

## **A Special Message from the Killingly Board of Education**

The Board of Education appreciates the participation of Killingly students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents and citizens in the recent superintendent search focus groups and online survey. These data collecting activities produced a wealth of useful information which has been compiled into a comprehensive report. The report has been reviewed by the Board and will be used as a framework for the selection process. You are invited to read the final report prepared by the search consultants by clicking on the link below. Again, thank you for participating in the process.

Alexis Rich  
Killingly Board of Education Chairperson

# **Killingly Public Schools Community Assessment Report**

Presented to the Board of Education

**January 27, 2012**

By C.E.S Executive Search Consultants Kaye Griffin and Tom Jokubaitis

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The Killingly Board of Education has begun its search for a new superintendent of schools to succeed Dr. William Silver. It is expected that the new superintendent will begin his/her duties for the Killingly Public schools on or about July 1, 2012.

The election of a school superintendent is a state legislated responsibility of the Board of Education. The Board's goal is to find the most qualified person whose background and personal attributes best match the needs and expectations of the school district and the Killingly community. The Killingly Board of Education believes that assessing the school and community opinion about desirable leadership attributes for a new superintendent will enable the development of a reliable profile to assist in the recruitment and selection of a new superintendent of schools. To that end, the Board of Education has employed the services of Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.) Executive Search consultants Dr. Kaye Griffin and Tom Jokubaitis to conduct focus groups in the schools and community to develop this profile and to facilitate the search and selection process.

In conducting the focus group session, C.E.S. consultants uses a structured framework of questions for each constituent group. The intent of the framework is to seek opinions from each focus group about what they perceive to be the most desirable skills, qualifications, background of experiences and personal qualities in the next educational leader for the Killingly Public schools. Seven focus group sessions were conducted on January 12, 2012 for the following groups: (1) central office personnel; (2) high school students; (3) school administrators; (4) teachers, two sessions; and, (5) parents and community members, two sessions.

Each focus group began with introductions and clarification of the purposes of the focus groups and the processes to be used in soliciting participant opinions. Consultants indicated they were there to listen to the opinions of the various groups. Each focus group used the guiding questions to frame their responses for the consultants. Responses were recorded and participants were asked to verify the accuracy of the record of responses to each question before moving on to the next question. Questions focused on six areas: *Professional Experience, Prior success, Educational Background, Special Knowledge, Personal Characteristics, and Final Thoughts*. The record of opinions for each group is appended (note: all administrator groups are consolidated into one record as are the teacher groups – this was done so small groups would not be isolated).

In addition to the focus group sessions, an on-line survey was accessible to all Killingly residents and school employees from December 23, 2011 through January 13, 2012. The on-line survey utilized similar questions as those included in the focus group question framework. The results of the on-line survey and focus group results are blended in determining the recommended list of priority attributes for a new superintendent of schools.

This report represents a composite of the Killingly community's vision of its next superintendent of schools. Upon review and acceptance of this report by the Killingly Board of Education, it will be posted on the district web site. The profile of the "ideal" superintendent profiled in this report will serve as

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essential criteria for the Board of Educations as it focuses on the recruitment and selection of a new superintendent of schools.

### Common Areas of Interest to Stakeholders

Through the focus group sessions conducted on January 12, 2012 and the on-line survey posted on the website from January 6-13, 2012, a total of one hundred, ninety-three (193) persons contributed the following data for Board of Education consideration. The consultants were impressed by the thoughtfulness and insight provided by various focus group participants. While the focus group record (appended) summarizes the thoughts and opinions of the various groups, it does not adequately capture the rich conversation surrounding many of the themes/issues raised for discussion by the individual groups.

