



RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in October and November, 2016 for the new superintendent of the Rye City School District. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below: Not all focus groups were a group that was disaggregated for the online survey.

| Group | Personal Interviews or Focus Groups | Online Survey |
|--|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Board of Education Members | 7 | NA |
| Interim Superintendent | 1 | NA |
| Secretary of Superintendent | 1 | NA |
| Central Office Administrators | 3 | 5 |
| Building Principals | 5 | |
| Directors and Ass't Principals | 10 | |
| Central Office Support Staff | 14 | 4 |
| Teachers Including Association Leaders | 21 | 28 |
| Parents & Community Members | 17 | 163 |
| Students | 6 | 9 |
| Total | 85 | 209 |

The community survey report and a draft of the desired characteristics are attached to this report.

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are

attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants' judgment, they warranted the Board's attention.

The HYA consultants interviewed approximately 85 district constituents. Each of the individuals and groups were asked to share their thoughts regarding three questions: 1) how would you describe the strengths of the District; 2) what do you see as the greatest challenges facing the District in the next 3-5 years and 3) what characteristics would you like to see in the next Superintendent?

What follows is a summary of the responses shared by the above persons. The first section provides the collective summary of all of the respondents. The second section provides response summaries from the various categories of individuals interviewed regarding desired characteristics.

HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the district. The search team will seek a new superintendent who can work with the Rye City School District Board of Education to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and communities.

The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey and the Rye City School District staff members who assisted with our meetings, particularly Secretary to the Superintendent, Josephine Vicinanza who organized the search team's time in the district.

Respectfully submitted:

Debbie Raizes

Robert J. Roelle

SECTION 1: Summary Responses from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Many respondents expressed praise for the current Interim Superintendent, Dr. Brian Monahan. Respondents noted that Dr. Monahan almost immediately gained respect and trust from various constituents –attributes which will be needed in the next superintendent.

Generally there existed consistency of responses among those interviewed regarding the three questions.

Strengths of the District: The following District “strengths” were frequently reported by most of the persons interviewed:

- A Talented and Dedicated Faculty and Staff: Faculty is described as caring, committed and “student first” professionals.
- Terrific Students: Students are not only high achieving in academics; they are well rounded and notably appropriate. The students “come to school ready to learn.”
- A strong and dedicated administrative staff.
- Highly Educated Parents and a Supportive Community: The community has a long history of supporting the schools (recently supported a tax override) while readily volunteer to support school activities.
- Numerous diverse offerings, academic and extra-curricular, are available for students. “There is something for every student.”

Challenges and Issues Facing the District

- A Collection of Schools: While the schools are viewed favorably, there exists a sense that support to the schools could be enhanced if the District provided a clear and focused direction. The District would benefit from a 5-10 year long range plan.
- Professional Development: The need for increased and improved quality staff development for all employee groups was expressed by numerous individuals and within groups. Respondents suggested that the District was slow to address the Common Core Standards, and did not provide quality staff development to prepare teachers to implement the Common Core.
- Student Achievement: Recent reports of student achievement on State assessments suggests a downward slide in the district’s standing.
- Board of Education and Superintendent Relationships: There existed a view that the Board and the Superintendent “were not always on the same page.” Some suggested that the Board appeared to be too involved in the administration of the schools.
- Tax Cap Consequences – School Finances: The challenge of addressing the New York State Tax Cap legislation will be an ongoing challenge. With increased enrollments, it will be difficult to maintain favorable class size and add program improvements. Although the community had recently supported a tax rate override, it will be difficult to continue to seek added revenues for new programs without increased funding or decreased spending. The district will also need to address facilities improvements likely to cost several million dollars.

- **Low Teacher Morale:** Teachers do not believe their ideas are valued by the administration and the board of education. Contract negotiations can be difficult. While teachers believe parents have high regard for them, they feel that the district has not been supportive in providing staff development and they feel pressured by increased demands relating to student assessment results.
- **A Conservative Culture:** There exists a belief that the Rye City/School Community is slow to address necessary changes in school programs. While respondents shared interests in innovation in school programs, it was noted that on balance change is not welcome. The District efforts to embrace the Common Core standards was noted as an example of the district's resistance to accept change.

