

Oswego Community Unit School District 308



New Superintendent Profile Report

SCHOOL EXEC CONNECT

Dr. Kevin O'Mara-Dr.Devon Horton



THE BOARD REQUESTED THE CONSULTANTS TO:

- Conduct Focus Groups with a wide variety of stakeholders
 - Conduct an Online Questionnaire to gather input from school staff, parents, students and community members
 - Create a *New Superintendent Profile* based on information gathered from these sources
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HOW PROFILE REPORT WILL BE USED

- The Board and Consultants will use the *New Superintendent Profile* as they screen and conduct interviews with candidates
 - The Profile Report may be used to develop interview questions for the candidates
 - The Board of Education may use this Profile Report to find out more about the thinking of the District's constituents
 - The candidates and the community may use this Profile Report to find out about the strengths and challenges of the District
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SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION

Focus Groups

90 Attendees

Online Questionnaire

1,129 Responses

April

Due to sampling methods, the resulting report is not a scientific study and provides only the perceptions of those who responded or participated

In the questionnaire report, percentages are rounded



FOCUS GROUPS & QUESTIONNAIRE

- **List the District's greatest strengths and attributes. Why would a new superintendent want to come to your District?**
 - **List the District's greatest challenges and barriers. What should a new superintendent know before he or she accepts this responsibility?**
 - **List the most important areas for the new superintendent to focus on in the first year besides getting to know the people and practices of the District. Where should the new superintendent put his/her efforts in year one?**
 - **Assuming honesty and ethical behavior, describe the most important areas of knowledge and skills the next Superintendent needs to possess to be successful.**
 - **What else would you like to say about the selection of the next superintendent?**
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FOCUS GROUPS

9 Focus Groups/Open Forums (90 Attendees)

Board of Education, District Administrators, District Staff,
Student, Community, and Parents



District STRENGTHS

In general, the Oswego district appears to prioritize inclusivity, diversity, and a well-rounded education for their students. The community is engaged, and the strong connections between home and school foster a positive environment for learning. The dedication of the administration, staff, and teachers to their students is evident through their passionate work and regular communication with families. There is a focus on meeting the needs of all students (including Special Education support), fostering a growth mindset, and creating a welcoming and supportive environment.



District CHALLENGES

The Oswego district faces a range of complex and interconnected challenges, including those related to community engagement, fiscal stability, diversity and inclusion, professional supports, mental health resources, research and curriculum development, mentorship programs, and communication strategies. Additionally, there are issues surrounding staffing, student behavior and burnout prevention that may require more immediate attention. Addressing these challenges will be important for the development and success of Oswego's future students, as well as the growth of the Oswego district as a whole.



FOCUS AREAS IN FIRST YEAR

- Prioritizing financial stability and creating a plan to address finances
- Building a culture of empathy and inclusion, including addressing issues related to implicit biases, discipline and equity divide
- Enhancing diversity efforts and making parents and students of color feel more welcomed and engaged
- Improving communication and engagement strategies to build trust with all stakeholders
- Prioritizing the well-being and mental health support of students
- Addressing staffing issues, including the hiring & retaining of diverse administrative, teaching and support staff
- Improving curriculum development and incorporating culturally responsive teaching, including the teaching of research skills to students
- Developing a strong focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), including creating a priority around DEI and other connections-focused initiatives.
- Addressing issues related to special education, such as ensuring adequate resources for IEP needs and providing additional support and training for bilingual sped staff and teachers of bilingual students
- Addressing concerns related to overly-focused mandates and assessments
- Improving the transition between elementary, middle, and high school education
- Addressing issues with the gifted program, and making parents feel welcome and supported
- Implementing strategies to increase staff retention and support them



DESIRED SKILLS & CHARACTERISTICS

- Servant leader
 - Good listener,
 - Adaptable
 - Goal-oriented
 - Prioritize the monetary aspects of each school
 - Unify the district
 - Strong communicator both ways
 - Having a diverse experience
 - Good problem solver
 - Commitment to the community
 - Possess strong leadership skills
 - Approachable
 - Thick skin
 - Authentic,
 - Accountable
 - Able to stand up for all is crucial
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Other Priorities

- It's essential that the superintendent leads with an open heart and possesses diverse and compassionate leadership experience
- They must also have experience working with a similar district and actively get into schools with boots on the ground
- Making sure they are visible and listening to the passion in the community, including parents with students already engaged in the district.
- Superintendent must be genuinely caring and understand the importance of the mental wellness of all, including employees, emphasizing inclusivity.
- A committed leader who operates on a Servant leadership model should be a priority and
- Focus should be on leadership framework-driven decision making.
- Transparency and stakeholder inclusion during the hiring process should be the norm
- The committee needs to be diverse to represent the school community without any self-serving interests.
- Educated on how to lead Oswego 308 is essential
- Superintendent should have experienced leadership failures
- Must have clear timelines, strategic planning, and
- Stick to their decision-making process.
- Superintendent must have a strategic thinking mindset – visionary, goal-oriented and understands the importance of prioritization.