Despite the fact that some people had voiced concern about difficulty in locating the on-line survey on the district web site, the number of responses is at or above that experienced in other school districts. The make-up of on-line respondents is as follows:

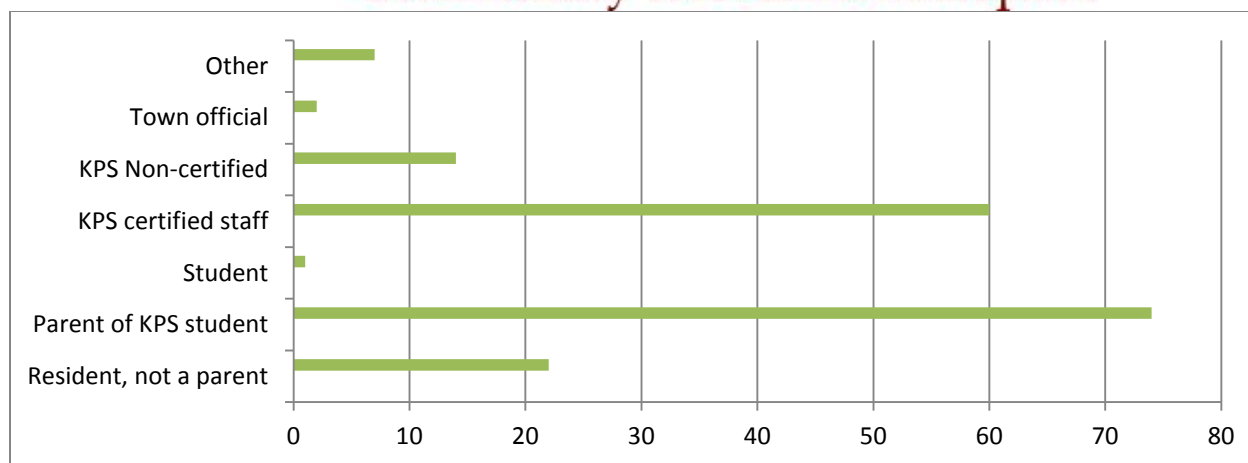
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<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
Resident, not a parent	22	14.5%
Parent of a KPS student	74	48.7%
Student	1	0.7%
KPS Certified Staff	60	39.5%
KPS non-certified staff	14	9.2%
Town Official	2	1.3%
Other	7	
<b><sup>1</sup>Total Respondents:</b>	<b>152</b>	

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Some respondents checked more than one category.

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## **Professional Experience**

### ***Q. - What experience should the next superintendent of the Killingly Public Schools have in his/her background?***

Focus group participants indicated that the school district and community would benefit by having a person with some prior superintendent experience, or significant central office experience. The general sentiment of all groups is that the district has a number of significant issues that need to be addressed and experience with a district perspective and scope of responsibility would enable their resolution more efficiently and effectively. A person with a good “business” sense and good budget skills would resonate well with constituents. The successful candidate should be skilled at getting to know the community and how town government works.

Focus group participants also indicated that the successful candidate should have a strong educational background; he/she should have a deep understanding of leading, managing, and teaching at the school level. Teacher experience, knowledge of special education programs and services, and knowledge of contemporary curriculum issues would enable the new superintendent to effectively lead the school district.

Various groups offered opinions that, while not mentioned often, provide insight into the type of person most would like to have as an educational leader. These desirable attributes would have the person be a visionary, a creative problem solver, someone who uses data as a basis for decision making, and a person who can create a school-community culture of continuous improvement.

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### Online Survey Results

Response Choices	Number of responses	Percentage Response
Superintendent of Schools	75	49.3%
School Principal	92	60.5%
Classroom Teacher	105	69.1%
Central Office Administrator	50	32.9%
Central office Supervisor	49	32.2%
Private Sector Management/Leadership	44	28.9%

The on-line survey results are similar to the opinions expressed in the focus groups. There is a preference for someone who has served in the role of superintendent of schools. However, it also seems that experience as a central office administrator would also be acceptable. It is clear that survey respondents consider a breadth of educational experience at various levels is important. This echoes the focus group participant feelings that the successful candidate should have a good perspective of the work associated with teaching and leading at the school level.

### Recommended selection criteria:

- 1. Superintendent experience or significant experience at the central office level.*
- 2. Experience as a teacher and school-level administrator.*

### Prior Success

**Q. - What kind of achievement record do you believe the new superintendent should be able to demonstrate?**

Killingly is looking for a superintendent who has demonstrated an ability to help a school district raise student achievement scores. This should be accomplished in a context of a positive learning environment and with a collaborative/cooperative/ team building leadership style. The successful candidate should have the ability to help schools who may be at risk (Annual Yearly Progress – AYP) turn around to become more successful. This would be aided by a clear vision for the school district and an understanding of the changes needed for this to happen as well as the processes for enabling change to result from the effort. The ability to build on district strengths while maintaining a proactive and sustained focus on needs are key strengths needed for success.

