in national searches for TK-12 school districts. Selection will be made based on an evaluation of the entire information supplied, including the Statement of Qualifications and not solely based on lowest price. Also reference “Bidder Requirements” in a separate section of this RFP.

To allow the Board of Education to fairly judge the merits of each proposal, responses to this RFP shall include a response to each of the items listed below. The Board reserves the right to reject proposals that do not follow this format.

Statement of Qualifications

1. Cover letter (see Appendix 1) that includes the name of firm, address, and contact information (email, phone, fax).
2. Information on the size and organizational structure of the firm (limit to one page).
3. Name of team lead/director/partner who will have primary responsibility for the search.
4. Name of personnel, with their classifications, who will be assigned to the search. Changes of personnel must be discussed with the Board in advance.

5. Resumes of the team members to be assigned to the engagement (limit to one page each). The resumes should include:
 - a. Position in firm
 - b. Years of experience in the firm and overall experience
 - c. Education
6. List of similar school districts the firm has performed searches for or is under contract to perform, and whether the firm's searches were successful.
7. A Statement of Understanding of the work to be performed by the search firm.
8. Provide a description of the overall approach to the engagement and specific techniques that will be used. This description shall include a work plan, task timing, and phasing for completion of the contract, including the following:
 - a. Approach to be taken to complete the scope of work;
 - b. Methods to be used to communicate, work with, and advise the five-member Board of Education;
 - c. Methods to be used to identify prospective candidates and promote their interest to apply;
 - d. Approach to effective community engagement, including collecting input and feedback from multiple stakeholders to craft the leadership profile and evaluation criteria and providing a meaningful way to generate and receive public input in the process;
 - e. Describe major challenges to a successful search and how they can be addressed and/or mitigated; and
 - f. Estimate a reasonable timeline that will be used to guide the search process which will balance confidentiality with transparency.
9. Statement of the level and nature of support that will be required of the Board or the District staff by the search firm. Include a list of typical information requests the firm requests of clients. Provide details regarding the primary method utilized by the search firm to gather District data and feedback to ensure a successful search.
10. Professional fees/fee schedule for the type of search services provided. Be as thorough and specific as possible as this will form the basis of any contract for services that may be presented to the District, and include:
 - a. Maximum cost and estimated cost by each section of the work scope;
 - b. Estimated hours to be spent by each team member and their estimated fees and travel expenses;
 - c. Hourly rates, if applicable, for various levels of personnel;
 - d. Estimated publishing and advertising expenses; and
 - e. Other costs necessary to complete this search.
11. Statement of ability to comply with the Other General Requirements and PUSD Independent Consultant Agreement (Appendix B).
12. Provide as references a minimum of three school districts that have used your services for a superintendent search within the past five years. For each reference, provide the school district name, contact person (and title), and contact information. Describe the contract (scope, length, outcome) for each reference.
13. Describe litigation, anticipated litigation or arbitration with any of your clients within the last seven years, including name, date, and jurisdiction of each matter, a brief description of the nature of the dispute, and the outcome.
14. Describe your philosophy, policies, and practices regarding client satisfaction in the event of an unsuccessful search, e.g., coaching for the new superintendent, subsequent search services if the new superintendent is released after the first year.
15. Additional comments regarding the search firm's qualifications.

SECTION V: SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The following schedule is proposed for the implementation of this RFP.

Date	Activity
August 19, 2026	RFP is issued, including emailed to prospective search firms known to the District and posted on the District website
August 26, 2026	Deadline for submission of RFP questions by 5:00 PM PDT
August 28, 2026	Responses to RFP questions provided by 4:00 PM PDT
September 2, 2026	Proposals due by 12:00 PM PDT
September 2-8, 2026	Review/interview of search firms
September 9, 2026	Firm is selected

SECTION VI: SUBMISSION DETAILS

The Consultant must submit their proposal in the same order as the Request for Proposals. Five (5) copies sent by mail, courier or hand delivered and shall be bound or in binders with tabs identifying each section and an electronic file can be submitted via email to the address below or via a thumb drive that is delivered with the printed copies of the proposal. The deadline noted below applies both to print and electronic submissions.

