

Poudre School District
Leadership Profile Report
Superintendent of Schools Search
February 2021

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Glenn “Max” McGee, Ph.D., Dallas Strawn, Ph.D., and Nola Wellman, Ph.D. of Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in December 2020 and January 2021 for the Poudre School District (PSD). The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in individual interviews, focus groups, and virtual community forums as well as from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. Interviews, focus group meetings and surveys were structured to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews, focus groups and forums elicited information about strengths and challenges the District faces in the coming years. The online survey data was found to be consistent with the focus group interview data. It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor necessarily represents the majority opinion of each respective group.

Process

The structure of the individual meetings, forums, and focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other’s comments. We spoke with nearly 200 stakeholders in the following categories:

Individual Interviews

- Board members
- Interim superintendent
- LCE Leader
- City and county managers/leaders
- Union leaders
- Partnership Liaison
- Non-profit foundation leader

Focus Groups

- Parents (4 groups)
- Teachers (5 groups)
- Language Culture Equity (2)
- Classified (2 groups)
- Administrators(3 groups)
- Students (1 group)
- Community/Government Partners (3 groups)
- Foundation (1 group)

Open Community Forums

- Staff
- Community
- Spanish Speaking Parents

Additionally, the online survey was available for stakeholders for seventeen days and provided an additional avenue for stakeholders to participate in the process of determining the next superintendent's qualifications and characteristics. Those involved in providing input into the selection of the superintendent of schools were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. What are the **strengths** of this district that the next superintendent will need to retain?
2. What are the **challenges** this District currently faces, what issues will the new leader face in the next three to five years?
3. What are the **personal and professional characteristics** you and your community expect a superintendent to possess?

Common Themes

In responding to each prompt, participants shared colorful personal narratives as well as big picture overarching themes. Some of the stories referenced positive experiences with former leaders while others expressed various levels of frustration and consternation. All, however, were hopeful that the process would result in identifying a new leader who will immerse oneself in the lives of the school and community as a regular, positive presence, who values teachers and learning; engages with the university business community and non-profits; listens to parents; appreciates the culture of the schools and community; and will be an outstanding communicator.

The top overarching themes that emerged were

- **Equity and diversity**
- **Trust and mutual respect**
- **Communication**
- **Strategic vision**
- **Authentic engagement**

The topics of **equity and diversity** challenges were mentioned numerous times during individual and group interviews. Achievement gaps and opportunity gaps were frequently cited. We also heard about disproportionalities of traditionally underrepresented minority children in special education placements, access to higher level courses, participation in athletics and extra-curricular activities, disciplinary infractions, and regular attendance. Clearly the district understands the importance of ensuring students are treated equitably and are to be commended for hiring Family Liaisons, supporting a thriving Language, Culture and Equity group and addressing challenging issues and events regarding race and ethnicity. That said, assuring students and families are welcomed and connected to their schools, the district, and the greater community was noted as being a high priority. The Spanish speaking parents appreciated the efforts to improve communication but noted more needed to be done and also requested the district provide more parent education opportunities. The new leader will need to develop systems to connect and engage with – and respond to – the diverse communities and continuum of needs across the entire district.

Additionally, we learned that site based management may be contributing to inequities. The comment, “We don’t have a school district, but a district of schools” was mentioned several times during interview sessions and was attributed to the practice of using site-based management which allows each school to use their allocated funds to specifically address the needs of their individual community. Although there are many positive benefits to the site-based management concept, there may be unintended consequences inherent in this system. We heard from one, “this system promotes the haves-and have-nots.” As the district states the importance of educating every student, there is a question whether this system promotes unintended issues of inequity for schools located in lower SES areas of the school district. More needs to be done for marginalized students and families who believe they are not receiving equitable access to the same supports and opportunities in more affluent district schools.

The second overarching theme, restoring a positive culture of **mutual trust and sincere respect**, will require a commitment to cooperative and collaborative decision making. As finances in the district become tighter, there needs to be open and transparent dialogue among all employee groups. The new superintendent should meet with each association leader to discuss their needs, and their perceptions of the district’s culture. The development of trust in working with association leaders should be scheduled in a timely manner. The process of listening to each other discussing both positive and negative cultural concerns may start opening doors and begin developing a foundation of improving mutual trust and respect toward the district’s future.

School funding issues will need to be presented in a more understandable and transparent manner to the school employees and the community. It was often mentioned that schools in affluent areas receive more funding and community support than schools in lower SES areas. This seems to be a theme which requires more open communication, transparent financial allocations and an in-depth study of the impacts of site-based management. There is a belief by many that schools in affluent areas receive generous funding from their school communities and schools located in less-affluent areas receive very little community support. This practice keeps funding of like schools out of balance in relation to equitable resources. This funding imbalance may be causing cultural damage with marginalized parents, students and even teachers working in diverse school environments.

Restoring a culture of mutual trust, sincere respect and authentic compassion will require a strong commitment to collaboration. It will require employing a new leader who is approachable, self-confident, and humble. The leader must be immersed in the schools and community. Restoring trust is not only about being trustworthy but about being trusting. The leader must attend building parent leadership meetings, must communicate regularly with all Board members.

A key component of trust is connection. The new leader will need to reconnect the district office to the schools, to connect the schools to one another, and under the generous donors of time, treasure and talent to the difference their contributions make. As one interviewee stated, “The new leader must display a kind heart, overall kindness and caring for all district staff, kids and the community.”

Stakeholders across the board spoke about a third overarching theme and advocated for clearer **communication**, specifically when decisions are being considered. A leader who honestly shares district challenges as well as regularly celebrates successes and achievements will be welcome. The leader will need to demonstrate a high degree of emotional intelligence and be an inspiring, authentic speaker who welcomes the opportunity to engage with all staff, parents, students, and the full array of community members. Students specifically mentioned that they want the leader to respect their voice both by listening and communicating regularly. Parents said they wanted their opinion to be solicited when it would be seriously considered in decision making. Listening is a critical component of communication. In many interviews and focus group, consultants heard participants wanted a good listener and ideally one who, in the words of Steven Covey, “seeks first to understand and then be understood.” Many said they wanted to hear directly from the Superintendent when important decisions are being considered. Clear writing – especially avoiding “eduspeak” and jargon – is needed for the leader to connect with the community. We heard repeatedly that the “WHY” behind decisions that impact students, staff, and families must be transparent, clearly communicated, and developed with input from appropriate school personnel and other stakeholders. Many echoed the theme that meaningful change cannot and must not be made from the top down or in isolation. When a decision is made, the staff specifically stated that they wanted to know ahead of the community so they could prepare for the change.

