



SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROFILE

Lima City School District

Lima, Ohio

February 27, 2025

Prepared for the Board of Education

By:
K-12 Business Consulting, Inc.
Deb Campbell, M. Ed.
Frank Forsthoefel, M. Ed.



Lima City School District

Superintendent Search Profile Report

February 28, 2025

This report presents the summary of findings from the Superintendent Search Profile focus group forums conducted by K-12 Business Consulting, Inc. (K-12), on February 24th, and from written search profiles submitted by numerous stakeholders. Once the Board of Education selected K-12 Business Consulting to conduct the superintendent search, a Search Profile Questionnaire document was created to solicit input from various stakeholders in the community. The Board and administration developed a broad list of community stakeholders to solicit input from as well as a general community-wide invitation to meet with K-12 staff members Deb Campbell and Frank Forsthoefer to discuss, in greater depth, the search factors and desired new superintendent characteristics. Any stakeholder who had a desire to express an opinion was welcome to submit a search profile and personally meet with K-12 consultants at the open focus group forums. The information obtained through these sources, and summarized below, should be used to assist the Board in identifying the desired characteristics of the superintendent candidates. Consultants had 119 participants attend and give input at the focus group sessions. We also collected 164 survey questionnaires.

The Search Profile Questionnaire form was made available to the district staff, identified stakeholders, plus all individuals who attended the focus group sessions. In addition to the individuals who returned written search profiles, there were stakeholders who participated in interviews and focus group sessions facilitated by K-12. The results of the written Search Profile Questionnaire form are included in this report along with several comments received in face-to-face discussions held at community forums.

In accumulating the data used in this report, K-12 sought opinions, recommendations, and general comments with respect to preferred candidate characteristics, traits, qualifications, and personal demeanor, as well as district strengths, weaknesses, issues, and concerns which may have a bearing on future leadership strengths for your next superintendent. At the request of the Board, K-12 sought the views of a broad range of individuals represented in the district to assist in the search process. Focus groups were conducted for all Lima City Schools as well as with district office leaders, support staff, students, invited community leaders, and community groups. It was determined that K-12 would report the findings to the Board without revealing the identity of any citizen or staff member who provided information, thus equipping the Board with unbiased data to use as it proceeded to define the search profile for the next superintendent.

A Search Profile Questionnaire form was used to provide a framework for reporting the information compiled by K-12. Broad themes were highlighted in each question area into six response groups (support staff members, teachers, administrators, high school students, community members/parents/business professionals and school board members). Under each question in the report, the response group's common themes were identified. The first category titled "Consistent Themes" are comments which were frequently heard from all or nearly all six of the response groups. Comments heard less frequently or only heard in a specific response group are listed only under that response group. The comments shown for any of the response groups are noted with the highest frequency comments listed first, then descending to comments less frequently heard. Some comments are combined into one statement in the interest of space. It is important to note that data compilation is not a scientific sampling, nor should it necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of those interviewed in the response group.

K-12 would like to commend the Board of Education for its efforts to include many stakeholders of the school district in the development of the superintendent search profile. Many survey respondents and focus group forum participants expressed positive feelings about being involved in this process and the opportunity to help shape the Lima City Schools. We would also like to thank Beth Jokinen, Public Relations and

Heather Sharp, Treasurer/CFO, for the professional way all arrangements were made, including the dissemination of invitations and search profiles, as well as scheduling the virtual focus group sessions that made this profile possible.

STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

Question #1: What do you consider to be the two or three most significant strengths of the district?

CONSISTENT THEMES

- Lima City Schools offers multiple opportunities for students including academic, career-technical, arts, vocational and extra-curricular programming.
- The district values its diversity and promotes a culture of acceptance of all.
- Lima City Schools is blessed to have dedicated and caring staff who continually step up in the interest of students.
- Our district provides extensive professional development and training for staff.
- Lima City Schools provide extensive student and family support services.
- We strive for positive community engagement by fostering positive relationships with parents while offering support for families.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

- Lima City Schools offers multiple opportunities for students including academic, career technical, arts, vocational and extra-curricular programming.
- We believe in equity and inclusion for every student and family in the district and are accepting of all.
- Lima City Schools believes its diversity is a strength and promotes an egalitarian culture.
- The district provides multiple services for families.
- Lima City Schools has educators that are dedicated and focused on the whole child.
- The district is fortunate to have great facilities and excellent technology for students and staff.

