

The Downingtown Area School District Superintendent Search Update

Monday, March 13, 2017

The interview phase of the search is well underway! The board has now completed first- and second-round interviews. The Board screened 33 applicants and selected 17 applicants for first-round screening interviews. At the conclusion of first-round interviews, the board selected seven candidates to advance to second-round interviews. Second-round interviews have concluded and the board has moved onto third-round interviews. Following third-round interviews, the board will determine if additional finalist interviews are needed, conduct a thorough background and reference check, and begin contract negotiations with the finalist candidate.

It is a very exciting time in the district and we thank everyone for their patience and support during this crucial process. We have been extremely pleased with the caliber of the candidates and are confident that we will be able to select an outstanding educational leader to guide the district and continue our strong tradition of excellence.

Friday, January 27, 2017

The superintendent search has reached the interview stage! The deadline for applications was January 1 and the Board got right to work screening the 33 applicants and is in the process of scheduling and conducting first-round interviews. At the conclusion of first-round interviews, the board will select the candidates who will advance to second-round interviews. We anticipate second round interviews will conclude in late February.

The Board is extremely appreciative of the staff and community's input and support during this very important process and thanks everyone who participated in one of the 15 focus groups or who emailed their input to the search team. It is from your input that the candidate criteria and interview questions have been developed.

Based on our progress thus far, the Board still anticipates that the search process will be completed by late winter/early spring and we will have a superintendent who can assume his or her responsibilities at the District on or near July 1, 2017.

Thursday, December 15, 2016

The Board is pleased to announce that the number of candidates seeking to be the next superintendent of the Downingtown Area School District has grown to 21 applicants. The Board will continue to receive additional applications over the next two weeks and up until the deadline for applications on January 1, 2017. We

anticipate receiving over 30 highly-qualified applications for the position, which is being advertised locally and nationally.

In preparation for selecting the candidates, the board has reviewed stakeholder input from the 15 focus groups conducted in September and October and is selecting interview questions and developing a candidate profile based on participant feedback.

The Board will begin the selection process by screening all applicants and selecting those who best match their criteria for first-round screening interviews. At the conclusion of first-round interviews, the board will select the candidates to advance to second-round interviews.

Based on our progress so far, the Board of School Directors hopes to have the search process completed by late winter/early spring in order to have a superintendent who can assume his or her responsibilities at the Downingtown Area School District on or near July 1, 2017.

The Board continues to be extremely appreciative of the staff and community's input and support during this very important process.

Thursday, November 10, 2016

The Superintendent Search is progressing nicely. Focus groups were held throughout the months of September and October with school administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, community leaders, township supervisors, senior citizens, high school students and the community at large. A total of 15 focus groups was conducted. A candidate profile is being developed along with a set of interview questions that center on the qualities and skills identified in the focus groups as being necessary for the next superintendent.

Anyone who was unable to attend one of the 15 focus groups but who would like to provide input to the School Board on the characteristics of the next superintendent may do so by emailing the answers to the following four questions to DASDSuptSearch@cciu.org:

1. Identify the qualities of a superior school leader;
2. Identify the strengths and skills essential for the next superintendent to demonstrate;
3. Identify key issues facing the district in the next five years that the superintendent will need to address; and,
4. Identify the obstacles to student achievement and the strategies the next superintendent will need to employ to overcome those obstacles.

Also, the Board is pleased to report that district has received much interest in the position and with almost two full months left before the application deadline has already received over a dozen applications from highly qualified school administrators from across the tristate area. After the application deadline of January 1, the Board will determine which of the applicants best meet the needs of the district. This process will include a paper screening of applicants and screening interviews followed by a series of in-depth interviews. The Board anticipates concluding the paper screening and beginning first-round screening interviews by February.

The Board is extremely appreciative of the staff and community's input and support during this very important process.

Tuesday, October 4, 2016

The superintendent search process is well underway! The timeline for the search has been established. The position is being advertised throughout the commonwealth and tristate area, a series of 15 focus groups have been scheduled and the Board has begun to receive applications.

Focus groups have been scheduled with school administrators, principals, teachers, support staff, parents, community and business leaders, high school students, senior citizens and the community at large. Please see the entire list with dates and locations below. To register for a focus group, please visit <http://www.cciu.org/DASD>.

At the focus groups, participants will be asked to address the following four statements:

1. Identify the qualities of a superior school leader.
2. Identify the strengths and skills essential for DASD's next superintendent to demonstrate.
3. Identify key issues facing the district in the next five years.
4. Identify obstacles to student achievement and strategies to overcome those obstacles.