Budget development and management skill is a recurrent theme expressed by each focus group and often reiterated for several questions within each focus group as participants went through the framework of questions. Essential to this area is an ability to develop a climate of trust in the community and schools with all stakeholders/constituents.

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The successful candidate should provide evidence of having well-developed interpersonal skills. Respect for all constituents and sensitivity to their status is very important. This requires the new superintendent to be an excellent communicator with a clear vision for the school district. The candidate should have a leadership presence without giving an appearance of condescending, and have high personal standards for self and others with clear accountability standards.

The new superintendent should have the ability to develop a cohesive and effective school district organization where functions, roles and responsibilities are defined from the Board of Education level through the rest of the organization to achieve established district goals. A clear vision is needed to guide this work and effective program implementations and evaluation skills are needed to measure progress toward achieving district goals.

### On-line Survey Results

Response Choices	Number of Responses	Percentage Response
Raising student achievement	67	44.1%
Creating a positive learning environment	74	48.7%
Creating a positive school/district culture	90	59.2%
Improving organizational productivity	32	21.1%
Creating a climate of trust in the community	67	44.1%
Creating a climate of trust with public officials	15	9.9%
Improving professional development programs	16	10.5%
Improving supervision and evaluation programs	29	19.1%
Recruitment and retention of high quality personnel	45	29.6%
Strategic planning	20	13.2%
Leading school reform efforts	17	11.2%

On-line survey respondents focused on climate/culture issues as necessary prior achievements as well as raising student achievement. The new superintendent should be able to produce evidence that the climate for learning in his/her prior district was positive as a result of their work. As with the focus groups, on-line respondents indicate that raising student achievement had to be a priority skill/ability of the new superintendent of schools.

### Recommended selection criteria:

3. **A record of raising student achievement.**
4. **Building positive relationships in a climate of trust.**
5. **Ability to develop a cohesive, effective school district organization.**

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### Educational Background

#### **Q. – What kind of educational background would you prefer to see in the new superintendent?**

Most focus group participants consider the experience, qualifications and personal characteristics of the candidates for the Killingly superintendent position to be more important considerations than having a doctorate degree. Some participants prefer the doctoral degree or enrollment in a program to achieve it as important. Some would also like to ensure that some graduate coursework in school finance or some business background as desirable.

#### On-Line Survey Results

<b>Response Choices</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percentage Response</b>
Doctoral degree	34	22.4%
Advanced degree (beyond MA/MS)	98	64.5%
MBA or business course work	20	13.2%

On-line survey respondents mirrored the sentiment of focus group participants in that the doctorate degree is not a critical factor in the selection process for a new superintendent of schools.

#### Recommended selection criteria:

- 6. A doctorate degree is a preferred, but not a necessary qualification for the new superintendent of schools; however, a candidate's background and personal qualities are considered to be more important factors for consideration in the selection process.**

### Special Knowledge

#### **Q. – Given your understanding of the Killingly Public schools community, what personal expertise do you believe would benefit the new superintendent?**

The budget development and management theme was elaborated upon by focus group participants with this question. The ability to streamline and improve what participants viewed as a contentious budget development process is necessary to improve public relations and support for school initiatives. Transparency, effective, and clear communication of budget issues to a variety of constituents is needed to improve understanding of the budget. Creative thinking is needed to provide resources for priority goals with constrained fiscal resources.

Building positive interpersonal relationships and trust is fundamental for the successful candidate to realize success with all other issues confronting the school district. This will require an effort to be visible in the schools and at community functions, involvement in student activities, strong communication

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skills, and understanding of the community. Recognizing and acknowledging the accomplishments of students and staff are important to focus group participants. Being able to effectively resolve conflicts in a professional and timely manner will contribute to positive interpersonal relationships.

The new superintendent needs to understand and have an ability to be an effective spokesperson for the district and its students, advocating for the needs of the district locally, at the state and federal levels. Again, the need for effective communication skills surfaces as a significant attribute for the successful candidate. Other issues of importance to some of the focus group participants include upkeep of facilities, reconfiguration of elementary schools, strong personnel management, school governance and policy development.