ADMINISTRATORS

- Lima City Schools offers multiple opportunities for students including academic, career technical, arts, vocational and extra-curricular programming.
- Our schools strive for positive community engagement, fostering positive relationships with parents while offering support for families.
- The district provides extensive professional development and training for staff.
- Lima City Schools is proud of its students' diversity while promoting a culture of respect.
- We provide extensive student support services.
- The district makes decisions on what is best for students while addressing the whole child.
- Lima City Schools is fortunate to have strong leadership and dedicated and caring staff.
- The district has great facilities, strong technology, and financial stability.
- Lima City Schools offers a wide range of Title I services.
- The district is transparent in its communication.

TEACHERS

- Lima City Schools is blessed to have dedicated and caring staff who continually step up in the interest of students.

- The district offers a wide range of opportunities for students including career and vocational technical.
- We value our diversity and promote a culture of acceptance of all.
- The district offers a wide range of professional development and training for staff.
- Lima City Schools enjoys strong community support striving to engage its community while forging partnerships.
- Our schools support strong athletic and arts programs.
- The students at Lima City Schools are caring and resilient.
- Lima City Schools communicates openly with its community.
- The district offers many resources for families and students including free breakfast and lunch.
- Lima City Schools have great facilities and technology.
- The district has strong special education and Title I programs.

SUPPORT STAFF

- Lima City Schools offers multiple opportunities for students including academic, career-technical, arts, vocational and extra-curricular programming.
- The district offers support for every student striving to make decisions in the best interest of students.
- There is strong community support for Lima City Schools.
- The diversity of students and families is a strength of Lima City Schools.
- The district offers a wide variety of training courses for staff.
- Dedicated staff, including special education staff, are focused on student success.
- There are multitudes of wrap-around services for students and families.
- Our facilities are a strength of the district.
- The district Arts and sports programs are strong.

PARENTS/COMMUNITY

- Lima City Schools offers many opportunities for students including career-technical, arts and science as well as strong magnet programs.
- The district values its diversity and strives to promote an environment of equity and inclusion where every student fit in.
- We are blessed with strong and dedicated staff.
- Lima City Schools offers multiple programs and services for underserved students and families including a health center and mental health support.
- There is a strong community – and the district serves many generational families.
- Great facilities and school safety are a priority for Lima City Schools.
- The district is education-focused striving to improve state report card scores.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Lima City Schools offers many opportunities for students including career-technical and arts.
- There is a strong sense of community pride within Lima City Schools.
- Strong athletic programs are prevalent in Lima City Schools.
- Lima City Schools staff support all students.
- Every student fits in at Lima City Schools.
- The students in Lima City Schools participate in the community.

IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING DISTRICT

Question #2: What do you consider to be the two or three most important issues facing the district?

CONSISTENT THEMES

- Lima City Schools needs to address how to stop the loss of highly qualified staff and what is needed to recruit new employees.
- We need to increase student learning which in turn will result in better performance on test scores, graduation rate, and student success.
- The district is concerned with maintaining funding to support the many exceptional programs that they offer.
- Lima City Schools needs to develop a marketing plan to highlight the positive things that are happening in the district to boost student enrollment.
- Student attendance rates are a problem and solutions must be generated.
- The district enjoys strong partnerships with community resources which support and enrich the lives of students. Enhance how these resources can get students and parents involved in schools.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

- Improving student learning is paramount.
- We would like to continue to strengthen our Technical Trades and Arts programs.
- It is important to partner with the city and city specific stakeholders to coordinate growth and to market both the city and schools.
- Retaining and hiring quality staff is a priority of the Board.
- The issue of declining staff morale needs to be addressed.
- We would like to see progress in bringing in students from outside the district.

ADMINISTRATORS

- We need to continue to recruit and retain high quality staff for our schools.
- Lima City School depends on state funding for many programs. The political climate, legislative mandates, and funding proposals may negatively impact the district finances.
- The district needs to have a laser focus on improving student learning.
- There are some gaps in services such as Special Education, ELL, and preschool opportunities.
- Staff and student attendance need to improve.

TEACHERS

- We have a critical need to retain and hire quality staff members.
- Lima City Schools must improve student learning and the current graduation rate.
- Student attendance is a problem.
- The district needs to find ways to increase parental involvement in their child's school life.
- There are concerns that funding may become unstable,
- Staff morale needs attention.
- The district needs to ensure fairness for all staff when addressing issues.

SUPPORT STAFF

- There is a crisis when it comes to retaining and hiring qualified staff throughout the district.
- Lima City Schools need to consistently apply rules such as dress code and discipline.
- We need to improve community/parent involvement. The schools must strengthen their outreach.
- The district needs to improve student learning and improve test scores.
- We need accountability for all staff.