Proposals must be received no later than 12:00 pm on September 2, 2026. This deadline applies to both print and electronic versions. Proposals received after the date and time indicated above will not be considered. No faxes of proposals will be accepted.

Proposals should be sent to:

Ruchi Medhekar
PUSD School Board President
760 Magnolia Avenue
Piedmont, California 94611

rmedhekar@piedmont.k12.ca.us

Any and all questions concerning the RFP must be directed to Ruchi Medhekar at rmedhekar@piedmont.k12.ca.us. Proposers are not to contact District staff about this Request for Proposal.

The District reserves the right to revise this Request. If the District cancels or revises this request, all respondents will be notified by addenda. The District also reserves the right to extend the date proposals are due.

SECTION VII: BIDDER REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of the bidders are as follows (see also "Proposal Requirements" in a separate section of this RFP):

1. Only search firms or individuals with relevant executive search experience are eligible for consideration.
2. The name, mailing address, and telephone number of the firm submitting the proposal and the name of the person who has the authority to legally bind the firm in a contract must be identified.

3. The firm to be retained must demonstrate its experience in performing similar work for TK-12 school districts by providing a list of three school district references, of which all have been search clients of the firm within the last two years, and whose search was similar in nature.
4. The firm must provide resumes of all participants assigned to the search team. These resumes should detail their education, related experience, qualifications, and professional education.
5. The firm must include a description of its overall approach to the engagement and specific techniques that will be used. This description shall include a work plan, task timing, and phasing for completion of the contract.
6. The firm may provide descriptions of any other specialized services it is able to provide.
7. Each response will be reviewed prior to the selection process for completeness and adherence to format. A response will be considered complete if all requested sections are included in the proper order and properly completed.

SECTION VIII: INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Consultant shall procure and maintain during the full term of this Agreement the following insurance amounts and coverage:
 - a. Commercial General Liability Insurance with limits not less than \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) for each occurrence Combined Single Limit for Bodily Injury and Property Damage (including coverage for claims of sexual abuse and molestation).
 - b. Workers' Compensation Insurance, with Employer's Liability limits not less than \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) for each accident.
 - c. Professional Liability (E & O) Insurance with limits not less than \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) for each occurrence and in the aggregate. Coverage must, at a minimum, apply to negligent Errors and Omissions arising out of professional services, performed under the contract, with any deductible not to exceed \$250,000 each claim.
2. Commercial General Liability policy must provide the following:
 - a. Name as the Additional Insured, Piedmont USD, its Board, officers and employees.
 - b. That such policy is primary insurance to any other insurance available to the Additional Insured, with respect to any claims arising out of this Agreement and that such policies apply separately to each insured against whom the claim is made, or suit is brought.
3. If any policies are written on claims-made form, Consultant agrees to maintain such insurance continuously in effect for three years following completion of the Agreement or extend the period for reporting claims for three years following the completion of this Agreement, such that occurrences which take place during the Agreement period shall be insured for three years following completion of the Agreement.
4. The Consultant shall provide PUSD with the appropriate certificate(s) of insurance prior to the commencing performance. The Consultant shall also be obligated to notify PUSD in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance of any cancellation, non-renewal or reduction of any of its insurance policies required under this Agreement. Consultant also understands and agrees that PUSD may withhold payment for services performed for any violations of the insurance provisions of this Agreement.

SECTION IX: OTHER GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. *Equal Opportunity:* The Consultant must be an Equal Opportunity Employer and shall certify that the firm is in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Fair Employment and Housing Act, and all other applicable Federal and State laws and regulations relating to equal opportunity employment.

