



SOUTH ORANGE - MAPLEWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the comments and observations from various school and community meetings as well as the interviews conducted by the search firm of Hazard, Young, Attea, and Associates as part of the Leadership Profile Report. The purpose of this report is to assist the Board of Education for the South Orange-Maplewood School District (SOMSD) in its search for the next Superintendent of Schools. The Board has decided to make this decision after stakeholders have had many opportunities to record their thoughts, feelings and recommendations for the selection of the next Superintendent. The data collected herein were obtained from 20 school community meetings as well as individual meetings with 8 of the current members of the Board of Education. These meetings occurred between June 23, 2014, and October 9, 2014. Additionally there are data from the online survey that ran from July, 2014 to September 26, 2014. This advisory information is intended to help the Board of Education make the critical decisions on the criteria that guides the Superintendent search. The Board of Education is very appreciative of the considerable involvement of all those who participated in the meetings and the online survey.

Information obtained through the stakeholder responses reflects both the similarities and differences regarding the strengths, challenges, and needs of the district. Comments are not to be construed as facts, and we report them as individual opinions and important pieces of input for the search process and criteria.

The South Orange Maplewood School District is a proud educational community which has an extensive and long reputation for educational leadership in the state of New Jersey and nationally. There is a defined strength in the core curriculum, an exceptional arts program, and several specialized programs that provide unique educational experiences for all students. The district maintains a recognizable student-centered focus despite the multiple issues that often complicate the delivery of sound educational programming within a large school district. Community constituents view themselves as caring for the welfare of all students as well. It is clear to say that community members are engaged, passionate, involved, and connected to the educational system. There is a high degree of support for public education and it is highly valued and supported. There is also a very strong sense of belonging in these communities.

Several interviewees within the educational community cited the rich diversity of the school district and the multiple opportunities provided for students by the school district as contributors to that pride. They described diversity is being multilayered and multifaceted, covering all aspects such as race, gender, professions, ethnicity, household incomes, educational levels, sexual orientation, political orientation, and so on. In fact, many participants in focus groups mentioned that diversity was a compelling reason for them to choose to live in the South Orange – Maplewood area. The communities celebrate their enviably rich, multicultural arts and music environments. And, because of its proximity

to New York City, institutions of higher education, and several corporate headquarters, SOMSD benefits from an ongoing cross-fertilization of ideas and energies. We heard that some community residents, e.g., immigrant families, are not yet fully represented and are being encouraged to participate in the larger educational community, which will further enrich what the district has to offer.

There is a strong feeling that the school district must play an important role in balancing the multiple demands of a quality education program with the complicated issues facing families within a diverse community. The aspirations for superior educational outcomes were shared by a majority of participants in community engagement sessions and online surveys, particularly focused on making changes in the curriculum for 21st century learning, advancing instructional practices such as personalized instruction, and assuring that there is access for all students to the broadest set of opportunities that the district can offer. Of concern is how the district can create and maintain an equitable educational program in each of the schools given the constraints on its budgets and the increasing amount of mandates for testing, regulation, etc. We then learned that despite their different interests, parents and representatives from key constituent communities such as the Presidents Council, South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition on Race, SOMA Parents of Students of African Descent, Special Education Advisory Committee, and Special Education PTO, shared several points of common view, particularly around the allocation of resources and the execution of programs to respond to student needs.

SOMSD has undergone several changes in the recent past including: the de-leveling of its middle school curriculum, except for mathematics; new leadership at Columbia High School and other buildings; initiation of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program in the two middle schools. There is a willingness to innovate inside the district in order to improve outcomes, and some clear concerns that the district has taken on too many initiatives at the same time. Several constituents expressed the need for coherence around which initiatives or programs should be the highest priorities.

The respect for educators is also very clear, and there was notable mention of the long-standing impact that teachers and principals have had on students and the larger community. We met several teachers who were former students in the district, and are now residents and parents of SOMSD students. This sense of belongingness permeates the district, as does a strong sense of professionalism. However, there have been ongoing challenges and tensions in the relationships between teachers and the district that call for purposeful dialogues and communication to bring the educational community together.

SOMSD is also a concerned educational community. Improved communication from within district leadership and throughout the district was frequently mentioned as an issue. There is deep concern that the relationships between some stakeholder groups within the educational community, the Board of Education, and district administrative leadership are at times strained due to negative perceptions. Because of the community's exceptionally high involvement and interest in its educational system, clear and consistent communication must be a high priority and regular practice of the new Superintendent in order for all stakeholders to benefit from the district's substantial strengths. A call for sensitivity around stakeholder concerns and needs should receive greater attention.

The static economy, unfunded mandates, and the state mandated 2% growth limitations on budget increases have resulted in making difficult program and staff choices over the last few years. Some

programming that had distinguished SOMSD in the past – its elementary enrichment program, for example – has been cut back or eliminated. There are needs for addressing deferred maintenance in district facilities and long-range planning to address the evolving needs of students in the teaching and learning process. We learned that stakeholders are hopeful that the Board of Education and new Superintendent will work collaboratively with all stakeholder groups in embracing a comprehensive and cohesive vision built on the premise that programmatic and budgetary decisions will focus on teaching, learning, and student achievement.

The new Superintendent will require excellent communication skills to foster openness, honesty, and integrity in quickly re-building sound relationships between and among stakeholder groups in the educational community. He/she will also need to be visible: this district demands that the Superintendent become part of the community at large and is recognized as its key representative in discussions at the local, state, and even national level. Among other things, this individual must make informed managerial decisions about resource allocations and personnel, nurture professional growth, and lead through a changing educational landscape. The new Superintendent must accept and institute accountability measures for the overall educational and financial operation of the district.

The goal of this profile is to assist the Board and the South Orange – Maplewood communities in finding a candidate who possesses most, and hopefully all, of the essential characteristics necessary to lead a school community that is proud of its accomplishments and desirous of re-instituting a sense of revitalization of its academic programs. We are enthusiastic and optimistic about the opportunity to assist in this important endeavor.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Leroy D. Nunery II
Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, and Attea & Associates (HYA) from July - October 2014 for the new superintendent in SOMSD. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they interviewed individuals or held focus groups and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The results from the surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were gathered to assist in preparing this Leadership Profile, and ultimately will assist the Board in determining the Preferred Criteria for superintendent search.

The three main questions posed to all stakeholders were:

- What are the strengths of the South Orange-Maplewood School District?
- What challenges, weaknesses, or issues face the district?
- What skills, traits, or characteristics do you want in the next superintendent?

The responses to these questions are organized to enable the SOMSD Board of Education through the entire search and selection process. HYA will use the entire Leadership Profile to identify and screen likely candidates, and then present those candidates who best fit the Profile and the Preferred Criteria to the Board for in-depth interviews and selection.

Community Engagement Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Personal interviews or focus groups</u>	<u>Date</u>
SOMSD Board Members (Individual interviews)	8	Various
Building level administrators/Principals/ASCA	30	July 1
Senior Leadership	6	July 1
Faculty/Teachers	2 6 SOMEA members 4 CHS teachers	June 23 Sept. 9 Oct.9 Note: Several teachers attended other focus group discussions
Presidents' Council Focus Group	16	July 10
Presidents' Council Meeting	12	Sept. 9
SEPAC, SP PTO	16 7	July 10 Sept. 13

Faith-Based Leaders	2	Sept. 9
Achieve Foundation Forum	4	Sept. 13
Forum: CCR, SOMA, NAACP, MASOMA	27	Sept. 13
Open Forums	23	Sept. 9, Oct. 6, Oct. 9
Elementary School Parents Forum	9	Sept. 13
	9	Oct. 6
Middle School Parents Forum	11	Sept. 13
High School Parents Forum	20	Sept. 13
Middle and High School Parents Forum	4	Oct. 9
Columbia HS Students	87	Oct. 9
Online Survey Results	744	Closed Sept. 26
Total Interactions	1,041	

In the course of our community outreach, we met with a wide variety of stakeholders as suggested by the SOMSD Board. Our interactions were organized in three separate open/public forums; forums for elementary, middle, and high school parents, respectively; teachers and teacher union leadership; high school students; representatives from several community-based interest groups; members of the central administration, and concerned citizens of the two communities. We enjoyed our interactions and found that each opportunity to engage was informative and insightful. The online survey was made available on the SOMSD website in July, and closed out on September 26. At the date of closing, HYA received 744 completed responses.

The responses provided by the individuals and focus groups during the interviews are listed in two places: 1) “Consistent Themes,” which are listed beginning on page 6 of the report and, 2) all responses from individual and group meetings, which begin on page 15. They are listed alphabetically without prioritization. A separate appendix lists all comments made by survey respondents in no particular order starting on page 26 (Note: any negative statements about a single individual have been redacted). The first draft of this Leadership Profile Report was presented to the Board on October 10. The final draft will be presented to the public on October 13.

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants’ judgment, they warranted the Board’s attention.

The ECRA Hazard, Young & Attea consultants would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey. Also, we would like to thank all of the SOMSD staff members who assisted with our meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Leroy D. Nunery II
Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates

CONSISTENT THEMES FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND IN THE SURVEY IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Strengths

Achieve Foundation, funding for STEM and innovation

Accepting community

Active community

Advanced Placement classes (# of kids, # of tests taken)

Arts and music communities

Arts programs have been supported and maintained, more than other surrounding districts

Arts: Offer more arts classes in HS, than other districts, commitment from district

Athletics program; extraordinary coaches with Olympic experience

CHS fabulous for kids along the spectrum, help to get the kids support needed make-up is “wonky”, lot of parents who are academics, engaged in kids’ education suburban district that looks like an urban district

CHS is best part of the district

Choices to live here because of the quality of the educations

College admissions (rates) are very strong, college acceptance rates are high

Columbia HS graduates compete successfully for most/very selective college placements

Community has a lot to offer not found in other places

Connections with other community activities, e.g. Soccer Clubs, Parks and Recreation, etc.