Preferred Characteristics in the Next Superintendent

- **An Accessible, Approachable and Visible Leader:** A people person who spends time in the schools and in the community. Someone who enjoys working with people and makes people feel comfortable working with her or him.
- **A person who will motivate and engage faculty and staff.**
- **A Visionary Educational Leader:** A person with a strong curriculum and instructional background.
- **A Mentor:** someone who values staff development and can guide professional development for faculty and staff.
- **A Team Member:** A person who will be a good team member with the Board of Education and be able to guide the Board in providing effective governance for the District.
- **A person who will set the standard that intolerance is never acceptable.**
- **An Effective Communicator:** A person who effectively presents him/herself as the spokesperson for the district. Someone who is a good listener.
- **An administrator with a strong record of accomplishments.** A person with previous experience in New York as a superintendent is preferred.
- **An administrator with a strong record of academic training, preferably with a doctorate.**
- **A person with a good sense of humor.**

SECTION 2: Summary of Comments from Focus Group and Individual Meetings

The structure of the focus groups was open, allowing for participants to build upon each other's comments. Participants were asked to respond to the following questions.

- What do stakeholders value regarding the schools? What strengths do they desire to retain and build upon?
- What are the issues this District currently faces, and, will face in the next three to five years?
- What personal and professional characteristics are expected in a new Superintendent?

BOARD OF EDUCATION

STRENGTHS

- Amazing and diverse offerings for students
- Guidance Department very helpful
- High performing school district
- Maintains a good reputation

CHALLENGES/ISSUES/CONCERNS

- Can we define success in different ways – not just test scores
- Communication – need to get more people engaged
- Conservative community – new programs must have been proven elsewhere
- Increasing enrollment - maintaining class size
- Need to address differentiation – meet every students' needs
- Social and emotional wellness – place for district to have a role
- Successful outcomes – can we show that we are providing the education our students need to be successful in college – to what degree do test scores reflect the quality of the education we want for our students
- Technology not integrated into curriculum

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Advocate for everyone
- Creative, out of the box thinker
- Elicits confidence and trust
- Energetic
- Good leader who can mentor others
- Knows what questions to ask and how to move the answers to achievable outcomes
- Manager who can put systems in place
- Open and not defensive
- Regularly loops back to Board and community to report on outcomes

- Sets the standard that intolerance is never tolerated
- Successful track record
- Thick skinned
- Understands how the Board and superintendent should work
- Understands how to work with a demanding parent body – hold firm to decisions

ADMINISTRATORS

STRENGTHS

- Strong administrative team

CHALLENGES/ISSUES/CONCERNS

- Building facilities review identified needs in the range of several million dollars
- Classroom space concerns
- Curriculum areas need review - math, social studies
- Need consistent Central Office leadership – bring Cabinet together
- Need to build a shared vision
- Need to rebuild trust between the RTA and the District
- Perception that student testing is too important – creates undo pressure on students and teachers
- Professional development for Common Core could have been done better and begun sooner
- Teacher contract is not settled
- Staffing needs in all areas need to be examined, i.e. insufficient staff to accommodate special area subjects, added classes without adding extra staff

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Be able to work with the Board to define the role of the Board and the superintendent
- Collaborative
- Good at PR
- Instructional leader who can navigate through the budget process
- Knows how to empower people
- Someone from New York
- Strong educational leader who can advance academics while valuing and supporting extras as well
- Strong financial background
- Trusting – gives and elicits trust
- Understands assessments

- Understands burdens that school administrators face – has administrators’ backs – will take the time to speak to an administrator about how a decision might impact the administrator’s school
- Understands the operations of the District
- Will hold teachers, staff accountable
- Will take a position and stick with it
- Willing to endure difficult conversations – strong enough to be comfortable with difficult decisions
- Willing to partner with the teachers union

FACULTY

STRENGTHS

- Teachers are always happy to learn more
- The FLES program in the elementary schools

CHALLENGES/ISSUES/CONCERNS

- Common Core: the district was late to address – training not adequate – not enough support
- Direction and messages from the administration are often not clear or consistent
- Lack of follow through from administration
- Lack of trust between the faculty and the district
- Morale among teachers is low – teachers stressed
- Not clear as to “who runs what” among administrators
- Poor support for the new literacy program
- Teacher training and support is often “one size fits all” and needs to be differentiated and focused upon subject, age level, grade level needs
- Teachers do not believe their views/ideas are valued

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Can bring people together, can resolve contract issues
- Can lead the Board in understanding its governance role and the superintendent’s role in administration and education leadership
- Can provide clear direction and coordination to administrators
- Collaborative leader who will work together with faculty, motivate them and solve problems together
- Instructional leader – someone who will place academics as the number one priority
- Understands the needs of early elementary school grades’ programs
- Values teachers
- Will demonstrate pride in the District
- Will engage teachers in defining and providing meaningful professional development

- Will stand up to the Board

SUPPORT STAFF

STRENGTHS

- District reputation is strong and has been for years
- Strong academics, arts, and athletic programs
- Strong special education department
- The District mirrors the education one would expect from a private school