Stakeholders across the board recognized and valued Poudre’s excellent staff, strong community support and academic excellence. However, many noted a fourth overarching theme that there is a need to “pull together” behind a **shared strategic vision**, collaboratively developed, and a concerted effort to implement common goals. Statements about using current data to inform the community of progress being made were repeated. Specific examples of addressing the inequities and needs of the marginalized students impacted by poverty, racial inequities, and students with disabilities were mentioned. There is a growing need to agree on a shared vision, set common goals as a district and community and ensure implementation of the goals with continual funding and accountability to achieving them. It was mentioned that the district has published aspirational ENDS, but the resources to achieve the goals are not sufficient or consistently provided. Aggressively pursuing the funding issue in Colorado is critical to attacking many of the issues faced. Therefore, the next leader needs to realize the funding challenge and work at the local and state level to make progress.

Every stakeholder group expressed some degree of frustration regarding historical lack of **meaningful engagement** with the top levels of district leadership. Students and staff are hungry to see the new superintendent in their schools interacting with them informally and seeing teaching and learning first hand. They want their voices acknowledged and heard and consulted when appropriate. The current organizational structure separates the superintendent from school leaders and a closer coupling is needed to balance a central vision and central systems with some site autonomy. Likewise, access of the Leadership Culture and Equity team, business community, CSU, non-profit partners, and even the Education Foundation to the superintendent appears to have been limited. All of these stakeholders are talented, supportive partners who have much to offer to staff, students, and families, and a structure that enables the superintendent to connect and engage with them will be most beneficial. While we heard positive remarks regarding Open Door policies and practices, the next leader must get OUT through the Open Door to be an immersive presence in the community. Staff members and others also expressed hope that the superintendent and Board would be a highly functional team of eight and not siloed into Board and Administration. There is general broad support for the Board with recognition that a top quality leader who is part of the team will also enable them to be more effective at the policy level.

Frequently Noted

In pursuing the three prompts, several participants offered comments and made remarks that were similar. These are listed below:

Strengths of the District:

- Strong school district, good reputation, history of excellence
- District does an excellent job with the funding they receive
- Great academic performance, innovative and creative (Futures Lab)
- The kids in this district are awesome!

- Increasingly diverse community; The district is working on understanding more about equity and how to involve and support the marginalized students in the district
- Forward thinking
- Community has been very supportive of bond issues and tax levies
- District recruits and retains passionate, committed teachers and excellent staff; strong advocates for students
- Supportive and involved community
- Community partnerships are strong, and many more opportunities are available to work with the business and higher ed communities
- Well-maintained facilities
- Beautiful area, excellent weather and a great environment in which to raise a family.
- Variety of curricular options and diverse programs
- Programs to help our special needs students learn, gain job skills and participate in internships.
- Site-based management is a strength and also a challenge

Challenges and Issues Facing the District:

- **COVID, online, hybrid** and how to transition out of this period regarding school attendance and enrollment. “Remote learning is not equitable for all kids, especially those with disabilities and no computer skills or internet bandwidth.” “We need to balance educational needs and safety issues.”
- **Vision** should focus on PSD’s published ENDS (priorities) and gauge what is most important to direct resources efficiently. “Identify and remove barriers to success. Identify strategic partners to support students. Reframe thinking as a school district, not just separate schools (systems thinking).”
- **Mental health support** must be strengthened as **Covid** has “deeply hurt kids, parents and faculty.” “We need more mental health support in the entire district.” “We need to focus on what is best for families, not just individual schools.”
- **Marginalized student populations** do not have equitable opportunities or outcomes according to discipline and achievement data and analysis of disproportionalities in special education and honors level classes. Equity issues must be addressed related to race, power dynamics and gender. School choice and equity continue to be a concern. Not all kids and schools have the same educational opportunities because of family circumstances. A clear plan, well executed and thoroughly evaluated, is needed to bridge the gap between the haves and have nots in the district. “Our families would like to see is a person who is capable of connecting with minorities, who is respectful and accepting for our diversity, who is supportive to staff, a good listener and effective communicator; is not afraid to adopt new ideas and solutions. We need someone who is

knowledgeable of the best practices for maximizing student achievement of minority students and connecting with their families.” “Look at new data, not old. Strive for continued and sustained success of all groups. Use growth metrics and others in addition to traditional achievement.”

- **Funding for schools is not equitable** as some schools who are in a less affluent area get little from the community in addition to their district allocated funding. Schools in affluent areas get generous donations from their communities which keeps overall school funding for schools out of balance.
- **Collaboration with the business, university, and non-profit community** must be improved. The Chamber, CSU, and non-profits are eager to engage with the district and need a direct line to district leadership. They are invested in school success because their ability to attract and retain their employees is tied to the quality of the school district. They are ready to provide numerous innovative experiences for students and staff and looking for the district to be a strategic partner. “When we recruit our workforce, schools are essential; our next leader needs to be laser focused on educational excellence We need innovation here!! The next leader must demonstrate multiple examples of what they have done for innovation.”
- **District communication and transparent decision making processes** need to be improved and be transparent. We heard about confusion and frustration due to inadequate communication. “When the leadership teams make a decision that impacts all the students and schools in the district, it would be appreciated if that decisions were shared with school leaders and teachers well before it is publicized to the community.” “We need an open-door policy with the top leaders; open doors – open hearts.” “The teacher’s association seems to be held at arms-length.”
- Balance and understanding needed between **site-based and district-based decisions** related to equity, curriculum, etc. The new leader will be asked to identify what impact site-based building policies have on the marginalized population. “Site-based management causes difficulty in bringing our district together. We are a district of schools too frequently, instead of a school district.” “The treatment of schools is not equitable. Some schools are able to flourish and others are not supported well or ignored. Some of the district’s budget issues should be centralized and not be involved in site-based management.”
- **Growth** is occurring faster than expected and a leader must understand the growth areas and how to best allocate adequate funding. Differences among communities is a challenge.

- **Bond and mill elections** will be needed in the future. Refocus on facility planning. **Deferred maintenance has occurred** to support the academic programs, and the older buildings need care and updating with interior areas and especially grounds.
- **School boundaries** will need to be adjusted when the new schools are completed and to deal with growth in some existing boundaries.
- **Recruiting and retaining staff.** “Salary schedules should be continually evaluated to be in a competitive situation with neighboring districts.” “We are losing classified staff due to our outdated salary schedule.” “Develop a program to better recruit and retain our classified staff members.”