### On-Line Survey Results

<b>Response Choices</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percentage Response</b>
Facilities management	24	15.8%
Negotiations and personnel	21	13.8%
Faculty relations and development	65	42.8%
Policy and governance	16	10.5%
Public relations	46	30.3%
Curriculum and instruction	66	43.4%
Student activities	31	20.4%
Special education	27	17.8%
Budget development	63	41.4%
Fiscal management	63	41.4%
Communications	48	31.6%

On-line survey respondents identified similar knowledge and skill requirements for the new superintendent as the focus groups. Dominant themes are knowledge of curriculum and instruction, budget development and management, and faculty relations, including development of employee skills/abilities.

### Recommended selection criteria:

- 7. Knowledge of budget development and fiscal management, including transparent and clear communication of budget information to all constituents. Killingly citizens would like the new superintendent to have good business sense.**
- 8. Knowledge and skill in faculty relations and development, including building effective teams, engaging in conflict resolution, expressing appreciation for accomplishments, building trust, and managing personnel.**
- 9. Visibility in the schools and community, including being engaged in Killingly community activities to gain a good understanding of the community and its people. Becomes known**

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by students, parents, and community members by becoming integrally involved in school and community life.

**10. Strong communication skills with the ability to speak effectively to a variety of audiences; possess good presentation skills and a willingness to advocate for the school district at the local, state and federal levels.**

**11. Demonstrates expertise and leadership while facilitating the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the district's curricula and instructional programs.**

### Personal Characteristics

#### **Q – What personal characteristics best define your ideal superintendent?**

Focus group participants had much to say about the personal characteristic desired in a new superintendent of schools. Foremost in their thoughts is the willingness and ease to which the superintendent will engage in the life of the community, becoming engaged in community and school activities, being visible and known by students, staff, parents and the community as more than just a name and face, but as a person who is genuinely interested in them and the community. This needs to be a person who really wants to work here and come to understand and respect the community and its people. The new superintendent must be outgoing, friendly and approachable with a good sense of humor. The new superintendent needs to make an effort to get to know people; students, staff, parents, community leaders, and citizens. Consistency in dealing with people in a professional manner is expected.

Communication skills again surfaces as a dominant theme. Effective communication in this sense refers to the context of the community. The new superintendent needs to first understand the community and develop effective communication strategies for various constituent groups, and then reach out to engage the community in developing a shared vision of excellence. Keeping everyone informed and being transparent is expected. The new superintendent can reach out and find creative ways to build the school district.

The new superintendent needs to be a good problem solver, knowing when and how to engage others in the process. He/she needs to be thoughtful, reflective and not quick to judgment. Building the capacity of the administrative team to help realize the district vision through guidance and mentoring would be welcome. Confidence in the ability of the administrative team to carry out their responsibilities with accountability and not micro-manage is expected. The new superintendent is a good motivator and can align efforts of school personnel and stakeholders toward achieving district goals; maintains a focus on the priority goals and provides time for results to occur and be evaluated.

Basic expectations for a new superintendent include high ethical standards, trustworthiness, strength of convictions, and an ability to respond professionally and capably under pressure. He/she is empathetic to the needs of employees and maintains balance in his/her personal life. The person should be willing to make a long-term commitment to the school district.

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### Recommended selection criteria:

12. Ethical and trustworthy; approachable and friendly; communicates effectively with all constituents/stakeholders.
13. A good problem solver and decision maker; thoughtful, reflective, not quick to judge.
14. Has a strong desire to work in Killingly with its students, parents, community, and town officials.

### Residency requirement:

**Q. – Do you think the new superintendent should reside in Killingly?**

The on-line survey posed this question. The issue was also raised in the two parent-community focus groups as well. There was a divided opinion about the residency issue in the focus groups and that appears to be the case with the on-line survey respondents as well, although there was a substantial opinion that it was unimportant as a selection criterion or expectation for the new superintendent of schools.

### On-Line Survey Results

<b>Response Choices</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Percentage Response</b>
Yes	45	29.6%
No	6	3.9%
Unimportant	101	66.4%

### Recommended selection criteria:

15. It is not necessary that the new superintendent of schools reside in the Town of Killingly, although that would resonate well with a large segment of the community. It is important that the new superintendent is committed to being actively engaged in the life of the community and becomes well-known by its citizens.