CHALLENGES/ISSUES/CONCERNS

- Administrators not always clear as to their decision making authority
- Board and superintendent need to communicate better – they fail to explain things
- Low morale among teachers
- Negotiations – not timely, district office staff not often on the same page
- Pressure and competition may lead to high incidence of drug use
- Too much pressure placed on students and teachers to achieve

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Charismatic
- Compassionate
- Educator – someone who has been a teacher
- Knows how to make people feel good about their work and coming to work
- Patient person who has a strong backbone
- Strong public speaker
- Strong understanding of the finances and budgeting needs
- Team builder

STUDENTS

STRENGTHS

- Communication – Google classroom, emails
- Good variety of academic offerings
- Faculty and staff very approachable

CHALLENGE/ISSUES/CONCERNS

- Drug problems need to be addressed – drugs off campus
- Education can be better – what drugs can do to your body

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Visible

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

STRENGTHS

- Excellent guidance department for top students
- Private school environment – a lot of enrichment
- Science 21 program
- Special Education Department
- Strong athletics, music and theater
- Variety of offerings for students

CHALLENGES/ISSUES/CONCERNS

- Atmosphere for teachers needs to be more supportive
- Budget – would like to see a 5 year plan
- Class size going up, funding going down
- Communication - lack of marketing positives – information not communicated
- Difficulty of maintaining academic excellence in tax cap environment – no one wants to cut anything – “like what we have”
- District seems to be “late implementers” of state of the art educational practices
- Empty nesters moving out, families moving in
- High stress involvement – social and emotional needs of whole child - need to provide services in proactive manner
- Increasing enrollment – no plan to handle potential issue
- More students identified as “different learners” – need staff development – plan for district
- This parent body is used to seeing metrics, expect the same from the District

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

- Firm hand – can back up principals
- Needs to understand the Rye culture
- Salesperson for the District
- Social media savvy approach – being able to communicate in ways people will see it
- Successful in small district
- Thinks about different learning styles
- Wants to meet with parents, face to face

Online Superintendent Profile Survey Results

The Superintendent Profile survey was completed by 209 stakeholders. Over two-thirds of respondents were parents (74 percent). Thirteen percent were teachers. The rest were students, community members, administrators, and support staff.

Stakeholder Group

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--|------------|--------------|
| Administrator | 5 | 2.4 |
| Community Member without Children in Rye Schools | 8 | 3.8 |
| Parent with Children Attending Schools in the District | 155 | 74.2 |
| Support Staff | 4 | 1.9 |
| Student | 9 | 4.3 |
| Teacher | 28 | 13.4 |
| Total | 209 | 100.0 |

Percentages may not add to one hundred percent due to rounding.

The top-rated characteristics respondents selected for a superintendent were:

- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (M)
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)
- Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (VV)
- Provide meaningful guidance for systematic and comprehensive district-wide curriculum, instructional services, assessment programs, and professional development. (IL)
- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. (CC)

Percentages of respondents overall who selected each item, as well as percentages by stakeholder group, are given in the tables on the following pages. Benchmark results from over one hundred and twenty comparable districts, incorporating the ranking of over sixty thousand stakeholders, are also provided in the table to allow for a comparison of results to national norms.

In addition, differences were examined for statistical and practical significance to determine whether the mean scores by stakeholder group differed. Results indicate that, for many items,

the various stakeholders were in agreement. On the other hand, there were several items that certain stakeholders valued more than others.

- Parents were significantly more likely than teachers to choose the Vision & Values item “Promote high expectations for all students and personnel.”
- Parents were significantly more likely than teachers to choose the Instructional Leadership item “Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations.”
- Teachers were significantly more likely than parents to choose the Community Engagement item “Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life.”
- Teachers were significantly more likely than community members, parents, and students to choose the Communication & Collaboration item “Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators.”
- Parents were significantly more likely than teachers to choose the Management item “Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District.”

Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)