Desired Professional and Personal Characteristics of the new superintendent:

- A thoughtful and active listener and exceptional communicator
- Displays confidence and courage coupled with humility
- Inspirational, dynamic, and highly energetic leader (“a firecracker”)
- Proven ability to engage with community partners including non-profits, service organizations, businesses, and higher education
- Demonstrates a kind heart, compassion, overall kindness and caring for district staff, kids and the community.
- Servant leadership philosophy for whom educational leadership is more of a calling than a job
- Growth-mindset; commitment to continuous improvement; comfortable with change.
- Integrity, honesty, and transparency
- Innovative, creative, and “out of the box” thinker
- Collaborative decision maker and team builder
- Visible, approachable, and accountable through involvement and being an active presence in schools and immersive presence in the community

- Strong educational leadership background; classroom teaching experience; academic and instructional leader
- Builds strong culture of unity and trust with a positive voice and presence
- Demonstrates experience with diverse/marginalized populations and successfully addressing problems and gaps related equity and inclusivity issues
- Eager, competent, and experienced in working with the Board as a true team
- Skills in hiring and retaining excellent employees in the district. Skills to develop an inclusive leadership team and evaluate current leadership job descriptions in the district and evaluate if all leadership jobs are needed. Values professional development
- Understands and addresses importance mental health issues of students and district staff
- Attends to program evaluation, data analysis, and financial planning

ONLINE SURVEY

Parent Comment 722: *“The person should listen to parents and take their opinions and concerns into consideration when instituting policy changes that affect our students. Surveys should matter and not be summarily dismissed ...”*

Turning to the quantitative data, we received approximately the number of surveys we projected for a district the size of PSD. We expected to have 2000 respondents, but the final total was 2345, which includes 52 Spanish language participants. By group, the final tally was:

- 1558 parents (46 Spanish language)
- 462 teachers and certificated staff members (3 Spanish language)
- 121 support staff members (3 Spanish language)
- 52 administrators
- 76 students
- 75 taxpayers without children currently in school

Also, 106 of the 2293 respondents to the English language survey self-identified as Hispanic. Regarding racial identity, 15 selected Black, 34 Asian/Pacific Islander, and 7 Native American. 347 participants preferred not to share their racial identity. For this analysis, we have only separately disaggregated those who answered “yes” to the Question 27, “Are you Hispanic/Latinx?” We chose to do this because approximately 18% of the student population

identify as Hispanic compared to 3% Asian, 1% Black and 1% Native American. While the latter voices are important as every voice, the number of respondents is too small to provide reliable information.

Turning to the Spanish language survey, we had 52 respondents and are appreciative of their input. This limited number does not enable us to draw any meaningful conclusions regarding their feedback. However, this limited involvement may speak to larger concerns noted in several focus groups and forums: the schools and district need to attend to the frequency and the means of communicating to families whose first language is not English. This group represents an important population, and while participants in our Spanish language forum complimented the district on recent efforts to improve the quality and frequency of communication, they also asked for more attention to using different modes beyond email. Both the district and families would be well served by pursuing multiple modes of communicating and connecting. While we have included this group in the analysis, results may be misleading because of the small response rate. Moreover, feedback from our Language Equity Culture focus group, the Family Liaison focus group, and individual interviews indicated that the perception of Hispanic parents and students would be more aligned with the response of the Hispanic/Latinx group to the English Language survey than to the far more positive responses of parents on the Spanish Language survey.

Likewise, we were concerned about the small number of student respondents. In a district this size, we expect to receive about 350-400 responses from high school students responses. While we cannot say whether this low response was due to survey fatigue, Covid related matters, student apathy, and/or communication breakdowns, we can say that student voice matters significantly and have included it in our analysis. That said, the small number of respondents means that findings and conclusions may not be representative of the student perspective.

Further, please note that this survey does **not** represent a scientific sampling. It was a survey of convenience meaning that it was made available to a large public and individuals could choose to complete it or ignore it. However, because such large numbers responded to it, we believe the data are important to consider in the selection of the next superintendent as they speak both to the experiences, expertise, qualifications, and attributes the next superintendent will need to successfully lead the Poudre School District.

Participants were asked to choose four statements from a list of fifteen that represented the most important characteristics they want to see in a new superintendent. The top five were:

1. Foster (i.e. sustain and strengthen) a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect (overall consensus number one and number of one of all staff groups).
2. Provide regular and transparent communication (teachers, students, and Hispanic respondents rated this as one or two).

3. Sustain and strengthen a culture of belonging and connection for all students and staff (respondents to the Spanish speaking survey and Hispanic respondents to English survey identified this as number one).
4. Understand and address the needs of our diverse population (students rated this as number one [tied with communication] and teachers rated it as number two).
5. Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel (parents rated this as number one)

We also surveyed stakeholders on what they thought should be the top areas of focus for the next three to five years for the new superintendent from a list of ten.

- Attending to students' social emotional needs, especially given issues associate with remote learning during the pandemic and others which will arise when all students return to school.
- Sustaining and strengthening a culture of trust and transparency.
- Retaining and recruiting top quality teachers.

To assist the Board in selecting a new superintendent and to assist the superintendent in assessing the state of the district, we asked participants to respond to these seventeen statements using a Likert scale of either Excellent, Good, Average, or Poor for statements one to nine and Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree for questions ten to seventeen.

1. The overall quality of education in the District
2. The college and career readiness of PSD graduates
3. The effectiveness of the district in meeting the needs of my child (or meeting your needs if you are a student)
4. The effectiveness of the district in meeting the needs of students with disabilities
5. The effectiveness of the district in meeting the needs of English Language Learners
6. The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of exceptionally talented students
7. The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of historically underrepresented (minority) students
8. The district's ability to attract and retain excellent teachers
9. The quality of communication from the district
10. The district has high standards for student performance.
11. The district is working successfully to help students feel they are welcome, connected to, and belong at PSD
12. The district provides a well-rounded educational experience for all students.
13. The district is meeting the social emotional needs of the students.
14. The district engages parents as partners to improve the school system.
15. The district is fiscally responsible.

16. The district employs effective teachers and staff members.

17. If a family were considering moving to PSD because of the schools, I would encourage them to do so.

It should be noted that while we provide a “No Opinion” option, by design we do not have a “Neither Agree nor Disagree” option for questions ten to seventeen. In analyzing the data, we exclude “No Opinion” answers and recalculate the percentages for each response. The two tables below show the percentage of respondents rating the district “Excellent” or “Good” on questions one to nine and “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” on questions ten to seventeen.

The first table shows these percentages and the second table color codes these same percentages. Green shading indicates that 82% or above gave the district a positive rating. We use 82% because this percentage means the ratio of positive to negative responses is at or greater than 5:1 (rounded to the nearest whole number). That is a goal to which most districts aspire.

Red shading indicates an area of concern because the negative responses outweigh the positives. These areas require near term attention.

The two tables are included in below and in a landscape format following the report that makes for somewhat easier reading.

