Monday, January 12, 2015
APS Employee Meeting
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Ryan Ray and Stan Paz, facilitators from Ray and Associates

1. What do you consider as the significant strengths of the school district?
   - That the district is able to educate many students effectively is always a positive and an accomplishment
   - Diversity and talent are the biggest strengths
   - We have a strong staff both at schools and in departments
   - Community schools with wrap-around services

2. What do you feel are the positives of the community?
   - Investment in the community - people care about APS and care about education
   - Invest with capital dollars and bonds
   - The community really participates in the process whenever they can
   - Dr. Winter has helped to reinvigorate the connections with the community

3. What are the three qualities you would like to see in a new superintendent?
   - Approachable, visible in community and schools
   - Good listener
   - Cannot hide behind his or her desk - needs to be an active participant
   - Collaborative, problem solver
   - Understands diversity - it must be celebrated, not tolerated
   - Concentration on the arts and extracurricular activities - need to make sure we have a balance between the core and the things that kids get excited about
   - Committed to increased parent involvement in the schools - particularly in secondary schools - doesn't come without monetary commitment
   - Need to be able to work with the state to garner enough funds necessary to actually make the district function - especially in light of decreasing revenue in the state

4. What is the management style you would like to see implemented by the new superintendent?
   - Collaborative, open door policy
   - Trusting
   - Schools have gone through having a lot of site control v. almost no control - would like to see it go back to more site management - trying to do everything one way doesn't work
   - Flexibility and open mindedness
   - Do they have to be a teacher? If they haven't been a teacher they need to have a lot of experience working with teachers - if they cannot feel the
support and buy in from the teachers then there will be a danger that we continue the divide between the classroom and City Center (APS Admin building)
  ○ May be better if they have been a teacher and moved up but not a requirement
  ○ Being an educator gives people credibility - if they aren't, then they have to build the credibility

5. What are the critical issues the new superintendent will face in this position?
   • Achievement gap is the number one obstacle
   • Size is our strength but it is also our biggest challenge - it is hard to initiate things on a large scale
   • Public confidence and able to address the lack of confidence in public schools
   • Teacher accountability - high stakes testing - everything that is being initiated in a way that teachers think is being done to them, feel like things are out of control
   • Teacher evaluations and negative morale
   • Teachers don’t feel empowered by the evaluation process
   • Principals feel strained
   • Concerns that school staff don’t have freedom to make decisions
   • Truancy - need fresh perspective and more resources
   • Poverty is huge - community schools and addressing the whole student is really important - data is important to drive where we go instructionally, but it doesn't drive what gets a kid to come to school - we have to address social needs
     ○ Health center, dental work, mental health needs, coordinators - community school really does make a difference - important to understand community services be based in the school
     ○ Helps get kids to stay in school when they have real challenges - enriches everyone
   • Transportation needs - have to transport kids to extracurricular activities
     ○ Poverty causing parents to work more than one job and not be available to provide transportation to get students to school, sports, extracurricular activities and back home
   • Nursing and behavioral health needs

6. Is there any other information you would like to share concerning the community, school or superintendent position that would impact the search process?
   • Should they be bilingual? Helpful but not a requirement - would be a bonus
     ○ Going beyond language being the lynchpin; really need to talk more about culture competence - understand poverty - understand affluence - understand where different people come from and how people speaking different languages impacts the way we do things is important
• Example - we place stakes in testing but we don't even test in the home language
  ○ Don't have to be bilingual but does need to be able to communicate with the community and understanding language helps that