| Number indicates rank order by overall results | | National HYA Benchmark | ALL (209) | Admin. (5) | Comm. (8) | Parent (155) | S.S. (4) | Student (9) | Teacher (28) |
|--|---|------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|----------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 | Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. | 33% | 52% | 20% | 13% | 57% | 25% | 56% | 46% |
| 2 | Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. | 45% | 50% | 20% | 13% | 50% | 100% | 44% | 57% |
| 3 | Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. | 39% | 45% | 60% | 13% | 50% | 25% | 11% | 39% |
| 4 | Provide meaningful guidance for systematic and comprehensive district-wide curriculum, instructional services, assessment programs, and professional development. | 27% | 42% | 0% | 50% | 43% | 0% | 33% | 50% |
| 5 | Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. | 40% | 40% | 60% | 25% | 32% | 75% | 11% | 86% |
| 6 | Identify, confront, and resolve issues and concerns in a timely manner. | 31% | 38% | 20% | 25% | 36% | 75% | 22% | 54% |
| 7 | Promote high expectations for all students and personnel. | 34% | 36% | 40% | 13% | 41% | 50% | 44% | 11% |
| 8 | Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations. | 33% | 35% | 0% | 38% | 43% | 0% | 22% | 4% |
| 9 | Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District. | 30% | 34% | 20% | 38% | 39% | 25% | 22% | 11% |
| 10 | Align budgets, long-range plans, and operational procedures with the District's vision, mission, and goals. | 24% | 31% | 20% | 25% | 36% | 0% | 33% | 11% |
| 11 | Hold a deep understanding of the teaching/learning process and of the importance of educational technology. | 35% | 31% | 40% | 13% | 32% | 25% | 44% | 29% |
| 12 | Strive for continuous improvement in all areas of the District. | 31% | 29% | 20% | 13% | 31% | 50% | 56% | 14% |

| | | | | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Key | VV-Vision & Values | IL-Instructional Leadership | CE- Community Engagement | CC- Communication & Collaboration | M-Management |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------|

Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)

| Number indicates rank order by overall results | | National HYA Benchmark | ALL (209) | Admin. (5) | Comm. (8) | Parent (155) | S.S. (4) | Student (9) | Teacher (28) |
|--|---|------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|----------|-------------|--------------|
| 13 | Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life. | 33% | 29% | 20% | 25% | 24% | 50% | 22% | 57% |
| 14 | Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner. | 31% | 28% | 40% | 25% | 25% | 75% | 22% | 43% |
| 15 | Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments. | 30% | 27% | 0% | 13% | 31% | 0% | 22% | 18% |
| 16 | Encourage a sense of shared responsibility among all stakeholders regarding success in student learning. | 33% | 25% | 40% | 13% | 26% | 0% | 11% | 29% |
| 17 | Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and in a variety of ways. | 27% | 22% | 20% | 38% | 18% | 50% | 22% | 36% |
| 18 | Be an effective manager of the District's day-to-day operations. | 21% | 21% | 0% | 0% | 21% | 25% | 22% | 29% |
| 19 | Seek a high level of engagement with principals and other school-site leaders. | 21% | 19% | 40% | 13% | 21% | 0% | 11% | 11% |
| 20 | Guide the operation and maintenance of school facilities to ensure secure, safe, and clean school environments that support learning. | 22% | 19% | 0% | 0% | 19% | 25% | 11% | 25% |
| 21 | Involve appropriate stakeholders in the decision-making process. | 23% | 17% | 40% | 13% | 14% | 25% | 22% | 25% |
| 22 | Utilize student achievement data to drive the District's instructional decision-making. | 17% | 15% | 20% | 13% | 19% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| 23 | Maintain positive and collaborative working relationships with the school board and its members. | 25% | 15% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 50% | 11% | 7% |
| 24 | Act in accordance with the District's mission, vision, and core beliefs. | 27% | 15% | 0% | 13% | 17% | 25% | 0% | 11% |
| 25 | Develop strong relationships with constituents, local government, area businesses, media, and community partners. | 22% | 8% | 20% | 13% | 8% | 0% | 0% | 7% |

| | | | | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Key | VV-Vision & Values | IL-Instructional Leadership | CE- Community Engagement | CC- Communication & Collaboration | M-Management |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------|



DRAFT FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

***RYE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS
Superintendent of Schools***

After seeking input from its Board members, parents, staff, students and the community via focus groups, interviews, and an online survey, the Rye City School District Board of Education seeks a strong educational leader with the following characteristics:

A knowledgeable and visionary educator who:

- Supports and coaches staff in their efforts to coordinate and explore programming opportunities for all students
- Is innovative in exploring and implementing programs designed to meet the needs of all students

A collaborative and engaging communicator who:

- Builds and engenders respect through collaborative interactions with staff, parents and community members
- Is visible throughout the District and actively engaged in the community
- Invests time and energy in building relationships with all stakeholder groups
- Interacts in an approachable and authentic manner with all stakeholders
- Builds a strong leadership team by valuing the contributions of each individual and encouraging cooperation between Central Office and the administrators
- Can motivate and engage staff
- Has excellent listening skills, can set goals and effectively articulate a shared vision
- Has a sense of humor

The successful candidate will:

- Be certified as a superintendent, or capable of gaining certification, in New York State
- Make a long term commitment to the District
- Have experience as an accomplished administrator, preferably at the superintendent level and preferably in New York
- Have a doctorate