Course offerings with opportunities for students not offered elsewhere, ~ 23 AP classes, TV studio, school schedules to meet with teachers, tutorials, built into the system

Cultural assets in town (arts, music)

Culture of acceptance

Demographics

District has/had a great reputation

Diversity: All types: racial, ethnic, religious, heritage, income level, profession, etc.

Diversity especially in comparison to neighboring communities

Diversity in terms of kids’ abilities, special educational backgrounds

Effective fiscal management

Elementary schools are “solid”

Experienced educators

Graduation rates are high

High achieving communities, lots of smart people, highly educated

High expectations

High parental participation

Humanities

Introduced recently significant big changes: e.g., full day K program, IB, writing, and one of the first districts to move to Singapore Math

Kids from all different backgrounds and family professional backgrounds

Kids have opportunities to be recognized beyond athletics

Libraries (Accessible, shared access)

Long standing academic reputation

Middle school de-leveling

Neighborliness and interaction: An “integrated” town where different backgrounds and different countries are found

No one is shy about [bringing up] real issues
Open community and accepting goes beyond sexual orientation, there's not so much of an "other"
Parental involvement; expectation that parents will be involved
Passionate parents
Pretty good school system with lots of engaged parents and community members have the basis for greatness
Professional development
Proximity to New York City; in the orbit of NYC with plenty of learning options, sophistication
Quality of the parents: Variety of interesting, strong mix of professions
Reading [held] as a value, high on literacy
Reading instruction is strong at lower grades with emphasis in 1st grade on phonics
Robust class offerings
Safe, suburban environment
Science and math prep are challenging
Singapore Math seems to be working, now in place
Size of school district allows for lots of different people and experiences
Strong partnerships with PTA, principals, etc. ably work at many different levels for schools
Talented and committed teachers
Teachers and educators balancing mandates with focus on whole child
Teachers at Tuscan care about the kids, are focused on the kids, appreciate their role
Teachers have advanced degrees, with desire to further educations
Wealth of resources available, e.g., libraries and technology
Well-rounded education
Veteran teachers with years of experience and deep roots to the schools where they work

Challenges, Issues, and Priorities for the Future

Accountability of central office staff
Achievement gap is "huge"
Adversarial relationship with teachers' union
Attitude from central office hostility towards parents: "We don't want to hear from parents", or "I cannot deal with lots of parents calling me"
Avoidance of complaints, and avoidance of making hard decisions about people who aren't performing (retention)
BOE has factions, not united
Budget pressures: 2% cap, rising healthcare costs, etc.
College readiness: 1/3 of students take remedial courses
Communications lacking: within district, to parents and community; not keeping parents abreast of what's happening in the classroom
Communications: Too much of "a need to know basis"
Communications Dept. doesn't want to hear from parents
Concerns about kids in the "middle" [in terms of achievement]
Cultural competency needs to be enhanced; Concern that lack of cultural competency creates excuses
Curriculum: Needs to be overhauled, almost exclusively college prep, and no options for skills building
Curriculum: Lack of curricular leadership
Dealing effectively with staff morale
Dealing with constant program change with little training for professional staff

Developing leadership that will challenge the norm
Develop processes for gathering input on key issues
District does poor job of communicating what the performance metrics are (e.g., Singapore Math, IB program) and what the intended outcomes are
Diversity: Staff in the schools don't reflect demographics
Doesn't really teach you anything, "it's memorization"
Elementary Curriculum is weak in "content richness", kids don't really study anything
Equity: Undercurrent of have/have-nots, particularly in middle and high school
Facilities: Amazing historical buildings that need updating
Facilities: Deferred maintenance across district; science labs, technology, scheduling problems because not enough sections
Gifted and Talented programs cut, concern about lack of attention to advanced students
Implementation [of initiatives]: Ideas not carried out fully; rollout processes not thought out; doing things without the supports, systems, or scaffolding
Inadequate courses on 21st Century skills, technology, coding, etc.
Inconsistency in terms of teacher observation using Danielson method, and subjective in implementation
Ineffective central administration of Special Education
Inequity in some of the schools: how technology is deployed, books and materials, etc.
"Initiative-itis": Too much put on the plate, nothing taken off
Lack of capacity for teaching and delivery: Not enough of a focus on student work or enough exemplars of teacher work, student excellence, etc.
Lack of consistency from classroom to classroom
Lack of execution on programs
Lack of rigor
Languages not available until 3rd grade, MS language not available
Loss of co-teachers, paraprofessionals
Lack of scaffolding provided to students, not consistently in place to understand the scope and depth of the curriculum
Leadership void at the school level where teachers have "given up", and culture that one teacher doesn't want another teacher look bad
Leveling system produced negative effects on lower level kids, and it hasn't been replaced with another approach to differentiate learning abilities
Low expectations of students (by some teachers)
Lower participation in AP for African-American students
Middle level achieving students need more attention
Must raise proficiency levels for all groups
Need for operational systems that function optimally
Need to maximize the use of resources
Non-communication (of principals and teachers) at school level
Not enough options at CHS: only Romance languages offered: Italian, Spanish, French but what about Mandarin, Economics, German, etc.?
Not in compliance on Gifted and Talented education, which Not optional but mandatory
Perception that we are losing traction, some kids are leaving CHS, going to private school
Pockets of excellence: Not enough oversight on quality
Professional development: Need more opportunities to professionalize
Punitive culture at CHS, without excuse; Suspensions first, not allowing kids to make mistakes

Raising proficiency levels for all groups
Relationships between board and union are weak
Role of supervisors; rift between principals and administrators/supervisors on responsibilities and accountabilities
Scheduling: Waiting for several days to find out about homeroom assignments and scheduling not done
School calendar issued late this year/every year that creates problems with scheduling
Social promotions
Socio-economic diversity also includes class issues
Special education students/Special needs are not addressed well or uniformly
Special education inclusion "arc": enormous shifts and changes, and lack of vision; test outcomes before moving forward
Special education: Significant tolerance for uneven results and poor performance
Special education: Inconsistency between how services are applied, and with case managers in terms of knowledge
Stability in leadership on building and central office level
Staffing allocations should reflect the whole child approach; Not meeting needs of all children
Students are bored, not challenged
Talent recruitment, employment and retention are lacking
Teacher input is not regarded highly
Teachers are not listened to there is a lack of two-way communications
Teachers are overwhelmed
Teachers dissuaded from supporting each other
Teacher expectations (of students) depend on parent advocacy
Teaching to the middle
Technology: Not evenly deployed or accessible across district
Technology: Training sparse for teachers
Transparency
Unevenness in applying programs, e.g., Danielson
Website needs to be updated
Wide achievement gap persists

Desired Characteristics for the Next Superintendent

Able to represent SOMSD at state and national levels
Active and effective listener
Advocates for Special Education students' needs and delivery of services
Be able to properly interface with the Board
Brings innovative practices to district for curriculum, operations, and administration
Celebrates and appreciates diversity
Collaborates and builds consensus
Communicates frequently with all levels of the districts
Communicates frequently with parents and community members about the district's programs and policies
Considers feedback and content and then demonstrates that he/she has considered the input
Demonstrates a commitment to the arts
Demonstrates a desire to be part of the South Orange and Maplewood communities
Education must be his/her priority

Effectively delegates work to be completed
Executes and implements plans in the most efficient manner
*Experience in a diverse, multi-cultural educational environment
Experience with a unions/unionized environment
Experience in closing achievement gaps
Expertise in efficiently managing the central office
Extensive experience in districts with high expectations for academic achievement
Intellectual and smart
Knowledge of up-to-date educational trends and philosophies that fit SOMSD's needs
Knows how to identify, recruit, and develop talent
Makes effective, critical decisions on personnel and organizational issues
Must engage often with parents of all communities
Must understand communities of color, income, demographics, etc.
Not afraid to say "no" when appropriate
Not easily manipulated by political pressure
Primary instructional leader for the school district
Promotes public relations that positively "brand" the district
Proven track record in dealing with student achievement improvement
Respects the lines between management and governance
Restore respect for the lines between management and governance
Seasoned educator with a keen understanding of teaching, learning and what works for students
Someone who's been a Superintendent before, knows law, policy, and the [governance] role of the board
Understands change management/how to implement change in a large organization
Understands that communication skills are critical and essential components of moving the school district forward
Understands that he/she reports to the entire board
Utilizes input when making decisions

Online Superintendent Profile Survey Results

744 stakeholders completed the Superintendent Profile survey. Over half of respondents were parents in the district (86.7 percent). Five percent were community members, another 4.6 percent were teachers, and the rest were administrators, students, support staff, and school board members

Stakeholder Group		
	Frequency	Percent
Building-Level Administrator	4	0.5
Community Member	37	5.0
Parent	645	86.7
Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	13	1.7
Support Staff	6	0.8
Teacher	34	4.6
District Administrator	5	0.7
Total	744	100.0

The top-rated characteristics respondents selected for a superintendent were:

- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (M)
- Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (VV)
- Promote high expectations for all students and personnel. (VV)
- Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations. (IL)
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)

Percentages of respondents overall who selected each item, as well as percentages by stakeholder group, are given in the tables on the following pages. Benchmark results from over fifty comparable districts, incorporating the ranking of over twenty-five thousand stakeholders, are also provided in the table to allow for a comparison of South Orange-Maplewood School District results to national norms.

Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)										
Number indicates rank order by overall results		National HYA Benchmark	ALL (744)	Building Admin (4)	Comm Member (37)	Parent (645)	Special Comm Member (13)	Support (6)	Teacher (34)	District Admin (5)
1	Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools.	36%	53%	25%	43%	55%	69%	50%	15%	40%
2	Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change.	36%	52%	0%	38%	54%	69%	50%	38%	0%
3	Promote high expectations for all students and personnel.	38%	50%	25%	46%	53%	46%	17%	21%	40%
4	Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations.	30%	45%	0%	41%	46%	62%	17%	26%	40%
5	Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members.	38%	42%	25%	30%	42%	31%	83%	56%	60%
6	Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments.	23%	40%	50%	41%	39%	69%	17%	50%	60%
7	Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators.	40%	39%	75%	62%	35%	31%	67%	71%	40%
8	Hold a deep understanding of the teaching/learning process and of the importance of educational technology.	35%	37%	50%	16%	38%	8%	33%	44%	20%
9	Identify, confront, and resolve issues and concerns in a timely manner.	35%	37%	50%	22%	36%	38%	33%	56%	40%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE-Community Engagement	CC-Communication & Collaboration	M-Management
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Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)

Number indicates rank order by overall results		National HYA Benchmark	ALL (744)	Building Admin (4)	Comm Member (37)	Parent (645)	Special Comm Member (13)	Support (6)	Teacher (34)	District Admin (5)
		10	Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District.	34%	37%	0%	43%	38%	31%	33%
11	Provide meaningful guidance for systematic and comprehensive district-wide curriculum, instructional services, assessment programs, and professional development.	23%	34%	25%	32%	35%	38%	33%	24%	20%
12	Align budgets, long-range plans, and operational procedures with the District's vision, mission, and goals.	28%	28%	0%	16%	30%	38%	0%	15%	40%
13	Strive for continuous improvement in all areas of the District.	27%	28%	25%	24%	29%	31%	33%	24%	40%
14	Guide the operation and maintenance of school facilities to ensure secure, safe, and clean school environments that support learning.	26%	27%	25%	24%	28%	0%	17%	18%	20%
15	Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and in a variety of ways.	27%	26%	25%	22%	26%	23%	50%	29%	40%
16	Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner.	27%	25%	50%	32%	22%	38%	67%	53%	80%
17	Encourage a sense of shared responsibility among all stakeholders regarding success in student learning.	36%	24%	25%	22%	24%	31%	33%	38%	0%
18	Seek a high level of engagement with principals and other school-site leaders.	22%	24%	75%	19%	24%	8%	0%	32%	40%
19	Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life.	28%	20%	25%	22%	19%	15%	50%	41%	60%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE- Community Engagement	CC- Communication & Collaboration	M-Management
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Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)

Number indicates rank order by overall results		National HYA Benchmark	ALL (744)	Building Admin (4)	Comm Member (37)	Parent (645)	Special Comm Member (13)	Support (6)	Teacher (34)	District Admin (5)
		20	Be an effective manager of the District's day-to-day operations.	20%	19%	25%	14%	20%	0%	33%
21	Involve appropriate stakeholders in the decision-making process.	26%	15%	0%	16%	15%	31%	17%	21%	40%
22	Maintain positive and collaborative working relationships with the school board and its members.	31%	15%	25%	19%	14%	8%	17%	18%	40%
23	Utilize student achievement data to drive the District's instructional decision-making.	19%	12%	0%	19%	12%	15%	0%	18%	0%
24	Act in accordance with the District's mission, vision, and core beliefs.	25%	10%	0%	19%	10%	15%	17%	9%	0%
25	Develop strong relationships with constituents, local government, area businesses, media, and community partners.	20%	8%	0%	19%	8%	23%	0%	3%	20%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE- Community Engagement	CC- Communication & Collaboration	M-Management
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SUMMARY OF ALL COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM MEETINGS

(* = Comments/Observations made more than 5 times)

Strengths

A number of staff and teachers live in the district

Achieve Foundation, support for new programs, facilities, professional development, etc.

*Advanced Placement classes (# of kids, # of tests taken)

Arts, music, and culture are prominent and available

*Athletics

*CHS graduates compete successfully for most/very selective college placements

*College admissions are historically strong

*Community has a lot to offer not found in other places

*Connections with other community activities, e.g. Soccer Clubs, Parks and Recreation, etc.

*Course offerings with opportunities for students not offered elsewhere

Culture of acceptance

*Diversity: Great, especially in comparison to neighboring communities; kids get an experience reflective of the real world; closer to the "real world"; racially and socio-economically diverse; all walks of life, religions, sexual orientations, etc. live here; in terms of kids' abilities and educational backgrounds; different interests, clothing and appearance are accepted and normal; becomes a reason to move and live here.

Economic base (ratables) of the community

*Ethnicity and heritage of the diverse population

*Experienced educators

*Extracurricular activities and clubs

Food program and nutrition

Graduation rates from CHS are high

Great community, people are welcoming and warm

*High expectations for achievement and outcomes

History of excellence, tops in state

Livable communities

Master teachers have been able to transcend the curriculum and be innovative and creative

Occupational backgrounds of residents

Opportunities for partnerships and networks

Organizations that advocate for equity (e.g., CCR, SOMA, etc.)

Opportunity to enhance and grow as a community in terms of new talents, abilities, culture, interest

*Parental engagement is high, expected; parents advocate for their kids and the district

Parents active at board meetings, and different groups have emerged and become vocal

*Performing arts, vibrant humanities

Pockets of excellence

*Proximity to New York City and metropolitan area

Professional Development activities

Public libraries

*Teachers: Resourceful and collaborative; experienced; try to educate the whole child; dedicated and responsive, definitely at middle and elementary; live in the community; visible; Time commitment of many teachers to assist students; many came into the profession before NCLB, high stakes testing, etc. is not fully reflected in the data

*Wealth of resources available, e.g., libraries and technology

Challenges, Issues, and Priorities for the Future

30% of SOMSD kids are in remedial college classes

Accountability of central administrators and supervisors

Achieve Foundation: without superintendent/central office support, work becomes impossible to deliver

Achievement gap continues to persist and “is huge”- 30% persistent gap that doesn’t go away; Must get to the root of the gap and instill a belief by all that all kids can achieve; population of students not making it in the schools, number of kids are off track but resources to address problems are short

*Addressing the flight to private schools

*Adversarial relationship with union (SOMEA)

Attracting qualified administrators

*Avoid small groups dictating district policies

Big bubble of students coming into the district from elementary into upper grades; not prepared in any school

*Board disunity: 3 factions perceived on the BOE

Board needs to effectively support the superintendent

Board needs to re-establish the public trust

*Budget pressures: State aid constraints and rising health care costs increasing 10% per year

Calendar: Perpetual problem, and late issuance this year, and late start; Very adverse impact on students and their options; Not sure why was SOMSD so late; Kids scrambling to get transcripts for college

Can you have both rigor and inclusion? Only with extraordinary teachers who understand learning styles

Central office functions should be reorganized and re-staffed for success

CHS: Large proportion of students are not doing well: students of color, special education

Children not being challenged, in general; Kids are bored and some may be regressing

College readiness: only 10% of AA students made college readiness and lower AA participation in AP classes

Communications are lacking or very late on processes, policies; Need an administration that really listens; poor chains of command; Messages not clearly conveyed to the right audiences

Communications with community-don't react (Board) to vocal minority only

Consultant reports not really used, e.g., Singapore Math, and DMC [District Management Council] recommendations were rolled out without full piloting

Create school climates that are not always punitive or penalty-driven; “Martial atmosphere” at CHS where some kids presumed guilty

Create mentorship programs for students for professions

Curriculum changes should be properly implemented in Special Ed classes

*Curriculum needs to be overhauled; Curricula are weak; Not enough leadership or focus on curriculum content and not presenting enough challenge

Cycle of black students leaving for private schools (parental preference)

Danielson observations process being used as an evaluation tool vs. training tool; Doing “drive-bys” not walkthroughs; Inconsistency in terms of observation, and subjective in implementation

*Dealing effectively with staff and teacher morale

*Dealing with constant program change with little training for professional staff

Dealing with program, staff, and process inconsistencies across the district

Dealing with stability of building level administrators

Deep unevenness of the teachers

De-leveling the Middle School didn’t carry enough PD to the teachers

*Develop processes for gathering input on key issues

Developing (redeveloping) a strategic plan

*Developing district leadership that will challenge the norm and find new solutions to long-standing problems

Differentiated instruction not working: Kids are regularly re-introduced to same material

Differentiating the expectations for learning in every classroom

District needs strong vision and strategic plan for 5 years that reflects our current realities (e.g., budget constraints)

District has no policy for how 504's are issued

Diversity: Concerns about lack of differentiation between qualities and abilities of students; Cultural competency needs to be enhanced; Teacher population doesn't reflect student population; Local pride about diversity doesn't ensure that all kids are treated evenly – we are “not fully integrated”

