

Monday, January 12, 2015

APS Employee Meeting

4:45 p.m.-5:45 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?
 - District recognizes the community is important and takes time and makes the effort to listen – The district doesn't always agree with what the community wants but does listen to what the community is saying
 - Constant analysis of needs for facilities and planning for implementation
 - Strong and intentional partnerships with the community to make sure APS is providing services through them that APS can't provide as a district
 - Strong dedicated teachers union providing professional development, resources and support to apply for national board certification
 - Diversity of students and diversity of programs - new schools of choice for students who may not fit into the traditional mold
 - Largest school district in the state

2. What do you feel are the positives of the community?
 - Diverse community - candidate needs to appreciate the diversity in the community - we are not homogenous in any way - in general there is a high level of tolerance and acceptance from everyone
 - College town - have both CNM and UNM - that makes partnerships better but good to have a college town because people can stay here - have options for people to be homegrown
 - Largest city in the state so what happens in Albuquerque really drives the success of the rest of the state

3. What are the three qualities you would like to see in a new superintendent?
 - Work with the union and collaborate - need to make sure that we can make all public schools better - need to make sure we are working together and not an adversarial relationship
 - Solid education background - someone that has a history in the classroom - leading the way with school reform, common core implementation - need to know the history of the district and the state, and the issues and the politics behind the issues
 - Superintendent has to be a practitioner – he or she has to have spent a significant amount of time in the classroom as a teacher - cannot have just spent two years in the classroom - cannot have a superintendent that left the classroom through an "upward demotion" where he or she became an administrator because he or she couldn't handle classroom management - person needs to understand what teachers face every day
 - Someone who is experienced in the dynamics of the community – he or she has to know and understand what's going on in the community

- Consider linguistic diversity as an asset
- Someone who sees our diversity as an asset
- Strong sense to move things that need to be changed - someone who is analytical, systemic approach to make change for the better - we cannot continue to do things just because it's the way things have been done in the past
- Person with vision based on research – We don't need to jump into something that is going to be short-lived achievement
- Need to have same code of ethics and same standards for all employees
- Person of personal integrity

4. What are the critical issues the new superintendent will face in this position?

- Recruitment and retention of employees at all levels, but especially in Special Education - Do we need to rethink the way we do Human Resources?
- Concern for the demoralization of teachers based on the issues that the teachers have had to deal with regarding testing and evaluation
- Acknowledgement of what the teachers and principals do for the success of the students
- Social issues - highest rate of suicide in the country is in New Mexico and Albuquerque has the highest rate of suicide in New Mexico, so Albuquerque literally has highest rate of suicide in the country
- Need to look at the whole student - if the student is not mentally present in the classroom - look at the whole child and be willing to put resources into those structures that help the whole child so we can make sure students have the ability to learn
- Truancy - need resources to be able to take what works district-wide - How do we scale things up?
- Social issues that are causing barriers to testing higher; causing lack of presence and mindfulness at school due to distractions and lack of resources
- We don't have control over things that are coming down from Santa Fe, so we need someone who can lead the district knowing there are morale issues - How do we help our leaders get through it and coach people to still be successful?
- Highest teen pregnancy rate in the nation
- Work with colleges of education on teacher prep programs so we know what types of teachers we need and how they should be endorsed - making sure teachers can teach the students we have

5. Is there any other information you would like to share concerning the community, school or superintendent position that would impact the search process?

- Very concerned about business model for education and don't think a CEO-type person would be good for the district - there is a big difference between education and business - students are not widgets, they cannot succeed on an assembly line
- Experience in education is essential
- Hire someone with a good heart

- Candidate does not need to be current superintendent - could be someone that hasn't been at the top somewhere else - don't want a superintendent that is obsessed with the test scores
- Passion for education and creativity; not obsessed with tests results: students remember teachers who touch their hearts and inspire them to learn
- Look for a candidate who has an affinity for this part of the country

6. Do you have questions regarding the search process?

- Transparency moving forward - when do we see who the candidates are that will receive information - public forum and interviews are week of March 22 or 23 at this point - that's when candidates will be public, the timeline is continually updated and confirmed
- March 13 is when the candidates are introduced to the BOE and the BOE decides who to interview. There also will be community forums with the candidates.
- Will candidates within APS be considered? Yes, submit nominations