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### **Final Thoughts:**

Several issues/concerns were raised about past decisions that may require revisiting or become future priority needs of the district. These are presented as areas that may be considered in the context of discussion about future goals.

1. The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools need to be more clearly aligned to promote an effective partnership that leads the school district toward realization of a shared vision for improvement.
2. The district needs a school-community shared vision for the future; the district needs to build programs to realize that vision with student achievement at its core.
3. Standards for the high school diploma and the grading policy need to be reassessed; look to the community college for feedback and support in the reassessment.
4. Student diversity and their learning needs are changing (increasing); teachers need professional development and support in meeting these needs.
5. Cost-benefit analyses need to be created for competing priorities in the school budget, especially for new initiatives. There is a perception that the laptop program in the high school needs to be reassessed as it may not have been approved if such a cost-benefit analysis practice were in place.
6. There is sentiment supporting the idea that involving Killingly school community members and personnel in the superintendent search process at the finalist(s) stage would be desirable.

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### Appendix

Summary of Comments from Focus Group Participants and Online Survey Respondents

#### **Administrators**

##### Background experiences:

- Prior superintendent experience; at least central office experience.
- Need a leader with a strong educational background.
- Leadership at the state and regional levels.
- Teacher and school administrative experience.
- Understanding of special education; need to bring out-placements back; understand special education law and school law; able to build capacity for programs in the school district.
- Curriculum development expertise; knows cutting edge issues, progressive.
- Visionary; holds people accountable but provides support to implement programs; hands on working with the administrative team; visible in school buildings; involved and engaged.

##### Achievement record:

- Experience in budget development & management; strong on these areas.
- Focuses on student achievement results.
- Knows how to create “turn-around schools” (AYP); knows how to help school improvement efforts to increase student achievement.
- Positive track record with student success.
- Team builder; creates a positive team culture; collaboration skills; analyzes and synthesizes various needs to maintain unity of the administrative team around a common agenda; brings a common vision to the district
- Has high personal performance standards; hold others accountable.
- Good relationships with bargaining units and within the community,
- Clear, transparent communicator.
- Strong at supervision and evaluation.
- Financial management; works in unison with the BOE and town agencies; creates cohesive groups from diverse opinions to move forward.

##### Educational background:

- Qualifications, experience and personal characteristics are more important than the doctorate degree.
- Someone regarded as a professional educator, understands the perspectives of various school personnel.

##### Special knowledge:

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- Understands and can connect with the various groups that comprise the demographics of the community; strong communications skills.
- Ability to build constructive relationships; trust and confidence with all constituents; a people person.
- Master at conflict resolution; can build a protocol for resolving issues in a timely manner.
- Build and maintain high performing teams.
- Knows adolescent development; initiates activities that meet the needs of students at this level.
- Thinks outside the box in developing more program options for students; understands the social-emotional needs of this group.
- Recognizes and expresses appreciation for student and staff accomplishments.
- Budget skills.

### Personal characteristics:

- Thoughtful, not quick to judge.
- Ethical.
- Has a good sense of humor.
- Wise; consistent in holding all accountable; promotes professional growth; builds the skills of team members; exposes the administrative team to a broad array of leadership issues/tasks/problems with a mentor relationship.
- Becomes a partner with administrators in problem solving; supportive of people; very approachable with professional and personal issues; handles issues privately with integrity and dignity when they occur.
- Good communicator; keeps everyone in the information loop.
- Does not exert positional power; understands the operational demands of the admin. team and has confidence in their work.
- Strong interpersonal skills.

### Final thoughts:

- The new superintendent will be involved in planning for school reconfiguration; a vacant building now exists and a decision will need to be made about its future use.
- The superintendent should have a commitment to technology.
- The superintendent will need to help develop a vision of high expectations in the community for its schools and students.
- The issue of communicating budget issues and needs and coalescing support is a continuing challenge.
- Roles and responsibilities for effective school governance need to be defined for the superintendent and board of education.