PARENTS/COMMUNITY

- Lima City School needs to improve student learning and improve test scores.
- We need to retain quality teachers and administrators.
- The district needs to leverage their community partnerships and the resources these partnerships can provide.
- Lima City Schools needs to create a new image. We have many positive programs and students we could market.
- Creative ideas need to be found to get parents involved in the schools and their child's education.
- We have concerns about State funding and fiscal stability.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Students need better communication from their principal, teachers, and the superintendent.
- There is a need to raise test scores which we feel can be done by improving teaching that focuses on kids learning styles.
- Some students have the availability to receive help from tutors. This program needs to be expanded to involve all students who are struggling.
- CTE classes are difficult to schedule due to class size and demand. Can this be addressed?
- Building administrators play favorites so there needs to be fairness in the application of discipline.

ATTRIBUTES OF NEXT SUPERINTENDENT

Question #3: Please tell us two or three characteristics you would like to see in the next superintendent.

CONSISTENT THEMES

- We would like a visionary leader who is open-minded and brings a fresh perspective and new ideas.
- A leader who understands and appreciates the diverse nature of an urban district and has relevant experience.
- Someone who embraces the Lima community, invests, and is involved in it.
- A leader with varied educational experiences including classroom and administrative.
- We need someone who has experience with holding people accountable for high standards.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

- A leader that sets high standards of educational excellence and will advocate for the district.
- Lima City Schools need someone who has experience with cultural diversity.
- A leader that is visionary and offers innovative ideas.
- A person who cares about the needs of the students.
- A leader who is a culture-builder and exhibits strong leadership with staff.
- Someone who understands school finance and will collaborate with the treasurer.
- A leader that will collaborate with the full Board of Education.

ADMINISTRATORS

- A leader who is curriculum-focused and an instructional leader.
- A listener who is open-minded to new ideas.
- Someone who is visionary.
- A leader who has classroom teaching and building principal/leadership experience.
- A strong communicator who is transparent.
- A leader who sets high expectations and holds people accountable.

- We are looking for someone who is firm, fair, consistent, honest, trustworthy, compassionate.
- A leader who will be invested and involved in the community.
- A person that will be visible and accessible.
- A leader with human resources and finance experience.
- A coach who will empower others while not micromanaging.
- Someone with urban experience who can relate to all the district's demographics.

TEACHERS

- A leader with classroom experience.
- A listener who is open-minded.
- Someone who is aware, invested in, and understands the Lima community and demonstrates a passion for it.
- A leader with similar experience to Lima demographics.
- We need someone who is forward-thinking and visionary.
- Our next superintendent needs to be visible, accessible, approachable, relatable.
- We need a strategic thinker who can analyze systems.
- A leader who is consistent with initiatives and staff accountability.
- Someone who is a motivator, cheerleader, optimistic, and inspiring.
- A leader who will trust professionals.
- A servant leader who builds teams and leads with empathy.
- Someone with student achievement as a priority.

SUPPORT STAFF

- A leader who will be a relationship-builder with staff and appreciates their efforts.
- A person who will learn from staff to understand their needs.
- An open-minded leader who will take risks.
- We need a person with integrity, fairness, honesty, humbleness, and empathy.
- A leader who will understand and support the diverse nature of the Lima community and to be its champion.
- A leader who has teaching, principal, special education, and curriculum experience.
- Someone who is visible in the schools and community.
- A leader who will support increased compensation for staff.

PARENT/COMMUNITY

- A visionary leader who has fresh perspectives and ideas.
- A leader who has experience and comfort in an urban district.
- Someone who coaches and values staff.
- We need an analyzer and problem solver.
- A leader who will promote increased student achievement.
- Someone who will be involved in the community and promote family engagement.
- A leader who has integrity, honesty, courage, wisdom, instinctual, approachable, optimistic.
- A person who is a listener and communicator.
- A leader who will hold people accountable.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- A Superintendent who is involved with students.
- Someone who participates in the community.
- We need a quick thinker.

- A Superintendent who understands and supports students' needs.
- A person who believes in our school.
- A Superintendent who will form a student advisory council.
- A superintendent with financial skills and who communicates clearly.
- Someone who is supportive of the arts.
- We need a leader who is fair.

SUPERINTENDENT CHARACTERISTICS BY RANKING

1 = MOST IMPORTANT TO **10 = LEAST IMPORTANT**

CRITERIA	BOE	ADMIN	TEACHERS	SUPPORT STAFF	COMMUNITY & PARENTS	H.S. STUDENTS
Ability and willingness to deal fairly with faculty, staff, students, and parents	3	2	1	1	3	1
Effective at creating and a vision for the district	3	1	3	2	1	6 (tie)
Expertise in design and implementation of instruction and curriculum	10	4	9	9	10	6 (tie)
Effective with both written and verbal communication	7	9	7	8	8	8
Successful experience as a superintendent	6	10	10	10	4	9
Experience with socially and economically diverse student populations	1	7 (tie)	2	3	2	4
Fiscal management expertise	9	7 (tie)	8	7	9	10
Effective organizational and management skills	8	2	6	5	7	5
Personal involvement and interest in the community	2	5	5	3	7	2
Strong interpersonal and public relations skills	5	3	4	6	6	3