2. *Errors and Omissions in RFP:* If a firm discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in the RFP, the firm shall immediately notify the District of such error in writing and request clarification or modification of the document. Modifications will be made by addenda. Such clarification shall be given by written notice to all parties who have been furnished an RFP, without divulging the source of the request for same. Insofar as practicable, the District will give such notices to other interested parties, but the District shall not be responsible therefore.
 - a. If a firm fails to notify the District prior to the date fixed for submission of proposals, of an error in the RFP known to it, or an error that reasonably should have been known to it, the firm shall submit a proposal at their own risk; and if the firm is awarded the contract, it shall not be entitled to additional compensation or time by reason of the error or its later correction.
 - b. The firm should carefully examine the entire RFP and any addenda thereto, and all related material and data referenced in the RFP or otherwise available, and should become fully aware of the nature and location of the work, and the conditions to be encountered in performing the work.
3. *Agreement:* In compliance with this request for proposals, the firm will propose and agree to furnish all labor, materials, and transportation.
4. *Signee:* If an individual or an individual doing business under a firm name submits a proposal, the proposal must, in addition to the firm name, be signed by the individual; if the submitting firm is a partnership, the proposal should be signed with the partnership name by one of the partners; if a corporation, with the name of the corporation by an officer authorized to execute a proposal on behalf of the corporation.
5. *Understanding:* It is understood and agreed that the firm has, by careful examination, satisfied itself as to the nature and location of the work, the character, quantity of the materials to be encountered, the character of equipment and facilities needed preliminary to and during the prosecution of the work, and general and local conditions, and all other matters which can in any way affect the work under this contract. No verbal agreement or conversation with any officer, agent or employee of the District, either before or after the execution of the is contract, shall affect or modify any of the terms or obligations herein contained.
6. *Disposition of Proposals:* All material submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the District and will be returned only at the District's option and at the firm's expense. The original copy shall be retained for official files and will become a public record after the date and time for final proposal submission as specified. However, any confidential financial information submitted in support of the requirement will be returned upon request.
7. *General Conditions:* The District reserves the right to waive, modify, or otherwise vary the conditions or requirements herein and may accept or reject any and all proposals as the Board of Education, in its sole discretion, deems to be in the best interest of the District. The District may, notwithstanding the terms herein, negotiate the terms of any response to this RFP. The District shall not be bound to accept the lowest priced proposal, but may accept such proposal, if any, as the Board of Education determines to be in the best interests of the District.

SECTION X: REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The District reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or any part thereof, or to waive any irregularities therein. No proposal, once submitted, may be withdrawn for a period of sixty (60) days after the date set for the opening of bids.

SECTION XI: AWARD EVALUATION CRITERIA

PUSD will evaluate all proposals received in accordance with the evaluation criteria listed below. The Board will review proposals. Award will be made to the firm offering the most advantageous proposal after consideration of all evaluation criteria. The criteria are not listed in any order of preferences. PUSD reserves the right to establish weight factors that will be applied to the criteria depending upon order of importance. PUSD shall not be obligated to accept the lowest priced proposal but will make an award in the best interest of the District after all factors have been evaluated.

The evaluation criteria that will be used to evaluate all proposal are as follows:

1. Quality and completeness of submitted proposal, thorough understanding of the objective, scope, approach, and requirements;
2. Demonstrated competence and expertise in conducting a statewide and national search, including demonstrated access to or ability to access diverse candidate networks;
3. Appropriateness of approach for PUSD, including involvement of District Board and staff;
4. Reasonableness of costs/fees; and/or
5. Financial stability.

The Board may also contact and evaluate the firm's references; contact any firm representative to clarify any response; contact any current users of a firm's services; solicit information from any available source concerning any aspect of a proposal; and seek and review any other information deemed pertinent to the evaluation process.

SECTION XII: AWARD OF CONTRACT

The Board of Education anticipates it will formally award the contract at the Board meeting scheduled for September 9, 2026. No contract awarded under this Proposal shall be assigned except with express written approval of the Board of Trustees. Any attempted assignment in violation of this provision shall be voidable at the option of the Board.

APPENDIX 1: REQUIRED COVER LETTER

This proposal is submitted on behalf of:

Company/Consultant:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

The above listed consulting firm hereby submits its proposal and agrees to furnish services to Piedmont Unified School District in accordance with this Request for Proposals and the response prepared by the consultant.

The consultant has carefully reviewed this Request for Proposals and the consultant's response, and understands that the District will not be responsible for any errors or omissions on the part of the consultant.

Consultant agrees that the District reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to waive any irregularity or informality in any proposal received.

The attached proposal shall be considered an irrevocable offer and shall be valid for ninety (90) days from the date the proposals are required to be submitted.

The undersigned hereby affirms that he/she/they is an authorized agent for the company submitting this response.

Date

Name of Consultant/Authorized Agent

Title of Consultant/Authorized Agent

Signature of Consultant/Authorized Agent