Emphasize the particular needs and aspirations of Gifted & Talented students

Engagement exists, but needs to be increased

*Examine resources that are underutilized

Explain how differentiated instruction is being delivered throughout the district

*Facilities need to be updated and refreshed: science labs; technology; scheduling issues (not enough sections); deferred maintenance; in spite of outsourced maintenance, costs have risen

Feeling of not being welcome: racial segregation in some programs; ostracizing African-American parents and students'; language barriers present

*Getting the Board members to trust each other

Handling the diversity of languages in the district

Have to train staff to understand test scores, test data, growth models

Hiring and employment demographics: Staff in the schools don't reflect demographics

IB should be the impetus for other changes in the district

Inconsistency and unevenness in applying programs, e.g., Danielson Learning Walk, or getting iPads/devices

*Initiatives are launched without systems or processes for proper implementation, measurement, or follow-through (“initiatives” and “impulsivity”); Missing an understanding of how to effectuate change without having the right oversight to make sure changes are executed

*Inequity in several of the schools, e.g., some schools lacking curriculum, materials, etc. compared to others;

Long-standing divide in terms of abilities and student access

Lack of classes in non-Romance languages (e.g., Mandarin Chinese, German)

Lack of classes in coding, technology

*Lack of communication between district and community at large

*Lack of consistency from classroom to classroom; “feels like you're playing the lottery” (in getting the right teachers or classrooms; Too many variations from grade to grade

Lack of continuity in curriculum, i.e., need to make sure whatever curriculum in MS should be carried forward into HS

Lack of flexibility and creativity in Athletics: We spend less on sports than other comparable districts

Lack of scaffolding provided to students, not consistently in place to understand the scope and depth of the curriculum

Leadership (at all levels) must clearly communicate professional behaviors

Leveling still prevalent

Limited access to rigorous curriculum at CHS

Loss of co-teachers and Paraprofessionals, now contracted, means less support in classrooms

*Low expectations of students (by some teachers)

Maintaining and building positive Board/central administration relationships

Many general education teachers ignore kids with 504's; Faculty has different perspective on what services are needed and applied

Math a really big problem: schedule is math-driven so kids who are not strong in math tend to lag behind

Math sequence in Middle School doesn't lead to Geometry and Algebra in High School

*Mediocrity of some teachers

*Middle level achieving students need more attention; Must be more emphasis on kids in the “middle” and focus on their needs; “If your kid is at the top, he’ll be fine”

Middle Schools have been a weak link, now IB change being implemented, but we must continue the momentum

Middle School language classes not available

Middle School should be training kids for critical thinking; Lack of scaffolding provided to students, not consistently in place to understand the scope and depth of the curriculum

Moved from Blue Ribbon district to now having 3 Focus schools

*Must find ways to leverage the diversities in SOMSD

Must have great leaders, not just good and not accept mediocrity that is represented as excellence

*Must raise proficiency levels for all groups

*Need for operational systems that function optimally

Need greater investment in technology

Need more ongoing exchange of ideas between central administration and the schools

Need some turnover of staff, refresh where needed in order to bring in new ideas

*Need to create a positive climate of change

Need to evaluate what’s working and then make changes

*Need to hold people accountable for results

Need enhance PD in language

*Need to maximize the use of resources

Needs to be consistency in technology program and equipment access

No two-way communications and feeling that the administration doesn’t care

*Non-communication (of principals and teachers) at school level

Not enough support/resources for elementary advanced students

Other districts nearby seem to be getting better outcomes for the same funding levels

People have to volunteer, “have to be locked in” in order to get the most out of the situation; “Come to a PTA meeting” isn’t the answer; some are discouraged to be engaged

Perception that we are an “urban” district, so have to avoid putting in programs that are more appropriate for urban district setting

Perception that we are losing traction, some kids are leaving, going to private school

*Placement Letter for this summer: Parents couldn’t find what scores were and didn’t get info on district assessments; “wasted energy” about leveling process and where kids stand; Waiting for 2 days to find out about homeroom assignments and scheduling not done; Parents and kids had to invest extra time to figure out the process; 6th grade placement based on 4th grade scores, but no one tells you about that process; Are some kids more/better informed than others?

*Professional Development is available, but current scheduling is not helpful; Needs to be revamped to meet teacher needs and upcoming vacancies caused by retiring teachers; Access to Columbia U. Teachers College should be funded again

Programs need to be tailored because now it feels like “one size fits all”

Properly leverage social media

Providing leadership that is instructionally focused

*Raising proficiency levels for all groups

Realize that just teaching one way is not the best way

Re-institute Gifted & Talented pullout program

Re-look at career/vocational education

Rift between principals and administrators/supervisors leads to inconsistent performance

Science department and curriculum needs an overhaul

Seth Boyden was supposed to be a “demonstration school”, but what’s a new vision for it to bring innovation to the district, to have it replicated across the district?

Special Education: 17 direct reports, completely inefficient management structure that prevents feedback from rising to the top

Special Education case managers are very different in terms of knowledge they have, and support they provide; more budget-oriented than student-oriented

*Special Education department needs to be reorganized; inconsistent service to parents and students; Need to get leadership and stability in Special Education Supervisor position; Lack of written plans, without central office knowledge of whether the law is being followed; DMC recommendation of ombudsmen was ignored by central office; Inconsistency between how services are applied, and with case managers in terms of knowledge

Special Education: District losing lawsuits; A feeling that district will only act if you have the resources

*Special Education program changes (e.g., inclusion, IEPs, other changes) were not communicated: “startling”; Enormous shifts and changes, and lack of vision; Nothing done long enough to know why it worked, “roller coaster”; Need to articulate a vision and use data to support it

*Stability in leadership on building and central office level

STEM opportunities are not fully in place, e.g., connections with pharmaceutical companies, universities, etc.

Students are bored because teachers are not pushing them

*Supervisors are very inconsistent in how they observe teachers, review curriculum, etc.; Conflict and confusion on roles of principals and supervisors; Lack of quality assurance

Systems not in place that are operating/functioning which truly benefit our students

*Teacher expectations depend on parent advocacy, voice, involvement

*Teacher input is not regarded highly and teachers are not listened to; there is a lack of two-way communications

*Teachers are not doing a good job of giving kids the challenge, or opportunities to expand towards being exceptional

Teachers are ignored most of the time for input or suggestions

Teachers feel disconnected from administration and their voices are not heard

Technology needs more emphasis in higher grades, to meet PARCC implementation

*The creativity of teachers is not being used

The district should be extending itself to increase its academic resources

There are racial and class overtones in schools that are not discussed or addressed

There is a question about how we are reaching the diverse language populations

*There is teacher distrust towards administration

There is too much reliance on data as the goal, not just a decision-making tool

Too heavy a reliance on consultants

*There is so much emphasis on Sports/Arts that other opportunities are not explored

Tuscan security breach: Changes were made, but not communicated

Wedge between SOMEA and administration, perceived as “so that’s the union” perspective, as if there’s always a hidden agenda, E.g., Whole language vs. phonics and spelling; What’s there to support kids who aren’t getting it?

When making choices on curriculum changes, not just look at what will work for 80% of the kids, but also for those for whom the curriculum is not working

*Wide achievement gap

Will HS be ready to accept new MS students (taking the IB curriculum)?

Desired Characteristics for the Next Superintendent

Ability to turn vision into real strategic operations plan

Able to grow the leadership, showing and modeling the right behavior

*Active, good, effective listener, not paying lip service;

Advocate for state aid

Articulates the district vision and the roles expected of administration; and understands the components of implementing the vision that is not a mantra, has to be believable

*Approachable

Aware of and proactive with legislation on vocational training and inclusion, etc.

Backbone: Standing up for what's right, in light of requests for special requests; Be able to talk with every stakeholder and talk honestly and fairly with each group

Be able to think strategically

Believes that SOMSD is heading in the right direction, e.g., IB and access to AP classes, multiple measures

*Brilliance

Brings fresh perspective on what's here

Builds morale

*Can disagree with the board on issues, and champions what's right

Can prepare the board for community interface on key issues

*Capitalize on the district's multiple assets

Champion to "fight for all of us" and someone we can follow

Cheerleader to encourage others

Collaboration

Collegiality

Comfortable with people, with students

*Communications: setting the tone for the district

Concerned (about students)

Consistent in following special education students through the system, and not forget about out-of-district students

Consensus-building and shared interests

Current knowledge of common core curriculum, PARCC, NJ school law, and about NJ schools

Decisive, impartial leadership with strong managerial skill sets

Deep love for teaching and learning, and teachers

*Demonstrates a commitment to the arts

Demonstrated track record on talent acquisition and development

Develop all of the potential in the district

Develops relationships with people

*Education must be his/her priority

*Effectively delegates work to be completed

Embraces the special needs community and see it as an opportunity to be as a place to create and innovate; "Can you make the difference in how special education is delivered here?"

Emphasis on what they did, real experiences, "knees skinned", etc.