QUESTIONNAIRE DEMOGRAPHICS

1,129 TOTAL RESPONSES

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|----------------------------|-----|
| • Staff Member | 284 |
| • Parent | 707 |
| • Community/Business Owner | 74 |
| • Student | 185 |
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EDUCATIONAL STRENGTHS

Strong Communication with Parents and Community	39%	449
Opportunities for Students outside of classroom	38%	433
Safe students and staff learning environments	37%	414
Use of technology for learning	36%	411



EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

Environment that attracts and retains highly effective personnel	50%	568
Adequate resources to fund programs and personnel to meet student needs	49%	551
Challenging state of the art curriculum	31%	347
Student readiness for the next level of learning	28%	313
Safe students and staff learning environments	25%	285



ORGANIZATIONAL or MANAGERIAL STRENGTHS

Clean and well maintained schools and grounds	58%	658
School Safety	40%	447
Relationships with other units of government	39%	439
Modern School Facilities	36%	411
Up to date Technology	34%	389



ORGANIZATIONAL or MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES

Stewardship of financial resources	62%	705
Class size	48%	540
Long range strategic planning and implementation	46%	518
Open two way communication between schools and district	35%	400
School safety	30%	345



PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW SUPERINTENDENT

Fiscal responsibilities	51%	581
Student well being (emotionally safe and confident)	49%	557
21st Century Skills (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Innovation, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Media and Technology Literacy)	48%	540
Improved Academic Achievement for all students	46%	517
Strong relationships with staff and community members	44%	493



CHARACTERISTICS/SKILLS NEEDED FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENT

Makes decisions based on what's best for students	65%	471
Possess a deep knowledge in curriculum, instruction and student learning	59%	666
Manages the budget effectively and leads in the financial business affairs of the district	54%	616
Practices transparency in decision making	53%	599
Builds effective teams and brings out the best in others	51%	580
Articulates a clear vision for leading our district that inspires others	49%	453



NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Possesses a deep knowledge of innovative teaching and learning with experiences in trauma informed practices.
 - Be familiar with the Oswego 308 Envision 308 Strategic Plan and the four priorities: Student Learning, Support for Student learning, finance and facilities and community partners
 - Is focused on student-centered decision making and planning while concurrently being creative, confident and responsive.
 - Communicates decisions with clarity, reason and empathy after considering input from all stakeholders
 - Is a visionary leader who is future focused, a strategic thinker and a relationship builder with staff, community and the Board of Education.
 - Possesses a genuine, warm, personable and approachable personality while being an active listener.
 - Highly skilled at building trust, mutual respect and consistency both systematically and systemically while strengthening a unified district-wide positive culture and climate.
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Passionately embraces the current traditions and values of the District, yet is open-minded, resourceful and responsive to the diverse and changing needs of the students and families.
- Exhibits excellent communication and public relations skills to engage all stakeholders, celebrate the successes and bolster the brand that enhances a positive image of the District.
- Communicates a clear vision for the future of the District and motivates and inspires others to act in accordance with that vision; establishes and maintains high expectations for all students and staff.
- Works effectively and collaboratively with the Board of Education, leadership team, teachers, staff, students and community members while maintaining and fostering a growth mindset and healthy teamwork culture to respond to the evolving needs of students and families.
- Prioritizes the recruitment, training, and retention of highly effective teachers and leaders, guided by clear human resource practices; focuses on hiring staff who are diverse in race, gender and background.
- Demonstrates understanding of and commitment to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, focusing on the academic and social-emotional development of all students and inclusion of all families in school life.
- Possesses successful experience as a teacher, building and district-level leader; understands teaching, learning and behavior needs while promoting instructional and management methods that are engaging and supportive of high academic and social-emotional growth.



NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Possesses successful experience as a teacher, building and district-level leader; understands teaching, learning and behavior needs while promoting instructional and management methods that are engaging and supportive of high academic and social-emotional growth.
- Values the unique needs of every student and allocates resources for programs in and out of the classroom that support students' academic, personal and social-emotional growth, including the development of creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Displays skills in fiscal responsibility, financial management and future-focused facilities planning.
- A visible, hands-on leader who becomes immersed in the life of the district schools and the community, maintaining a strong presence in classrooms, at activities and in community events.



NEXT STEPS

- Consultants conduct interviews and reference checks using the *New Superintendent Profile*
 - Consultants recommend candidates to the Board
 - Board conducts first interviews; chooses finalists
 - Board holds second interviews; candidate presentations
 - Board makes selection of finalist; conducts reference checks, negotiates the contract
 - New Superintendent begins duties on July 1, 2023
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QUESTIONS



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