Table One

	ALL	Parents	Teachers	Support	Admin	Students	Taxpayers	Latinx	Spanish Speakers
QUESTIONS	(n=2293)	1512	459	119	52	76	75	106	52
<i>The overall quality of education in the district</i>	82	79	92	86	94	73	80	82	84
<i>The college and career readiness of PSD graduates</i>	75	70	87	81	89	64	80	69	85
<i>The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of my child</i>	65	62	79	68	79	42	68	64	78
<i>The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of students with disabilities</i>	59	53	66	69	71	59	58	59	78
<i>The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of English Language Learners</i>	60	66	50	70	51	59	52	53	87
<i>The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of exceptionally talented students</i>	61	55	70	80	77	55	69	65	85
<i>The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of historically underrepresented i</i>	37	39	30	49	34	35	41	38	74
<i>The district's ability to attract and retain excellent teachers</i>	65	64	64	70	77	66	73	67	84
<i>The quality of communication from the district</i>	55	59	44	49	53	35	56	64	87
The district has high standards for student performance.	81	80	85	82	87	70	80	78	88
The district is working successfully to help students feel welcome, connected to, and bel	64	65	64	69	71	62	55	61	88
The district provides a well rounded educational experience for all students.	71	71	73	73	77	68	57	68	76
The district is meeting the social emotional needs of students	59	57	63	71	67	33	59	54	83
The district engages parents as partners to improve the school system	73	71	80	80	82	63	73	74	89
The district is fiscally responsible	67	68	67	56	71	68	69	73	95
The district employs effective teachers and staff members	92	91	99	96	98	89	93	90	95
Recommend moving to district because of schools	88	84	96	94	96	92	85	85	86

Table Two

	ALL	Parents	Teachers	Support	Admin	Students	Taxpayers	Latinx	Spanish Speakers
QUESTIONS	(n=2293)	1512	459	119	52	76	75	106	52
The overall quality of education in the district	82	79	92	86	94	73	80	82	84
The college and career readiness of PSD graduates	75	70	87	81	89	64	80	69	85
The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of my child	65	62	79	68	79	42	68	64	78
The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of students with disabilities	59	53	66	69	71	59	58	59	78
The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of English Language Learners	60	66	50	70	51	59	52	53	87
The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of exceptionally talented students	61	55	70	80	77	55	69	65	85
The district's effectiveness in meeting the needs of historically underrepresented minorities	37	39	30	49	34	35	41	38	74
The district's ability to attract and retain excellent teachers	65	64	64	70	77	66	73	67	84
The quality of communication from the district	55	59	44	49	53	35	56	64	87
The district has high standards for student performance.	81	80	85	82	87	70	80	78	88
The district is working successfully to help students feel welcome, connected to, and belong.	64	65	64	69	71	62	55	61	88
The district provides a well rounded educational experience for all students.	71	71	73	73	77	68	57	68	76
The district is meeting the social emotional needs of students	59	57	63	71	67	33	59	54	83
The district engages parents as partners to improve the school system	73	71	80	80	82	63	73	74	89
The district is fiscally responsible	67	68	67	56	71	68	69	73	95
The district employs effective teachers and staff members	92	91	99	96	98	89	93	90	95
Recommend moving to district because of schools	88	84	96	94	96	92	85	85	86

Table Two shows that the perception of overall quality of education is high as is the perception that the district employs effective teacher and staff. It is also notable that a high percentage respondents from all stakeholder groups would recommend a family move to the district because of the quality of the schools. The lowest area, and one that merits timely and intense attention, is stakeholders' perception of the effectiveness of the district in meeting the needs of underrepresented minorities. For each group except those taking the Spanish language survey, the negative responses outnumbered the positive ones.

Perhaps the most notable quantitative findings are the discrepancies among groups. For example, with more than a 20 percentage point spread on several questions, respondents to the Spanish language survey were far more positive than their Latin peers responding to the English language survey. We attribute this difference to what we learned in individual interviews and focus groups with members of the Language Culture Equity group and Family Liaisons. The fact that the Family Liaisons are so closely connected to Spanish speaking families undoubtedly results in closer connections to the district and a stronger sense that the district is serving their needs. These data speak well to the positive impact of the Family Liaisons.

We were also concerned with the ten plus percentage point differences between parents and teachers on several prompts, especially given the large numbers of respondents from both groups. The next superintendent will need to understand the underlying causes of these differences in perception and address them. Throughout our interviews, focus groups, and forums we heard from many that the next leader needed to be "unifier." Whether the problem

is one of communication, trust and transparency, site-based management, misaligned expectations, and/or other factors, the new leader will be successful to the extent he or she can engage stakeholders in pursuing a clear vision focused on an array of shared positive student outcomes. When parents and staff have common goals, high expectations, and mutual trust and transparency, students benefit.

Open ended survey comments reflected much of what we heard in focus groups, interviews, and forums. There were a total of 2,665 individual comments on the English language survey and 24 on the Spanish language survey. Many responses were Covid related expressing a fierce and immediate desire for students to return to school as well as safety of employees and other students when they do. These immediate decisions will likely need to be made by the current leadership, so looking to overarching themes for the new leader, the new superintendent:

- will need to have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing students social-emotional needs and mental health and wellness;
- must address long term impacts of Covid related issues (remote learning, political divisiveness) on student achievement, student and staff mental health, and district finances
- has to tackle systemic inequities that lead to significant opportunity and achievement gaps
- must learn about the problems and unanticipated impact of site based management and balance the need for central unification with autonomy (less a district of schools and more a school district)
- has restore trust and transparency
- will have to engage more broadly and deeply with student voice, teacher voice, and community partnerships
- need to focus on identifying and meeting the needs of “every student every day.”

To this end, commonly mentioned qualifications and attributes were:

- Exceptional communicator who is committed to transparency
- Highly visible, present, and approachable
- Honesty and integrity
- Trustworthy and trusting
- Collaborative and inclusive
- Courageous
- Innovative and forward thinking
- Experience as a classroom teacher

We also read several comments from stakeholders relating to the political environment. Some leaned right and others left. Some from both viewpoints were quite heated and even accusatory, but the most frequently mentioned politically related comment was that the new leader should not have a political agenda. “Political agenda” is open to interpretation and it differs depending on one’s own leanings but from our perspective the new leader will need to be skillful in navigating political matters and sustaining and strengthening the focus on educational endeavors which clearly include attending to energetically and effectively addressing opportunity and achievement gaps among different student populations. We prefer the more positive outlook others expressed as making the most of the leadership opportunity to unify all stakeholders in the community around common goals related to the achievement, growth, and well-being of all students all the time. Below are several representative, verbatim comments that reflect the most frequently mentioned remarks of each group. They are not listed in priority order; rather they are just listed based on when the survey was completed and submitted.