*Empathizes with the needs of Special Education students

*Establishes same standards for everyone (equity)

Evaluates people based on skills and identifies talents beyond what's already apparent

Evaluation of administrators as a priority

Even if not deeply experienced, knows how to make the vision happen

*Excellent communicator
 Execution of detail; Aware of which ideas should be implemented, and timing of implementation
 *Executive and execution ability
 Expectations should be higher than we're actually getting
 *Experience in complex, socio-economically diverse, multi-cultural environment
 Experience and success with managing a board to collaboratively demonstrate success
 Flexibility in the vision: sees the individual and stakeholders in the process
 Forge partnerships
 Get everyone on the same page
 Get to know the teachers and the culture of each building before making decisions
 Goes beyond town halls and is expected to be visibility at events, but visibility not as important as doing the work
 *Has a wealth of knowledge about curriculum, with a sense of what is/is not working
 *Has respect for teachers as professionals
 Have a basic discussion about what the district's long-term direction
 Have a clear passion for the job
 *Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change
 Have a thought process from beginning to end
 Have to have right people around the table; principals have not meeting as a team in at least a couple of years
 Hear out those "in the trenches" (principals, teachers, staff)
 High touch, empathy
 *Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments.
 Hold all of the different constituencies together because we are so fragmented
 Honest about where things are
 Inclusive at all levels
 *Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations.
 Inspires staff to lead for success/results
 Instructional leadership, grounded in the classroom
 Interact with everyone no matter their level or station in life
 Invests in professional development and supports it
 Is a delegator who knows who the key people are and relies on them to get things done
 *Is able to identify talent in all professional positions
 Knowledge of PAARC assessment and new evaluative processes
 *Knowledge of up-to-date educational trends and philosophies
 *Knows how to identify talent
 *Knows how to work with the union, based on trust
 Identifies good talent and has the authority to attract and retain it
 *Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations.
 Instructional rounds: Hard to offer support if you really don't know; must serve as model to guide relationships
 Leveraging local assets and know-how
 Long-range planning skills
 Make more connections to industries for career readiness
 Managerial courage
 *Mentoring and coaching mentality
 Models behavior for what he/she expects to see in others (at every level in the district)

Moral compass that extends beyond tolerance as the only virtue

Multicultural sensitivity

Must align Budget to district goals, e.g., having each kid with at least 1 AP class

Must be a good read on assets and liabilities, and how to leverage them

*Must be more than tweaking what we're doing, and managing the resource that we have

*Must develop a team, not have the savior mentality

*Must have cultural competence, understanding communities of color, income, demographics, etc.

Must restore level of trust between supt. and board and prove him/herself to new board members, and must keep lines of governance and management separate

No preconceived agenda or ideology which can cloud the goal of education

Need someone who is not worried about where next job is

Needs to get involved, need to know "who's who" (e.g., leaders of the business and religious communities)

Not an ideologue

Not become paralyzed by the data, but use it to make good, sustainable decisions

Not ready to go from one initiative to another without testing and evaluating what's working/not working

Open minded about resource allocation

Open to parents, teachers,

Passionate about all kids learning

Perform due diligence on recommendations and completely understand rules and regulations

Political skills

Present and engaged

*Primary instructional leader for the school district

Priority-setting

*Professional Development: encourage teachers to become teacher/leaders; workshops on technology implementation

*Promote high expectations for all students and personnel.

Promotes accountability, i.e., making sure the people are executing, asking, "What do I need to fix"?

*Proven leadership as a principal, 500-600 students or more

Proven track record in dealing with student achievement improvement and closing achievement gaps

Realistic and in touch

Realistic, collaborative educational vision and commitment to excellence

*Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools

Responds In a timely fashion

Relationship-oriented

Respects teachers and the work that they do

Restore a sense of pride in what SOMSD education has been

*Restore respect for the lines between management and governance

Restructuring central office

*Seasoned educator who can demonstrate a keen understanding of teaching, learning and what works for students

Should find time to teach, to show connection to the instructional core

Should respect that different parents want more options and should accommodate different approaches to education

*Should want to be part of SOMSD

Shrink initiatives and get schools on the same playing field

Social media expertise

Someone who's always learning and tries new things, but implement thoughtfully and purposefully

Stresses accountability for all, not just a selected few
Strong backbone, ability to take lots of criticism and feedback
Strong leadership, willing to say no when necessary
*Superintendent relations with the board transcends the board
Supervision/supervisory experience and capabilities; recognizes challenges in supervision
Support everyone at all levels, e.g., implementing the teacher evaluation system
Thick skin
Think differently, think bigger: take us to another level
Transparent on budgets, where money is being spent, salaries, and economics
*Understands communication skills must be a critical and essential component of moving the school district forward
Understands technology and take a look at each building to correct inequities in technology
*Understands that he/she reports to the entire board
Understands that parents are involved and education, and can't be afraid to engage with them or adversarial
Understand the difference between transformation and evolution of the district
Understands the need for cultural competency in this setting
Understands the suburban (vs. urban) mentality
*Utilizes input when making decisions
*Vigilant about promoting what SOMSD already has in place
*Visible; high visibility
Want someone who can rebuild the sense of excellence in the district
Want someone who is going to be supported to institute the vision
Want someone who knows their job, and is competent as an educational leader
Wants somebody who can move the district, and needs to be a superintendent on more than just paper
Well connected professionally and nationally so that the district is represented
Will make sure tools are available for teachers and in schools
Willingness to roll up sleeves and get into the mix; should be willing to "help you" not punish you

Selection Criteria - Superintendent of Schools **South Orange & Maplewood School District**

Academic Criteria:

- Subscribes to SOMSD's mission to educate the whole child
- Demonstrated successful educational leadership in multi-cultural, multi-dimensional district with a comprehensive high school
- Deep experience in curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Promotes high expectations for all students and personnel
- A proven track record in increasing academic performance and accountability for all students, including special needs populations
- Passionate about closing achievement gaps
- Understands and embraces cultural competence, diversity, and the role of the district in promoting those values
- Has the capacity to innovate, implement and evaluate academic solutions that respond to long-standing or emerging needs
- Teaching experience

Operations Criteria:

- Demonstrated ability to recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain talented and effective personnel throughout the District
- Demonstrated experience in dealing with school district finances and long range facilities planning
- Technology-oriented, with the ability to map out how to maximize the use of existing and future technologies
- Looks forward to grasp what developments or trends could positively or adversely affect SOMSD
- Has senior managerial and/or leadership experience in operating and executing plans in a complex organization
- Able to creatively use resources to maintain continued support for, and confidence in, the school district
- Has the capacity to plan strategically, implement effectively, and be adaptable when necessary

Communication:

- Superb internal and external communications skills
- Demonstrated ability to set and communicate goals and priorities
- Advocates for SOMSD at the local, state, and national levels for resources, support, policy formation, etc.
- Visible and understands role as an integral part of the community
- Listens to and effectively represents the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members

Professional Skills:

- A team and capacity builder with and for the board of education, school district, and community
- Proven ability to build consensus through effective conflict resolution
- Well connected professionally
- Creates professional and productive working environments
- Understands how to motivate, inspire, and challenge employees

Personal Skills and Characteristics:

- Listens deeply to concerns and issues, then acts pragmatically
- Approachable, personable
- Has humility and is willing to admit mistakes
- Has the courage to make difficult decisions, especially in light of increasingly limited resources
- Collaborative, decisive, and transparent in action
- Demonstrated commitment to professional learning throughout one's career (e.g., Ed.D.)

Summary of Online Survey Feedback

Community Member	All 25 characteristics listed above
Community Member	All hands-on to deal with the Achievement Gap.
Community Member	An education focused leader who will restore M-SO to the academic pinnacle it enjoyed before it began catering to the demands for diversity, multiculturalism, and other goals unrelated to academic excellence.
Community Member	As a tax paying community member, I'd be interested in learning more about the responsibilities of this role, particularly around what precisely what does a superintendent contribute to the district to command such high compensation? Frankly speaking, many of the characteristics listed are high-level goals that seem very difficult to evaluate and measure one individual's impact. My proposal would be a radical change to the leadership structure, empowering principals to expand their scope and take on additional responsibilities while exerting fiscal responsibility, or perhaps a district wide CFO role to cover budgeting. A one-year trial with no superintendent might be able to prove that there had been no meaningful change in the absence of this role. Additionally, my expectation as a taxpayer is that the superintendent is working all 12 months of the year. Teachers should follow this rule as well.
Community Member	Calm, Creative, insightful and accepting of the various cultures of the community
Community Member	Communicates well about all issues and never leaves the final outcome of an issue that needs to be communicated to a subordinate
Community Member	Continue the push for equitable opportunities for learning for all students and continued push toward exemplary classroom practice. This person must work for the interests of every student, NOT every vocal parent.
Community Member	Effectively raise expectations and participation of parents and other stakeholders in the success of the district. Community members are not as engaged as could be after many years of starts and stops in changes. The superintendent needs to have the skills to immediately get the students, parents, teachers and administrators on board to any changes that he/she may consider.
Community Member	Having been a strong supporter of Dr. Osborne, I believe the incoming superintendent should have a strong appreciation of where our district was prior to Dr. Osborne arriving and the initiatives Dr. Osborne implemented. I believe Dr. Osborne was on the right track and that his successor should continue on that path.
Community Member	I am a resident of South Orange and Maplewood before that. I have two school age children (elementary and middle school), and after attending a few district open houses, I realized that the education provided here was not something I could support. Thus, my children attend private school. This is a huge sacrifice for us, considering what we pay in taxes here. I urge the new superintendent to look at the population and ask questions about why so many of us are not choosing public school. He/she will gain some insight on what changes could be made. I also encourage the search committee to look for someone with not only a strong educational background but also a business background to help manage the budget.
Community Member	I hope the new superintendent will act quickly to end the districts destructive delevering fiasco and to implement the GATE program that has been mandated by the state
Community Member	<p>I would like the superintendent to address the ineffective monitoring of children who do not live in district who illegally attend our schools. It is overburdening the taxpayers. If my child and her friends and their parents KNOW who these children are, why isn't our district trying to effectively enforce this problem?</p> <p>Many parents have shared that they are afraid to be seen as racist. Is that our district's reason as well? The taxis that drop off in front of the high school and at most schools are readily viewed and have Irvington and Newark boldly advertising their origin.</p>
Community Member	It is important that a superintendent fosters a well-balanced relationship between the school community and the board. The superintendent should fully understand the true nature of diversity within this community. This community is composed of the nuclear