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### Teachers

#### **Background experience:**

- Experience as a superintendent opinions varied; most preferred this although significant central office experience may suffice.
- Ability to work alongside the community; establishes relationships with town officials and the community.
- Ability to get to know and understand the multitude of issues facing families and students in this community. Budget.
- Experience as a teacher and building administrator; retains those perspectives; an educator.

#### **Achievement record:**

- Is able to establish a clear vision
- Is able to turnaround a mismanaged district; new ideas are added without anything coming off the plate; various factions have their own agendas; need to follow-through on initiatives through implementation and evaluation; need a more effective change process and focus.
- Can create a climate of trust among various professional and community factions; ability to respond to questions directly and effectively; creates a climate of trust.
- Strong at supervision and evaluation of program implementation; hold people accountable to follow-through on initiatives/issues.
- Has a leadership presence that prompts trust; an ability to coalesce people to support school district budgets; takes control of schools to help manage discipline issues; engages self and others in planning to resolve these problems/issues.
- Visible in the schools and community; joins civic organizations.
- Communicates with bargaining units; builds relationships; is a regular presence at schools; communicates effectively, updating staff on issues – people want to be listened to and heard; interacts with staff and students.

#### **Educational background:**

- Degree is not as important as experiences and a track record of success; some business background would be helpful; has a sense of building a culture of continuous improvement.

#### **Special knowledge:**

- Developing and managing budgets; ability to streamline and improve what has become a contentious process; can structure the budget to increase community understanding and trust.
- Ability to communicate effectively with all community constituents.
- Facility management and upkeep; need a proactive plan to maintain buildings; need to decide what to do with an empty building.
- Public relations; building trust and confidence within the community; interacts effectively within the community.

#### **Personal characteristics:**

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- Strong ethical values; good communicator; friendly and approachable; involved in the community.
- On top of state and federal legislation.
- Engages the community constructively in vision planning and gaining support for schools.
- Can reach out and find creative ways to build the school district – Brooklyn students – school choice.
- Has a vision of excellence for the district.
- Interacts effectively with teacher as well as community members; addresses people as peers.

### **Final thoughts:**

- Committed to the district for the long-term; continuity of leadership is needed.
- The needs of students are increasing and becoming more diverse, placing more demands on teachers to respond effectively; teachers need more support; administrators and teachers need to engage in conversations about what is needed to meet student needs.

## **Students**

### **Background experiences:**

- Experience as a principal or supervisor
- Superintendent experience would be good but it is not necessary
- Knows government operations – the way the town works.
- Needs to be visible in the schools; knows students.

### **Achievement record:**

- Creates positive learning environments; likes kids
- Budget development and management.
- Positive, consistent leadership.
- Turning around a school district.
- Getting along well with all personnel; good interpersonal skills; a good team member.

### **Educational background:**

- Doctorate degree would be nice but it is not necessary; success record is more important; credentials are substantiated through actions.

### **Special knowledge:**

- Developing and managing a budget.
- Faculty relations – need to be on the same page.
- Needs to be involved in student affairs.
- Public relations; need to understand public perceptions about the schools and district operations.
- Advocate for sports programs; values sport; won't cut sports.

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- Reaches out to people in schools; attends events.

### **Personal characteristics:**

- Visible; has to be known by students.
- Involved in the community; news articles to report activities.
- Friendly and approachable, not intimidating; outgoing; makes an effort to get to know students.
- Accepting of students opinions; takes time to listen to students.
- Sense of humor – can laugh with students.
- Not aloof – leadership presence; honest; good decision making skills; good judgment.
- Evidence of good decisions and problem solving skills.

### **Final thoughts:**

- Prepares budgets that support school needs and are accepted by the community.
- Open discussion about the future of the school district; don't allow rumors to be the only information source.
- What is the K-12 success record of the candidate? Needs to demonstrate an ability to meet the needs of all students.
- How does the candidate respond under pressure or stress? Needs to have an ability to stand by convictions.
- Understands contemporary family dynamics.

## **Parents and Community (Session #1)**

### **Background experiences:**

- Superintendent experience is not necessary; personal qualities such as drive and concern about students are more important.
- Understands how private sector business works; some business management type of experience would be helpful.
- A leader who will focus on the life experience skills of students; need to help motivate students; bring faculty together to help motivate students and improve their learning; a strong leader who can coalesce people around issues.
- Places importance on technology to serve learning and learners.
- Experience working with students.
- Ability to think out of the box.
- Knows various school district levels; understands teaching and administration at the school level.
- Pushes for continuous improvement.
- Uses data to inform decisions; follows-through for results.