PARENTS

1. Strong moral values, integrity, genuine concern for the wellbeing and education of students
2. Strong leadership, transparent, respectful, shrewd, articulate, motivated
3. Integrity, leadership
4. The superintendent should be fair and honest with a high level of integrity. They should realize that they are educating our next leaders and that the education that PSD provides should help our future leaders understand how to bring our fractured society back together. Educators should not exacerbate the issue.
5. In addition to maintaining excellence for our students and teachers, the next superintendent needs to consider what is also best for the community. Kids don't live in a bubble; they are community members, too, and the implications of their behaviors and the scope of their education reaches far beyond classrooms.
6. I would like to see a superintendent who is a proactive planner, approachable, transparent, knowledge of change and change process, collaborative, demonstrate clarity of goals and objectives, and has led a building.
7. Honest, forthright, someone who listens, committed to equality of opportunity, supportive of and connected to staff, students, and families
8. Someone that truly cares about the students and the quality of their education and not someone that is politically motivated. I think there needs to be more education on mental health, nutrition, well-being, relationships, exercise, etc. for kids that gives them tools for a well-balanced life
9. I think that we need a superintendent who can help to bridge the gap between the parts of the community that have the resources vs. the parts of the community that need more resources. We have a huge income and social gap in our community that needs to be filled. The superintendent needs to effectively address the gaps in test scores and performance between students with historically marginalized identities and/or low SES

and their peers. The superintendent should have excellent leadership skills, transparent, respectful communication, and an openness to new ideas and diverse ideas and opinions. Solution focused, strengths based, and an ability to be steadfast in the face of negative, destructive feedback

10. Someone who can provide effective centralized leadership. Each school should have a unified voice, unified curriculum, and unified resources.
11. We need a leader who will rely on the strong operations and work on building better relationships with the community, and forging trust in their leadership. As parents, we've felt talked down to and ignored the past few months, rather than a PARTNER in solutions. There is much relationship repair to do while focusing on what's best for kids during these unprecedented times, especially kids with the highest needs.
12. Someone who will be an advocate for ALL students in PSD. Put the students best interest first. Make a plan and follow through, don't be wishy washy. Be a leader and a model for surrounding districts, not the other way around. Be very confident, don't let others influence you.
13. Strong visionary leader that leverages business and community leaders and community needs in the vision and success of the district. A leader that can create a united school district rather than a district of schools with no unified vision. Forward thinking, not status quo basing success only on test scores - rather reimaging education, increasing student led, real world authentic and relevant learning into the overarching district structure. Personally they need to demonstrate character and integrity, be energetic, confident and have the charisma to inspire and lead all stakeholders.
14. I would like to see someone come into this position without a politically focused agenda. Someone who has a strong skill set geared towards improving the current curriculums structure, recruiting personnel who have a passion for educating, knowledgeable in financial stewardship and finds communication essential in building back up the District.
15. The most important qualities for the next superintendent are: responsiveness to parents and students, innovation and creative problem solving, a strong background in serving students with exceptionalities, awareness and understanding of mental health needs of students, willingness to be a strong advocate for all students, culturally responsible, and strong leader. Ideally, the district will seek to hire someone who represents diversity.
16. Transparency and good communication are very important. Additionally, I would like to see a Superintendent that is hands on and gets involved beyond the office. A leader that has also plenty of experience in the classroom. Someone with a vision for the future and the ability to place PSD in a competitive circle. PSD has many resources but is definitely behind in innovation and technology compared to neighboring districts (SVVSD, BVSD). Make PSD attractive and competitive again
17. This should be a person that expects academic rigor from students, high performance from teachers, and manages the district's budget in a conservative manner.
18. We need an honest, dedicated superintendent with a mindset of keeping PSD safe, competitive, and forward-thinking -- even in the face of changing social, political, and health circumstances. I also think he or she should be passionate about supporting PSD's teachers: They're our 'front-line' workers and deserve someone who will address their needs and concerns.

19. The next superintendent needs to have a vision of what it means to attain "graduation". Essentially, by the time students graduate, they need to have a certain set of life skills (perseverance, critical thinking, drive/determination, money management) that help them succeed as a member of society. They need a foundation for a set of professional skills on which they can build upon for further employment or education (i.e. trades skills, mathematics, engineering, business etc.). Finally, they need opportunity--> what connections can the superintendent make in the local community to connect students to a network of people or skills that will provide a springboard for life. Finally, this person needs to communicate to students and the community that the goal is not just to get the piece of paper that says you made it but to be able to do something with it.
20. Someone who is willing to put children's educational needs before the politics of a school district
21. Can maintain a focus on the educational needs of the students while also being an effective operational manager. Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of social-emotional well-being of students, is visible throughout the schools and in the community, is an effective communicator and listener, solicits feedback, fosters a climate of open communication and trust with both staff and families. Takes an active role in understanding all the different facets of the District, not just a figurehead.
22. Leadership, honest, effective, inclusive (students and staff), communication, transparency, direction and goals.
23. Determined to maximize academic expectations and achievement of all students. Devoted to retaining and appreciating excellent teachers and staff. Insistent that the district finds ways to make all parents able to communicate any concerns about their children's education, stresses, challenges
24. Clear communication - not vague statements, strong leader- which means to make fair decisions and stand by them, positive attitude and vision
25. Aim to make this district the best in the state.
26. Unbiased, diplomatic, transparent, humble, gracious
27. It is important for them to engage with the community and communicate that they understand the needs of the district pertaining to education in addition to the social needs of the children during the pandemic. We need a true leader who has the ability to problem solve and think outside the box for trickier issues. They should also be empathetic to the needs of minority students and help to unify the families within the district
28. Leadership, humbleness, curiosity, listening skills, financial wherewithal. A forward thinker, unafraid of thinking outside of the box. Innovative, encouraging, able to be vulnerable and honest. Lead by example. Inspirational. Open-minded. Excellent communicator.
29. Far more transparency and involvement of community members, especially parents of PSD students, should be incorporated into the activities of the super as well as the BOE
30. Unity. I think that in this day and age we need to have someone who can unify our district. Bring everyone together in a meaningful way through leadership, fiscal responsibility, and student performance and well being. When we all work together, we can get things done.