	family, single parent households, gay families, multi-racial families, two parent working families and more. The superintendent should make sure the school community reflects this diversity by recruiting to reflect this. Finally, the superintendent has to respect the staff and expect the staff to be held accountable for academic growth; therefore, staff development with cultural understanding towards students learning and behaving differently is mandatory.
Community Member	Necessary characteristics: to be effective in the dealings with school administrators. To have a compassionate and educational background
Community Member	One who understands the importance of developing programs for all students based on their ability including gifted and talented
Community Member	She or he needs to know how to educate children with proven efficacy, not just philosophical fluff. We don't need another politician. The superintendent needs to be a person who can actually do what's best for the majority of students, if not all students, regardless of who is yelling the loudest, be that school board members, teachers, administrators, community members. Frankly I haven't met a good superintendent yet. They seem to get worse each new one we get. I'm not sure a good one exists, as they seem to just get recycled. Someone who has other experience, not just in education, might be a better pick.
Community Member	Solution focused, collaborative, interested in the community
Community Member	The Superintendent should lead a TEAM, not set up factions to quibble with each other. The achievement gap is important, yes, but so is expecting the best of every student and challenging every student to do their very best.
Community Member	The superintendent should recognize and reaffirm the basic proposition that academic achievement of students is the principal function of the school system. All other objectives, including, inter alia, diversity, are distant seconds to this primary mission. Taxpayers in this district are dismayed at the high cost of producing abysmal academic performance in statewide testing and rationalizing the unacceptable results by lauding alleged progress in ancillary areas. Lead, accept responsibility and be prepared to be held accountable for measurable academic performance. We are long time residents of this community whose children benefited from a marvelous educational experience in the District, capped by graduation from what was then recognized to be the premiere high school in N.J. I would not now move to this District because of the demonstrable failures in its school system.
Community Member	There are a good number of smart folks who have obtained their certification in recent years...I attended classes with some of them. Don't just consider the candidates who have years and years of experience and throw crazy amounts of money at them. Do a search that includes some forward thinking people who are not asking for the world.
Community Member	Understands changing needs of students and how to adjust teaching to their needs. Strong relationship skills and able to work well with all groups including the school board. Not afraid to take a strong stand and hold to it for the good of the students and community.
Community Member	We need a superintendent who is involved with and understands our unique community and promotes a better education for ALL students.
Community Member	We need a superintendent who will learn the community's racial history and take seriously closing the academic achievement gap. The individual should ensure that all students get the best out of the district's many assets-- all students, not just the academic/economic elite.
Community Member	We need someone who can promote innovation and special programs in the district. We need someone who can promote excellence at all levels. We need someone who can build a positive culture but also hold teachers and administrators accountable. The superintendent needs to improve communication and relationships with the community. The superintendent should have a deep understanding of teaching, curriculum, Common Core, etc. He or she should be an instructional/educational leader. We do not need another manager.
Community Member	We should get someone like Osborne - he brought the district further in his time here than twenty years before
District Administrator	Good with both students and parents in terms of the addressing of issues in the school

	district. They must also be active within the schools in terms of talking to students.
Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Achievement gap must be high priority - A focus on minority preparation for (starting in elementary and middle school) and access to the most rigorous course offerings in high school - Athletic facilities need to be updated and we need a title IX audit
Parent	Communication is key to fine leadership. Bringing all the various and diverse communities in our towns together to better understand and respect each other.
Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Genuine respect and unconditional positive regard for all individuals involved in and affected by the schools - Willingness to accept and respond to feedback - Ability to make stakeholders feel valued and heard, even in (or especially in) cases where the stakeholders' recommendations or requests are not being met - Comfort with being able to say "I don't know" - Creative approach to shaping the job to maximize strengths - both of the super and of leaders within the district - Commitment to hiring and supporting strong leaders across the district and giving them authority to facilitate success - Commitment to social justice and inclusion
Parent	I don't believe all the emphasis should be on improving the achievement gap at the expense of the higher performing students.
Parent	Must be able to work effectively and have best interests of students as priority when dealing with unions and with state and local government. Must possess good vision, communication and leadership skills.
Parent	<p>*The person should come from a similarly diverse district with similar financial concerns.</p> <p>* The person should be willing to make a long-term commitment to the district.</p>
Parent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Someone with a personal or professional understanding of African-American experience; 2. Someone who understands that race-neutral policies have limitations and is willing to implement, within a legal framework, policies that will raise academic performance among most disadvantaged student of color; 3. Someone who appreciates the value of a district-wide gifted and talented program and is committed to implementing such program in the near future.
Parent	A Digital Leader. A person who works collaboratively with the teachers in the district and does not have an "us against them" mentality. A person who always puts the students first. A person who leads by example. A person who understands the need for professional development especially in the areas of technology. A person who works to cultivate teacher leaders. Who communicates well with staff and parents. Who is willing to admit when a mistake was made.
Parent	A key quality that is absent in your list and glaringly absent in discussions is the importance of the superintendent to be "Chief Fundraiser." We need someone who understands and appreciates money, and knows how to rattle the cages of the private sector, companies and local individuals, to create resources for the district. Somehow there is this underlying

	current here that public-private partnerships are evil, when, in practice, they could be tremendous resources for building world-class education in SOMSD. We need someone who has "been there, done that."
Parent	A knowledgeable and caring person who is approachable, affordable and responsive to the needs of students and parents. Live in the school district
Parent	A leader who is able to address the achievement gap with data driven programs while not ignoring other needs of the schools/students such as an effective and evidence-supported G and T program.
Parent	A superintendent must have a STRONG vision and goals, which are CLEARLY COMMUNICATED to everyone who reports into him/her as well as all of the constituents in the districts. S/he must have HIGH expectations of all students and principals/administration and work effectively and utilize all of the HIGHLY CAPABLE parent resources this district has to offer, while being mindful of the tax burdens these parents have. S/he must be creative and an 'outside the box' thinker who can do the most for students with out increasing tax burdens on parents. With The Achieve Foundation and the many talented and educated parents who would be more than willing to donate their time and experience, I think it's possible to achieve this.
Parent	A superintendent needs to make sure that all aspects of a student's, staff's, and parent's experience is consistent across learning and social experiences and conflict resolution situations.
Parent	A superintendent who has a strategic plan and program for engaging parents to become more involved and responsible for children's academic success.
Parent	Ability to provide for comprehensive, consistent, continuously improving curriculum for all students, including those with special needs at both ends of the spectrum.
Parent	Add help to parent who have special needs students who attend school out of district.
Parent	Additionally, foster and support the value of extra-curricular activities to ensure our students have access to a balanced education.
Parent	Advocate for the rising need of special education supports throughout school district, especially Middle and High School level.
Parent	Although I did not meet the previous superintendent, he had a presence, heard his voice and did a terrific job as far as I my daughter's progress.
Parent	An appreciation for the needs of high-achieving and gifted students, and a willingness to be flexible with curriculum to meet students' needs.
Parent	An individual that is a disciplinarian.
Parent	An understanding of and commitment to the importance of social-emotional development as a factor in academic success -- not only in early childhood but right up through high school
Parent	An understanding of our community's unique appreciation of THE ARTS, and a commitment to the value of arts as a vital part of a complete education. Our superintendent should celebrate the rich DIVERSITY of our community, and continue to work towards our goal of serving ALL our students. Should make COMMUNICATION with the community a priority, through town-hall meetings, mail, email, State of the District speeches, and other means; and should lead the faculty, staff and community by presenting a clear vision of priorities and goals.
Parent	As a parent from a non-traditional family in this community (same gender parents of two boys), it is imperative to me that the new principal be 1) foremost competent 2) reflects the diversity of this community and perhaps is lesbian or gay to clearly demonstrate how diverse/tolerant we are as a community. I would seriously like to see the district make every effort possible to recruit someone from the lesbian or gay community for this position.
Parent	As a parent I would like increased transparency and communication about district growth