### **Achievement record:**

- Ability to build on strengths and is proactive with improvement efforts.

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- Ability to work in areas most in need of improvement - people and programs; knows change strategies; need all employees and students to take responsibility – hold them accountable; works with high achievers; provide recognition for work well-done (students and staff); has an ability to delegate.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities; accountability relationships.
- Improves the quality of new personnel orientation programs to ensure productive teaching and improved learning.
- Understands how to make change effectively; put the right people in the right job.
- Ability to develop and manage the budget effectively; keeps a focus on all kids with the budget; balance needs and resources.

### **Educational background:**

- The degree is not as important as successful experience; experience in business is helpful; has leadership training in his/her background.
- Document successful work and leadership experience.
- We do not need a politician; we need someone who can break through a culture of divisiveness and build coalitions to help students.

### **Special knowledge:**

- Communicates effectively with all constituents; timely communications – has a communications plan; open and transparent.
- Budget development and management; thinks creatively so needs can better match limited resources; ability to build coalitions for greater support; maintains quality.
- Knows the community; understands the financial situation of Killingly citizens.
- Knows how to advocate for Killingly at the state level.

### **Personal characteristic:**

- Has to know and understand this area of the state; ideally from the area.
- Visible schools and community; actively participates in school and community activities.
- Transparent in communication.
- Commitment to the community; becomes a part of community life.
- There is some sentiment expressed for the superintendent to live in Killingly; others do not view this as important a consideration as being involved in the community.
- Builds an effective, cohesive leadership team with a shared vision for the future.
- A strong leader with an ability to motivate people to achieve district goals; has the strength of his/her convictions; gives idea time to realize results; stays focused on goals.

### **Final thoughts:**

- Make the finalist interviews open to the public.

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### Parents-Community (Session #2)

#### **Background experiences:**

- Has experience as a superintendent; central office experience may be sufficient.
- Has experience as a principal; needs and educational background; has worked up through the ranks.
- Strong financial background.
- Understands what it is to be a teacher in an academic classroom.
- Not necessary to have private business experience; good to have a business sense.
- Knows the relationship between the school and town budget.

#### **Achievement record:**

- Can turnaround a mismanaged school district; there is a community perception that the district is not managed efficiently or effectively for the needs of the community.
- Building a climate of trust and respect in the community – with town government, staff, and with the BOE.
- Respect for people in the community, including teachers; can build positive interpersonal skills; give people a sense of efficacy.
- Sensitive to all constituents and their status.
- Collaborative/cooperative leadership style; not autocratic.
- Excellent communication skills; transparent with information; open and honest.
- Budget development and management.
- Good interpersonal skills; a people person; effective at personnel evaluation.

#### **Educational background:**

- Prefer a doctoral degree or someone who is enrolled in a doctoral program.
- Has some finance background in their academic work; there may be a need to evaluate the district accounting software to provide information enabling the effective monitoring and management of the budget.

#### **Special knowledge:**

- Recognizes how important the budget is in this community; ability to inform clearly about budget issues.
- Policy, governance, and public relations.
- Negotiations.
- Faculty relations.
- Has a good understanding of curriculum and instruction
- Strong personnel management skills.

#### **Personal characteristics:**

- Strong ethical values; good communicator; friendly and approachable; involved in the community.
- There is some sentiment that residency should be required; some sentiment it should be preferred but not absolute.

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- Actively engaged in town activities; an integral part of community life; visible in community activities.

### **Final thoughts:**

- The laptop program in the schools was not well conceived; was this the best expenditure of limited resources – need to do cost-benefit analysis when introducing new initiatives with competing priorities.
- BOE & superintendent need to define roles and responsibilities to form an effective governance team; communication and collaboration protocols need to be in place.
- District needs to establish a school-community shared vision of the future and build programs/procedures to realize that vision; focus on student performance at the core (e.g. the high school grading policy is an issue).
- Performance standards for the high school diploma need to be re-examined; work cooperatively with local higher education to set standards.