TEACHERS

1. A Superintendent that casts a vision that moves schools away from site based management will support our students and community. Site based management, while intended to be empowering, has created a disjointed district and a sense of disconnect from district and collective goals.
2. Professionally: less emphasis on school choice and more unifying of district programs that can improve outcomes for our secondary students who are not on a college path. Personally: Strong personality to implement necessary changes for increased educational equity
3. We need a superintendent who vocally and publicly champions teachers, while still challenging us to be the best teachers we can be and giving us tools and resources to constantly adapt, improve, and most importantly, meet the needs of our students. TEACHER VOICE MUST BE FRONT AND CENTER IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISTRICT INITIATIVES. Authentic communication and transparency.
4. Efficiently & effectively balance the needs of all students, all families, all PSD staff, & the community - systems thinker: understand the big picture(s) as well as the details of getting work done & delegate appropriately - evidence of effective collaboration in previous positions - understand the pros and cons of our site-based (vs central office-based) district: what initiatives/policies should be "tight" & what initiatives can be "loose"
5. Someone who understands the diversity we have in our schools. PSD cannot simply ignore the unique needs of our diverse learners ... There are many inequities in this district that must be discussed and addressed immediately. We need someone who understands this and wants to help EVERYONE. We need someone who will take real action and listen to our students and families who do not usually have a voice
6. Personable, fearless, level-headed, honest, and practical
7. Someone who not only provides clear and consistent communication district-wide, but encourages his/her school leaders to do the same. Someone who has spent significant time in a classroom and will continue to visit school sites as a means to avoid the disconnect that seems to occur at the higher office levels.
8. Be approachable, genuine, realistic
9. A qualified superintendent would have knowledge of students with disabilities and the special education program. She or he will put the needs of students with learning differences first (financially and through the implementation of quality programs and the need to support and provide for students and teachers). The new superintendent will also prioritize the needs of our students from low-income homes in order to narrow the gap between their education and the education of students who have more opportunities.
10. Strategic thinker that is able to plan ahead and move toward a vision for the district. Find ways to retain effective employees.
11. Clear communication, respect for all employees, collaborative problem solver, understanding and respect for diverse populations

12. Someone who leads by example and is kind, personable, cares about children and staff, strong, holds their ground, thinks about decisions from ALL points of view
13. "You are only as good as your employees." Maintaining high excellence in teaching is and this involves recruit and maintaining the best of the best teachers.
14. A leader with classroom experience will do a better job of developing policies that can be implemented in the reality of the classroom environment, maximizing the positive impact for students and teachers. The next superintendent needs to foster communication across primary and secondary levels. The next superintendent should also be someone who is committed to developing innovative policies which will center the needs of our most disenfranchised students/families.
15. A superintendent should have a strong vision for keeping PSD on the cutting edge of best practices that meet the needs of all learners, and be willing to listen to those in our community who have researched their specific area and engage in thoughtful discussions around how PSD might employ their learnings.
16. Knowledgeable of the inequities facing students in PSD - committed to disrupting those inequities - committed to providing supports / professional development for educators who are moving toward more equitable practices - innovative--especially in light of what education will look like in a post-pandemic world - courageous visionary who listens to teachers and staff - compassionate and courageous educator
17. Leader from Colorado who understands our culture and challenges -Leader who is prepared to unify our schools into one district
18. I believe transparency and communication are key! Even if it is decisions people don't agree with, knowing what is coming down the line and the reasoning behind it are so important when leading a large district as ours
19. I want a superintendent who is willing to take bold steps to ensure a quality education specifically for our most vulnerable populations. I would like a superintendent who values the professional and personal contributions of teachers to the district and who is willing to take bold action to protect our mental and physical health.
20. Positive, hardworking, understanding, loving, humble, decisive, but not rash
21. Look to build a cohesive district instead of individual schools doing what they want to do. Think critically about the needs of high poverty schools and their needs.
22. I am looking for an inspirational leader who has demonstrated the effectiveness of change around equity and diversity in another district.
23. We need someone familiar with PSD. Someone from the outside is not always better. We need someone who believes in the idea of educating every child, every day and systematically works through our district at every level to make sure that is true and that we are reflecting that value in all of our practices. We cannot stand behind "every child, every day" if our practice is actually "some kids, most days". We need courageous leadership.
24. Unifying the district, not continuing to be a site-based district - Be leaders in progressive teaching and learning change, not followers
25. Inclusive, inspiring, trustworthy, transparent and Visible, Realistic, Empathetic, Professional, Reliable, Culturally-Responsive

CLASSIFIED STAFF

1. Deep background in education as both a teacher and administrator; good communicator--both with district personnel and the wider community we serve; able to create and maintain a positive district culture based on trust and respect; able to focus on the present operations of the district while at the same time thinking and planning strategically for the future; a commitment to better understand and address the needs of the underserved members of our community and support the district's efforts to do so.
2. Integrity and open mindedness, both professionally and personally, are vital in all forms of leadership. Also, being able to listen to all sides and consider "outside the box" options is an attribute that is paramount in leadership roles.
3. LISTENING! Listening is essential; to staff, to families, to students. Remember that decisions that sound good from your office, may be wholly impractical for those on the implementation end. The superintendent should also surround him/herself with team members who have strengths other than his/her own, and then listen to them. Next, the most vulnerable, at-risk students in our district, those served by Early Childhood and/or Integrated Services, deserve a superintendent who considers them to be as important as their typical peers.
4. Communication; demonstrated ability to actively serve diverse communities, willingness to support and advocate for teachers.
5. A person who understands that we cannot be everything to everybody, but that EVERY student deserves the best education available. A person who understands that the school district is part of the greater community, and that people want to know the superintendent and learn about emerging educational research and practice and then see it put into action. A person who is willing to stand up to the Board and his/her asst. superintendents, cabinet members, and principals and say this is what we are or are not in Poudre School District. I would value a strong, honest leader over a "big picture" or "visionary" thinker--there is much practical work to be done in PSD and we need to get to it.
6. They should be out and about in the district and the community. They should be transparent in all aspects of leadership. They strive to understand the diversity of student enrollment/diversity in the community and work with the Board in validating the many needs that all stakeholders have - students/parents/staff/community.
7. Transparent, trustworthy, motivator, open-minded, collaborative, dynamic, visionary, risk-taker
8. Someone who understands that it takes the entire group of employees to move the district, not just all about teachers. It is the entire group of employees that work to educate the students.