RANKING OF TOP AND BOTTOM FIVE (5) IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS--ALL GROUPS

1 - 5 MOST IMPORTANT TO 6 - 10 LEAST IMPORTANT

RANK	TOP 5 CHARACTERISTICS
1	Ability and willingness to deal fairly with faculty, staff, parents, and students.
2	Effective at creating and a vision for the district
3	Personal involvement and interest in the community.
4	Experience with socially and economically diverse student populations.
5	Strong interpersonal and public relations skills.

RANK	BOTTOM 5 CHARACTERISTICS
6	Effective organizational and management skills.
7	Expertise in design and implementation of instruction and curriculum.
8	Effective with both written and verbal communications.
9	Fiscal management expertise.
10	Successful experiences as a superintendent of schools.

SUMMARY

The information gathered through surveys and focus group sessions bears strong similarity across all groups with respect to the Lima City School District's strengths, issues and challenges facing the district, as well as the characteristics desired in the next superintendent. The consistent themes expressed by groups and individuals about the Lima City School District's *greatest strengths* include: (A) Lima City Schools offers multiple opportunities for students including academic, career-technical, arts, vocational and extra-curricular programming. (B) The district values its diversity and promotes a culture of acceptance of all. (C) Lima City Schools is blessed to have dedicated and caring staff who continually step up in the interest of students. (D) Our district provides extensive professional development and training for staff. (E) Lima City Schools provide extensive student and family support services. (F) We strive for positive community engagement by fostering positive relationships with parents while offering support for families.

The top concerns and challenges facing the Board of Education and the new superintendent in the future - all of which appeared on surveys received and were expressed during the focus group sessions - include the following: (A) There is a concern about funding and ways to maintain fiscal solvency. (B) Lima City Schools needs to address how to stop the loss of highly qualified staff and what is needed to recruit new employees. (C) We need to increase student learning which in turn will result in better performance on test scores, graduation rate, and student success. (D) The district is concerned with maintaining funding to support the many exceptional programs that they offer. (E) Lima City Schools needs to develop a marketing plan to highlight the positive things that are happening in the district to boost student enrollment. (F) Student attendance rates are a problem and solutions must be generated. (G) The district enjoys strong partnerships with community resources which support and enrich the lives of students. Enhance how these resources can get students and parents involved in school.

It quite often is difficult to capture all the characteristics that respondents were looking for in a new superintendent. It is certain that no one person could embody all that was mentioned as desired attributes for the new superintendent. Many survey respondents and focus group session participants expressed the need for the new superintendent to be a person who has the following characteristics: (A) We would like a visionary leader who is open-minded and brings a fresh perspective and new ideas. (B) A leader who understands and appreciates the diverse nature of an urban district and has relevant experience. (C) Someone who embraces the Lima community, invests, and is involved in it. (D) A leader with varied educational

experiences including classroom and administrative. (E) We need someone who has experience of holding people accountable for high standards.

The consistent themes summarized above were either shared with K-12 during the focus group sessions or submitted in writing on the surveys that were returned to K-12. The themes also closely matched the top five (5) desired superintendent characteristics of the new superintendent. Not calculated in the responses or the rank ordering of characteristics were comments left for the board to consider on the back of the questionnaire. There were three themes to the suggestions made for the board to consider: (A) A leader with experience with diverse populations. (B) Someone from outside the district would lead with fresh eyes, new perspectives, and new excitement. (C) The third theme was written by several people who said that they would prefer an internal candidate.

The new superintendent will need to be visibly active in the school buildings and in the community. He/she must create a system where student learning is non-negotiable with teachers and administrators accountable for the growth of kids. It was evident that there was a strong community that was appreciated by students and staff. It will be essential for the new superintendent to ensure implementation with the fidelity of an accountability system that will produce results of strong building instructional leadership, quality teaching and improved student learning. Communication by the new leader must include ways to engage the staff, parents, and community. The new leader must be an experienced administrator who is approachable, collaborative, and able to demonstrate trustworthiness and integrity.

We believe that the right candidate for superintendence will recognize that: (1) Students at Lima City Schools can achieve; (2) Parents and the community genuinely care about the school district but need opportunities to engage for a stronger educational environment (3) The district has need to address the retention and hiring of qualified staff. We believe we will find the right potential candidates who have the attributes outlined herein, possess the skills and energy needed to address current and future issues expressed by survey respondents, and who will be happy to lead the district and the community into the future.

Respectfully submitted:

K-12 Business Consulting, Inc.