	priorities and strategic plan. What needs to improve and what are the steps to do so. Also I would like a "way in" to engage in district policy.
Parent	Awareness on how the school district impacts the community, especially regarding taxes and school facilities.
Parent	Be confident enough to value staff that doesn't necessarily agree with him or her. Good communication to all stakeholders. Effective budget management and long term planning. An understanding that he or she serves and works for this community and our needs.
Parent	Brian Osborne was terrific. Would like to continue/build on what he achieved.
Parent	Bring a more global perspective to CHS
Parent	Budget conscience! I love my kids and I think they are getting an excellent education. Can you please hire someone who doesn't throw money at every problem? Soon my taxes will be too high for me to live here, with 71% of the taxes going to the schools I'd like to see the money spent wisely.
Parent	-Can effectively respond to parents as opposed to hiding from them since parents are the best effective advocates/enablers of students' success. -Is dissatisfied with lazy notions such as "drug use and teen sex are just a normal part of adolescence" -Concern for results over "Political Correctness"
Parent	Candidates should be required to submit a comprehensive 4-5 year strategy for making improvements in the SOM school district.
Parent	Characteristics listed mentioned, "recruiting the best talent," etc., but I wish there was an option for "getting rid of poor performing teachers, etc."
Parent	Clear, effective communicator. Integrity. Accountability.
Parent	Commitment to academic excellence. Commitment to introduce a gifted and talented program.
Parent	Committed to enhancing diverse values/beliefs held within MWSO communities; many families migrate to the "two towns" for this reason; seeking solace in knowing their children will be educationally "raised" in an inclusive school system. The system's leadership must continuously support and actively engage his/her staff in this mission to assure its implementation. Despite the administrative role that dominates, the position requires a "hands-on" approach with routine connection to each district school to maximize each one's potential.
Parent	Common sense and flexibility. Understanding the ultimate goal of education. For example, if a high school student has the opportunity to participate at a high level in a given activity, whether sports, arts, service, research or other but will have to, for obvious reasons, miss school days, to support the student in that activity and not penalize the student because of school absences.
Parent	Communicate & actively lead the vision of the district — so changes, progress, technologies, programs etc. are implemented in a timely & effective manner for students, staff and parents to benefit from.
Parent	Communication is the key to success, whether it's communicating one's vision, goals, or commands. Clear, concise, and timely communication could be the difference between success and failure. While Dr. Osborne stated that communication was important, he did not follow his own advice. Too many times, decisions were made in a vacuum without input or made because of ideology rather than reality.
Parent	Communications is a weakness of the district, whether by choice or oversight. We need to remedy that, but not by hiring a dozen people. Use what we have better.

Parent	Comprehension of diversity of special needs population and associated long-and short-term requirements (within and outside of district) to ensure their needs are exceeded.
Parent	Constant, clear communication to all.
Parent	Differentiating for all levels of students
Parent	Do not implement new initiatives without a comprehensive plan for evaluating outcomes. Report outcomes fully and honestly. Develop a comprehensive plan for evaluation of recently implemented initiatives, including full-day K and middle-school IB.
Parent	Drive change around the way education is provided. Move away from a situation where stakeholders only have rights, everything is a democracy etc. etc. to an environment where rights are equally important as obligations, schools are not a democracy and performance is expected and measured
Parent	Effectively manage principals and recruit those who promote a positive learning environment for teachers and students. There is a ton of negativity among teachers and students at SOMS regarding the current principal.
Parent	Financial management and building maintenance are big problems - we spend so much fixing problems in the short run and not investing for the long run. I think finances and building / construction need to be considered hand in hand
Parent	Find some one like Brian Osborne.
Parent	First and foremost is that this is a leadership position and candidates should be above par is this category.
Parent	First, someone who puts primary emphasis on creating accountable, warm, nurturing learning environment for students--who does not prioritize test scores over education, but who keeps teachers and administrators accountable for welfare and learning environment. Second, someone who is a good, experienced manager, who can motivate right down the line, cut red tape, solve problems, budget wisely. Third, while not necessarily cutting edge in educational theory her/himself, someone who can give support to new initiatives and experts who will upgrade and modernize quality of curriculum and educational approach.
Parent	First, we need to identify someone who has all of the key characteristics noted on the previous page. Second, we need to identify someone who is committed to our district for the medium- to long-term--not just someone who wants to use it as a stepping-stone to move onto another district. Third, the key priority should be academic excellence, not pandering to it. That means pushing teachers to teach (rather than to be "friends" with our students); making parents understand that not everyone is academically "equal" (i.e., leveling is okay!); and, pushing our students to do and learn more.
Parent	Focus like a laser on high standard academics, and steer clear of gimmicks or distractions (e.g. be mindful of technology in this regard) or constituencies advancing any other social agenda than high standard academics
Parent	Focus on building gifted and talented education at the elementary level.
Parent	Focus on improving academic performance and have zero tolerance for non-performing teachers.
Parent	Focus on learning, and relax with the "politically correct" and "creatively diverse" rhetoric. We want our children to learn, and be able to adapt with the ever-changing climate. NOBODY cares about color, race, or special needs!!! Help our children learn, grow, and adapt! There is NO reason that any "outliers" need to dictate the curriculum as they have done in the past. This is what MANY of us opt to send our children to private school, even though our kids attend public school.
Parent	Focus on the District's Vision 2016 goal of: MAKING EACH CHILD'S EDUCATION AN EXHILARATING EXPERIENCE FOR THEM, ENGAGING THEIR INTERESTS AND PASSIONS!
Parent	Focused effort on character development.
Parent	Following through with projects, allowing creativity within the curriculum,

	Giving teachers the ability to think and do out of the box, communication is key as well.
Parent	For too long this district has had segregated classrooms. This happened despite the fact the vast majority of the students scored in the Proficient range on NJASK, the vast majority of white Proficient students were placed in the higher track and the vast majority of the black Proficient students were placed in the lower track. This set those students to have low expectations and fed into the achievement gap. Such insidious institutional discrimination must be eliminated. Setting high expectations for all students without regard to race or perceived ability is what we should strive for. Moreover, it is folly to waste scarce resources on the most able at the expense of the least able. If parents think they have little geniuses, let them do MOOC courses for their little Einsteins. The truth is that in grade school they thought Einstein was stupid. Good thing he wasn't tracked and told he was stupid
Parent	Fostering a greater sense of community among all of the schools - more sharing of ideas and supporting one another.
Parent	Genuine commitment to the students of this community
Parent	Get another Brian Osborne. Get someone with strong educational experience, NOT someone from the business community.
Parent	Given the recent turmoil in other New Jersey districts thanks to divisive Superintendents (e.g., Montclair and Highland Park), I believe it is crucial to find a superintendent who will stand up for the community's mission statement and students, even when doing so can be a challenge in the face of state-based mandates. I am very happy to see this survey and the generally participatory approach to this search.
Parent	<p>Has a strong understanding of our:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -District demographics (Race, SES, SPED) -Academic strengths and weaknesses of our district <p>*** especially the student achievement of our students by demographic -- especially the racial/SES achievement gap which is already large early in elementary school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Different parent and school personnel perspectives on current 'hot button' issues: Deleveling, G&T, IB, SPED implementations and funding, etc. <p>Questions for candidate (in survey):</p> <p>1. Our academic performance data shows that on average, in elementary school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our White students demonstrate nearly the highest NJ ASK performance in the State, as compared to other districts' White students. - However, our Black students NJ ASK performance is only middling as compared to other districts' Black students -- even though we are one of the wealthiest districts with a sizable Black student body. - What might you explore as possible causes of this difference? - And how might you address some of those causes? <p>2. Some hot-button issues have gotten strong reactions from parents on both sides of the issue, resulting in a divided community of parents (e.g., Leveling / Deleveling).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you approach an issue (e.g., your messaging about policy changes, implementation plan, etc.) if it has the potential to (or already has) divide the parents who support vs. who are against the policy change?

	<p>3. The leveling/placement programs that are in place appear to be confusing to parents. Also the information about how to change one's placement (e.g., to take a step-up class in the Summer) seems to arrive too late for many to incorporate this into summer plans. The leveled classes appear to have an 'exclusion' philosophy (those who meet some criteria, but not all, cannot attempt a higher level class), rather than a 'recommendation' philosophy (e.g., a level is recommended, but a student who meets at least one criteria of a higher level may attempt the higher level if they wish).</p> <p>Do you:</p> <p>§ agree with this 'exclusion' leveling philosophy?</p> <p>§ Or would you lean towards a 'recommendation' philosophy?</p> <p>§ Or would you wish to do away with all levels in all content areas (including or excluding AP classes)?</p> <p>If you wish to keep some levels/AP classes, are you aware of any methods to provide options to students/parents in order to reduce barriers to entry to higher level/AP classes, while ensuring registering students have the skills needed to be successful in the more difficult courses?</p>
Parent	<p>Has to identify and inspire change and growth. Has to be more involved in supervision and leadership of department supervisors, principals, special education, dept., etc. Has to be able to devise and implement strategies to deal with specific problems, such as low math test scores of middle school special education students.</p>
Parent	<p>He or She must be Proactive:</p> <p>The exceptional leader is always thinking three steps ahead. Working to master his/her own environment with the goal of avoiding problems before they arise.</p> <p>Flexible & Adaptable:</p> <p>An effective leader will know how to adapt to new surroundings and situations, doing his/her best to adjust.</p> <p>A Good Communicator</p> <p>As a leader, one must listen...a lot! You must be willing to work to understand the needs and desires of others. A good leader asks many questions, considers all options, and leads in the right direction.</p> <p>Respectful</p> <p>Treating others with respect will ultimately earn respect.</p> <p>Quiet Confidence</p> <p>Be sure of yourself with humble intentions.</p> <p>Enthusiastic</p> <p>Excitement is contagious. When a leader is motivated and excited about the cause people</p>

will be more inclined to follow.

Open-Minded

Work to consider all options when making decisions. A strong leader will evaluate the input from all interested parties and work for the betterment of the whole.

Resourceful

Utilize the resources available to you. If you don't know the answer to something find out by asking questions. A leader must create access to information.

Rewarding

An exceptional leader will recognize the efforts of others and reinforce those actions. We all enjoy being recognized for our actions!

Well-Educated

Knowledge is power. Work to be well educated on community policies, procedures, organizational norms, etc. Further, your knowledge of issues and information will only increase your success in leading others.