ADMINISTRATORS

1. The next superintendent needs to be focused on the success of all schools, manage the district budgets to that end, and foster trust among all stakeholders. We need a long term strategic thinker who understands how to create a system that supports all learners, is based on antiracist practices, stays focused on professional development efforts over a long term. Schools are expected to do too much and are bombarded with too much change. Often decisions are made without our input or secondary principals are consulted but not elementary. There needs to be a better balance of input between the two factions. We also need a measure of what we are pointed towards.
2. Approachable, good listener, able to synthesize and apply strategies that will serve a variety of people and opinions
3. Visible communicator, empathetic, beholden to staff, smart, interested in the success of others before the success of themselves, loves and cares for diverse range of students with a proven track record, visionary
4. In these times, I think it is critical that the superintendent be a unifier, be someone that can lead us in the work of antiracism, lead us in the work of inclusivity, foster cooperation and not competition among the schools, put a priority on building relationships with staff and not overemphasize standardized tests as the only measure of success, but multiple methods of gauging success, they need to be able to lead and ensure that all students, regardless of background get a great education and can pursue their future dreams.
5. Encourage all PSD staff to be the best version of themselves. Do this with solid positive communication and presence in buildings and events
6. Demonstrated fiscal responsibility and effective use of resources. Has demonstrated the ability to build cultures that value equity, diversity, and inclusivity. Is a highly effective communicator. Values placing resources at schools versus building a huge central office staff. Prioritizes being hands-on, visible, and connected to schools
7. We need a leader with a proven track record that has led a large organization through difficult challenges and times, inspiring other leaders to work together collaboratively while also holding each other accountable. We need a leader who will create a clear path and communicate the clear path and consistently and regularly checks to make sure the organization and leaders are all moving in the right direction. Someone who will step up and address those who are not supporting the direction of the district. Finally, we need someone to be a thoughtful and strategic thinker, someone who knows the questions to ask, or asks the right people the right questions and makes thoughtful decisions that will have a positive impact on students, not necessarily making decisions that will make them look good in the community.
8. I hope our next superintendent is a leader. Someone who has a vision and a plan, listens to stakeholders, and LEADS. I hope they have a very high level of communication with everyone, inclusive of all. Actively leads through our challenges in transparent ways. Believes that their job has 100 important layers, not just "managing the board". It will be important to have someone that people see engage the community, staff, students, and admin teams in ways that move us forward and tackle the hard stuff.

STUDENTS

1. Someone who will understand what a life outside of school is, can bring people together, make decisions based on student/staff interest
2. For the next superintendent, I think, especially during COVID, they need to understand and support mental health awareness. They need to be understanding and compassionate of the students and look from their point of view to see what the best interest is. Also, a superintendent must be caring and responsible to make the next big decision.
3. The next superintendent should be a kind and caring person. They should put student needs first. The new superintendent should make decisions based on student needs and wants and not just on what would be the most convenient and easiest for the district. The superintendent should be active in the community and everyone should have a good understanding of their personality. I never met the last superintendent and I think if the new one were to come to every school and introduce themselves and their goal for the district, everyone would have better knowledge and trust in the person leading the district.
4. Common sense
5. They should consult students more with surveys like this
6. We need a superintendent who knows what it's like to be a minority in a dominantly white area. The schools in PSD really do struggle when it comes to making minority students feel welcome and feel like they belong. As a minority student myself, I want a superintendent who will work to improve the way the minorities are treated in the district. Show that you guys really do care and hire a superintendent that isn't white.
7. Listen to what a majority of the students want/need. School now is completely different from when any staff, or parent has gone, adults do not fully understand what students are going through these days. Throughout our lifetime we have encountered many historical and life changing event, and due to that on average our mental health is severely worse. A majority of students are wanting to see positive change.
8. Definitely an increasing attention to students' social-emotional and mental health issues. A lot of times I feel like the schools only care about students doing well in their classes. While that is very important, there needs to be some slack cut to the students. Classes and school aren't all about educational learning. They are also about social learning.

TAXPAYERS

1. I just want someone who is not doing this for a status or title, but someone who genuinely cares about ALL the kids, not just the wealthy ones or civilly obedient ones and focus on giving these kids a chance because ignoring them will solve no problems.
2. Strong voice to lead School Board. Deep background in education to recognize effective efforts and discount 'flavor-of the month' popular schemes.
3. Trustworthy and transparent, respectful, compassionate, strategic thinker, mindful and inclusive of diversity of all kinds (including low-income and struggling families), inspire the trust of all families sending their children to school
4. Understands our unique community and the value that lies in the amazing non-profit community that currently exists. This community has worked tirelessly over the years to collaborate and partner with PSD only to be met with barrier after barrier. When PSD has failed to support their students, the nonprofit community stands by and closes the gap. In the past 5+ years PSD has pushed aside these groups. It's time to see, leverage and truly partner with the community that exists right in front of you. It's imperative your new superintendent sees and values community partnerships.
5. A strong leader; desire to reduce our educational gap; open and honest communicator; unifier;
6. The next superintendent needs to be a good listener, give staff the tools and time they need to teach well, and mold this district into one that effectively meets the needs of all students
7. An inspiring and engaging leader who uses their skills and their powerful position for the clear good of the District - including students, families, and staff. A person with a deep and positive understanding of their position and influence, with a clear desire to serve, with a strongly positive attitude, and with excellent interpersonal skills that leads to longevity with Boards and the community. And a powerfully good manager and leader who inspires the system.
8. Be visible and improve communication
9. Effectively completing building of new schools (and meeting other bond promises) and providing inspiring leadership for a community moving through and out of the Pandemic
10. Get to know the school community and larger community before making changes. Seek advice from a broad spectrum of educators, parents, community members

HISPANIC/LATIN X (English language survey)

1. I think that we need a superintendent that can help to bridge the gap between the parts of the community that have the resources vs. the parts of the community that need more resources. We have a huge income and social gap in our community that needs to be filled. We also need someone who can provide effective centralized leadership. Each school should have a unified voice, unified curriculum, and unified resources.
2. Of course, I would like a superintendent who is steeped in best practices and current trends in education and clearly articulates his/her vision for our district. I would like to have a superintendent who is accessible to staff, parents and the general public--

someone who is visible and promotes the vision of PSD. I would like someone who appreciates diversity and is always willing to work for the benefit of our marginalized population.

3. Communication, fairness and equity, ability to see and hear ALL perspectives (not just the squeaky wheels or what's getting political airwaves) and keep a balanced approach to solving problems, hiring and retaining the best applicants based on qualifications (not political pressure)
4. Honesty, integrity, experience working with students with disabilities, and an understanding of culturally diverse populations and their unique needs. A firm belief that every child's education is equally important and proof that they've participated in initiatives reflecting those beliefs.
5. Knowledgeable, good communicator, open to feedback, transparency, respectful, caring and level headed
6. Someone who puts the children first not politics!!
7. Being able to address the needs of minority, disabled, Spanish speaking, immigrant, at risk, and impoverished students. Provide care and help options for students exhibiting mental health issues. Understanding the risk of having police officers in schools and how they affect minority students especially
8. Mental health services for ALL children. Diversity/inclusion training for admin/teachers/staff providing students and parents with end of semester surveys to accurately evaluate realities of classroom setting.
9. Closing the achievement gap has been a continual priority and attending to the every-growing mental health needs of our staff and students.
10. Show school staff that you care about them by actually being in the schools. Show that you know engaging instruction and practice that gets results.
11. Placing PSD as a top school district. It is shameful that with so many resources it's falling behind. Teachers also need to be compensated accordingly. Please stop investing in administrative salaries. Help is needed in the classrooms. Voters will not be supportive of tax increases as long as a big majority of the budget is spent in administration. Start from the bottom up.
12. I think the most important thing is to foster a culture of trust and transparency. With everything happening this year, the district feels unstable and a leader needs to bring us back to stability with all the uncertainty of financial status for the next 3-5 years.