Below is a list of the focus groups scheduled to date:

Date	Time	Focus Group	Location	
9/15/16	3:30-4:30 p.m.	Student Life Committee	LMS	Library
10/4/16	9:00-10:00 a.m.	Senior Leadership Team	Trestle Place	Ad Cab meeting/Superintendent Conference Room
10/4/16	4:00-5:00 p.m.	Secondary Professional Staff	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A & B
10/10/16	4:00-5:00	Support Staff	Trestle	Staff Development

16	p.m.		Place	Room A & B
10/10/16	4:00-5:00 p.m.	Support Staff/Teamster Union Leadership	Trestle Place	Superintendent Conference Room
10/10/16	4:00-5:00 p.m.	Parents at Large	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A & B
10/13/16	4:00-5:00 p.m.	Elementary Professional Staff	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A & B
10/14/16	8:30-9:30 a.m.	Central Office Administrators	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A
10/14/16	10:00-11:00 a.m.	Senior Citizens	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A
10/14/16	12:00-1:00 p.m.	HSA/PTO	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room B
10/14/16	3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Professional Staff/DAEA Union Leadership	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A
10/20/16	9:00-10:00 a.m.	Principals/ Assistant Principals	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A
10/24/16	4:00-5:00 p.m.	Staff at Large	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A & B
10/24/16	5:30-6:30 p.m.	Township Supervisors	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A & B
10/24/16	7:00-8:00 p.m.	Community at Large	Trestle Place	Staff Development Room A & B

Persons who are unable to attend a focus group but who would like to provide input may email their responses to the four prompts listed above to DASDSuptSearch@cciu.org. In your email, please indicate the focus group from the list above that you were unable to attend. All responses will be kept strictly confidential.

From the focus groups, the Board will develop a candidate profile and a set of interview questions that focus on the needs and challenges facing the district in the next five years.

The Board will conduct preliminary screenings of applicant resumes and credentials and begin to interview the most highly qualified candidates in January.

The Board of School Directors hopes to have the search process completed by late winter/early spring in order to have a superintendent who can assume his or her responsibilities at the Downingtown Area School District on July 1, 2017.

**Downingtown Area School District
SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH TIMELINE**

**Ultimate Goal of Process = New Superintendent should
start no later than July 1, 2017**

JULY/AUGUST – Board announces search

**AUGUST –
DECEMBER** Recruit qualified candidates
SEEK applications; targeted contacts made – Board &
consultant identifies candidates
CONFIDENTIAL DASD online candidate database established
for all application materials

Goals:

- Identify key Board issues and goals
- Identify DASD issues and problems
- Identify personal characteristics desired in new superintendent
- Begin communication process – set up a regular meeting cycle for DASD Board and CCIU
- Begin monthly update – use website blog; DASD newsletters and communications; DASD Board updates at every meeting; superintendent search website on DASD website

**SEPTEMBER –
DECEMBER** Seek broad-based district & community input

- Run community forums
- Conduct focus group meetings of targeted groups and key district stakeholders
- CCIU develops themes and begins the leadership profile
- CCIU develops questions for interview with Board input

**JANUARY –
FEBRUARY** Arrange and conduct interviews. Use focus group themes and input in the interviewing process.

**FEBRUARY –
MARCH** **Contract Negotiation**
Successful Candidate Appointed/Announced at the March Board Meeting
Entry Plan Developed
Candidate to start ASAP – No later than JULY 1, 2017.

**APRIL –
MAY** **Joint Development of Superintendent Entry Plan**
Transition Time

JULY 1, 2017 – New Superintendent Begins (or ASAP thereafter)

Monday, July 25, 2016

Dear DASD Parents, Students, Staff and Community:

As you are most likely aware, Superintendent Dr. Larry Mussoline has announced his retirement at the end of the 2016-17 school year. We are very grateful to Dr. Mussoline for his many years of service to the District and to education. Under his leadership, DASD continued its quest for excellence and has become one of the top ranked school districts in the state and in the nation.

The task of finding his successor is a daunting one, and we are grateful to Dr. Mussoline for providing us with ample notice. The Board is pleased to announce that the search for the next superintendent of schools for Downingtown Area School District is already underway. The Board has contracted with the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) to conduct the superintendent search. The CCIU also conducted the search that brought Dr. Mussoline to the District in 2009.

We have now met several times with the CCIU Search Team, headed by CCIU Executive Director Dr. Joseph J. O'Brien, and have begun the process to find the next superintendent of schools for the Downingtown Area School District.

Integral to the process will be communication with district stakeholders. The Board will provide timely updates on the search's progress on the District's website. In addition to providing information, the Board will also seek information by conducting a series of stakeholder focus groups in the fall. The dates for the focus groups are being scheduled for September and October 2016; more details and invitations will follow as the dates, times and locations become confirmed. From the focus groups, the Board will develop a candidate profile and an array of interview questions that center on the needs and challenges facing our district as identified by you, our stakeholders.

Information on focus group dates, times and locations will be published on the website in September.

The Board of School Directors hopes to have the search process completed by the spring in order to have a superintendent who can assume his or her responsibilities at Downingtown Area School District on July 1, 2017.

We look forward to working with the entire DASD community to bring an outstanding educational leader to serve as the District's next superintendent of

schools. Inquiries regarding the search process should be directed to Dr. Joseph O'Brien at DASDSuptSearch@cciu.org.

We wish Dr. Mussoline a happy, healthy and enjoyable retirement! He will be greatly missed by the students, staff, community and school board.

Sincerely on behalf of the DASD School Board,

Colleen Cranney, President
Downingtown Area School Board