SPANISH LANGUAGE SURVEY

1. I believe that the new superintendent should be a person who cares about the ENTIRE student community, and not just the average student.
2. [Build]trust with the community, understandability as Latino people, see diversity of people so that they can give a better treatment to any type of people because we are very diverse.
3. Be a professional who is interested in the diversity that exists in the school district to improve communication and parental involvement. So that we can receive information and find out what happens to our district.

4. Do the best you can regarding safety for students and staff
5. Inspire and motivate your entire team to work together for the well-being of the community.
6. Do an analysis to know where we are, and then create a plan with your entire team to keep our students learning, at the high levels they were before this pandemic.
7. Listen to students when they have a problem. Thank you
8. [Ensure] the community is really involved so that that mutual connection is achieved
9. [Focus on] academic performance and emotional support
10. Our new leader must be culturally receptive and must broaden his vision to adapt education to current times
11. Improve education for children and hire more prepared and capable teachers
12. Close performance gaps. Advocate for improvements in staff compensation.

Respondents also were invited to freely respond to what the new leader's priorities should be. Below are a sampling of ideas from all groups. It is a long list that will inform the new leader and the board during the transition and goal setting process.

1. Improve the big split between classified school based and certified staff.
2. Dealing with the budget crisis caused by the pandemic; managing an effective and safe response to the challenge of maintaining our quality educational services in the midst of the pandemic while supporting the increased needs of students, families and staff.
3. Support and prioritize the effort to ensure students have sufficient internet access at home. Get the city, county, and others involved in getting this urgent issue addressed fully with a long-term plan
4. Mental health awareness and fostering a culture of trust must be the immediate priorities
5. Improve consistency and transparency of district communications to teachers, family, support staff, and students. Address diversity & equity issues
6. Increase graduation rates for student subgroups. Ensure "Student Connections" are improving/increasing for subgroups of students.
7. Getting us back into a stable financial situation with plans for sustainability
8. Show school staff that you care about them by actually being in the schools. Show that you know engaging instruction and practice that gets results
9. Get our kids in school full time with bus options.
10. Social/Mental Health of students, not just related to Covid changes, but overall constant attention.
11. Increasing attention to students' social-emotional and mental health issues, and fostering a culture of trust and transparency.
12. Rebuilding a unified in-school experience for students, teachers, staff, etc. Addressing issues of social justice and equity for multiple identities and experiences
13. Making sure kids and families of color are invited, welcomed, and treated with respect in PSD. A conscious effort needs to be made to recruit teachers and administration that reflect all of our community.

14. Increasing the attention given to students' social-emotional and mental health issues.
15. Build a trusting and transparent relationship with stakeholders.
16. Improving communication - and by this I don't mean MORE communication- I mean streamlined and tailored, 21st century approaches to communicating with stakeholders in the school district community that reflect our diverse community and our community's inequitable access to technology and digital tools.
17. Addressing the DEEP inequities that our students and teachers of color experience in and making more room for teacher and student voice in large decision making for the district.
18. A plan to rebound from the COVID crisis that retains quality teachers, focusing on financial needs and quality of professional life.
19. There is a pretty big lack of trust after this year between the teachers and district leadership that will need to be addressed immediately if the district wants to continue to retain and recruit top teachers.
20. Post COVID, all students need to have a strong sense of belonging at their school with a supported social/emotional health focus.
21. Social/emotional needs for students and staff are vital. We are all living during a global pandemic and a very tumultuous political time which are going to continue to have big impacts. We cannot focus on learning until these needs are being met.
22. Assessing impacts of the pandemic
23. As the new superintendent will be coming on board just as we are (hopefully) coming out of the pandemic, the immediate priority must be the social-emotional health of students, which joins closing achievement gaps, as these two issues go hand in hand and will undoubtedly be the most pressing needs for students in the immediate year or two following a full-time return to in- person schooling.
24. Fostering collaboration between parents, teachers and students in large, life altering decisions such as returning to school during a pandemic
25. Raise the bar! Even without Covid, even the average kids are not often challenged in this district. Bring the focus back to educational excellence.
26. Engagement with the business community
27. Get to the center of the aisle. Schools should not be a political environment
28. The entire focus should be on students - and the district should strive to close gaps for minority students and students with disabilities
29. Fostering a sense of belonging for our student
30. Most importantly, the quality of the education delivery should be top priority. ... The educational, emotional and psychological needs of our students must be the top priority.

Summary

Having sought the input from students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, community members and Poudre School District stakeholders via focus groups, interviews, community forums and surveys, the Poudre Board of Education has a clear picture of the desired characteristics and qualifications for the district's next **Superintendent of Schools**.

The Board of Education members seek an energetic, personable, approachable leader who will work collaboratively with the Board, school and district leadership teams, faculty, staff and community partners in developing a shared strategic vision which strengthens PSD's excellent programs and services furthering the high quality of education. The ability to communicate clearly and frequently and genuinely connect and broadly, deeply, and authentically engage with all stakeholders – especially the under resourced and marginalized students and families – is of paramount importance.

The new superintendent must be guided by an authentic commitment to all students and their families; faculty and staff; and community partners. He or she must be able to demonstrate previous evidence of being an excellent two-way communicator, transparent decision maker, successful collaborator and a visible presence. The selected candidate must thrive in being positively immersed in the life of the community. The leader will bring an outstanding background of teaching and leadership skills, emotional intelligence and servant leadership traits which will positively impact the community's culture.

The superintendent candidate must have documented evidence and recent and relevant experience in establishing a culture of trust, successfully addressing equity, opportunity and achievement gaps and communicating frequently and clearly with strength, confidence, and expertise to make challenging decisions.

HYA is committed to recruiting and screening candidates who fit the leadership profile and will provide PSD the high quality of stable and successful leadership needed to sustain all that is special about the schools, programs, and personnel and provide the vision, hard work, and collaboration that will engage all stakeholders in moving the district on a trajectory from great to greater.

The consultants thank all the participants who attended focus groups, personal interview meetings, forums, and/or completed the online survey. Also, we thank all of the Poudre School District staff members who assisted with our meetings and particularly Tessa Oppenheimer, for her efforts in facilitating our virtual meetings with stakeholders in the District.