Open to Change

A leader will take into account all points of view and will be willing to change a policy, program, cultural tradition that is outdated, or no longer beneficial to the group as a whole.

Interested in Feedback

How do people feel about your leadership skill set? How can you improve? These are important questions that a leader needs to constantly ask the chapter. View feedback as a gift to improve.

Evaluative

Evaluation of events and programs is essential for an organization/group to improve and progress. An exceptional leader will constantly evaluate and change programs and policies that are not working.

Organized

Are you prepared for meetings, presentations, events and confident that people around you are prepared and organized as well?

Consistent

Confidence and respect cannot be attained without your leadership being consistent. People must have confidence that their opinions and thoughts will be heard and taken into consideration.

Delegator

An exceptional leader realizes that he/she cannot accomplish everything on his own. A leader will know the talents and interests of people around him/her, thus delegating tasks

	<p>accordingly.</p> <p>Initiative</p> <p>A leader should work to be the motivator, an initiator. He/she must be a key element in the planning and implementing of new ideas, programs, policies, events, etc.</p>
Parent	<p>He should be able to reach and connect with people with different cultural and financial backgrounds.</p> <p>Display diplomacy skills and excellent communication skills. Be a risk taker- be innovative and well versed in education.</p>
Parent	<p>Find a way to relieve the tax burden placed upon all citizens in this community period.</p> <p>Maplewood was once a community of blue-collar workers in which their children could receive a quality education. Now even the Wall Street Brokers in my community find it to be a struggle to survive. The cost of living in a community in which people were once able to retire is gone and is all due to the cost of educating our children. This cannot continue. The new superintendent must make this priority number one! The BOE can no longer be allowed to set its own budget. It has proven time and time again that it cannot handle such a task.</p>
Parent	<p>Help manage curriculum changes/modifications to focus on the three "R"s that are sorely lacking in NJ. For example, inclusionary classrooms are failing both higher and lower performing children.</p>
Parent	<p>Highly intelligent, with clear vision of what our diverse needs to do to remain strong in the areas we excel as well as in the areas where we lag behind. He/She must be able to articulate to all invested parties that his/her vision and concrete plans for achieving goals. Must respect and seek input of all parties but ultimately do what is in the best interest of all students. Must respect and celebrate our diversity without using it as an excuse for less than stellar performance and be able to talk candidly about racial issues as they arise. Must be able to consider all sides of an issue before making decisions that stakeholders feel strongly about and be able build consensus and trust among parents, staff, and students.</p>
Parent	<p>Honest, open and clear communicator.</p>
Parent	<p>I am hoping for a superintendent who doesn't just rubber stamp what each school is doing, but who is actively encouraging principals and teachers to adopt progressive approaches to education, and who will support parents who propose progressive changes to the way schools operate. We are a community of very educated people, yet it feels like our schools are operating on some outdated model. At Tuscan, for example, children have little (if any) contact with nature as part of their curriculum, even though study after study shows how beneficial this is. It feels like we are focusing too much on technology and mediating the behavior problems that arise from overcrowded, over stimulating classrooms, and not taking a holistic approach to how children learn.</p>
Parent	<p>I appreciate that you are soliciting feedback from all the stakeholders in this process, but this survey is an embarrassment and creates no confidence that this will be handled well. The qualities outlined here are both so vague as to be meaningless and so essential that you can't hire someone who isn't seemingly proficient in all of them. I assume that the board is composed of intelligent, responsible people who care deeply about choosing the right candidate and I trust that the rest of this process will be handled in a more thoughtful manner that addresses the needs of our community than this third-party survey indicates. Thanks for your efforts on behalf of our children.</p>
Parent	<p>I believe a superintendent in a district like ours that is extremely diverse has to possess a great track record elsewhere, be somewhat young in outlook and vision, be resourceful and fair; understand that there are many populations that need to be served educationally, not just those of "in need" families but those of high achieving children as well to keep our district competitive with surrounding school districts. Our past superintendents seem to be</p>

	<p>very focused on the achievement gap and that has outweighed the needs of the higher achieving students whose educational needs are equally as important although very different.</p> <p>I believe our new superintendent should be fully aware as much as one can be of any biases they may have coming into a position like this in our district as I believe that the former superintendent operated from a personal level in decision making at times and this did not serve the district well. We all come to our jobs, lives, etc. with bias, conscious and unconscious but most people who choose to live here are very open minded and hope to serve all children in our school system equally well. Our superintendent has to identify the needs of ALL of our students, those who excel academically as well as those who struggle. This cannot be set forth from a race driven ideology.</p>
Parent	I believe a superintendent should understand the importance of learning in general and should focus on quality education regardless of results in standardized testing. A superintendent should also see him/herself as representing the whole student body, not just those with parents who know how to shape political processes in their favor.
Parent	I believe having a clear, realistic but aspirational vision for the district and knowing how to implement that vision both through leadership and delegation is crucial for our superintendent.
Parent	I believe that the superintendent must hold the administrators and teachers accountable for their effectiveness. He or she must listen to and respect the concerns of parents.
Parent	I believe that the Superintendent needs to be a strong and visible leader in the community. He or she would be most effective with an open-door policy and a willingness to take the parent community seriously when discussing teacher concerns and policies
Parent	I believe the district needs to place value on serving the students who are achieving at a high level, particularly at the elementary school level. While the students who underperform are well taken care of, those who master the curriculum are languishing and bored, and a unique opportunity to engage them and develop a love of challenge and learning is being wasted. We will continue to underperform, as a district, if the top performers aren't challenged.
Parent	I believe the ideal candidate would possess the ability to work with a wide range of individuals, from principals to parents, to serve his/her number one priority; the education and well being of the students.
Parent	I care about a superintendent has experience in the schools. Our new superintendent should have an educational vision that is consistent with our diverse community. He or she should be committed to excellence for all students, regardless of race or academic achievement. He or she should be a good listener, but be willing to make unpopular choices if they are right for the district.
Parent	I don't believe we need someone who already is a superintendent to be a superintendent. Because of the salary cap and experiences with other districts, I believe we need to consider highly qualified principals, supervisors, and assistant superintendents who are ready to step up to take on a diverse district like SOMA. We also require a strong leader who has the ability to work with a diverse and large BOE; and someone who will help mend some of the frayed relationships at the schools.
Parent	I feel like the district is very good at many things, but that the system still has holes, in terms of equity at the elementary school level, and in terms of systematizing best practices and making sure classes are inclusive, but also challenging (I see no disparity in those two values). I feel like the previous superintendent, while very good at many things, did not do enough to try to engage teachers and make them feel vital and important, and in listening to their concerns. The system is nothing without intelligent, well-trained teachers, and sometimes worry about quality of new hires. This is of the utmost importance: hiring and retaining excellent teachers and correctly weeding out those who are not...
Parent	I hope the new superintendent is a person who values public education and is not a pilot fish for the education companies that make their money from charts schools.
Parent	I hope the next superintendent views the arts as integral to education and not just in the

	<p>interest of "well roundedness." I want a superintendent that sees the arts, music especially, as vital to brain development, for this is what the studies tell us. You want higher scores in math and science? The answer's not an assessment test; it's a clarinet. Or a paintbrush. Or playwriting. Or Shakespeare. We live in a highly artistic community with paltry (and rapidly disappearing) funding for the arts in our schools. Why? And why don't we draw from our local, high-level artistic professionals? There are parents here who sing opera at The Met. There are parents here who act on Broadway. There are parents here whose work is hanging in the MOMA! Our towns aren't that big... there must be an enormous amount of artists per capita... why don't you look into those statistics?</p>
Parent	<p>I liked Osborne...here are some of the things I liked</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thoughtful & intelligent...not dismissive - had a vision that balanced various constituents, but wasn't a flag in the wind - Recruited good principals to replace weaker ones
Parent	<p>I personally would like a Superintendent who continues with the impressive movement of our district into the 21st Century by the previous Superintendent--primarily, one who continues implementing the International Baccalaureate program from Middle School through High School, but at the same time understands not all students will go on to college (though, thanks to the program, which I am a product of from overseas education, they'll all be qualified to) and that, especially by high school, vocational education also needs to be offered.</p>
Parent	<p>I think it's very important for the Superintendent to understand our communities and appreciate what the challenges are here as well as where the strengths in this community lay.</p>
Parent	<p>I think the key issue is to find a change management leader who can set a vision, effectively engage stakeholders and build buy-in, and guide the district through a period of rapid changes (common core, assessment changes, technology changes etc.) in a way which improves outcomes for all subgroups in a very diverse community. In particular, I think the socioeconomic, political/attitudinal, and racial differences in the community have large effects on students coming into the district and what they are able to achieve in the district. Strong candidates should have a proven track record leading educational change for both low and high socioeconomic status students.</p>
Parent	<p>I think the superintendent should be an engaging and dynamic person who draws people together in a unified way. I think inspiring personnel to do what they can to assist in that goal is very important. Also I think the person has to have the balance of budget concerns with academic success and keeping the balance between the two is very important.</p>
Parent	<p>I truly hope we will continue to move forward on closing the achievement gap and find ways to inspire the less advantaged students to high achievement and academic self-esteem. This includes de-leveling so that no students are stigmatized. My family was very sorry to have just missed out on the middle school IB program but we believe this is a great initiative. I am skeptical that technology is the answer for improved educational quality, but challenging children to be critical thinkers and writers and to be literate in STEM certainly are.</p>
Parent	<p>I very much see this as a "living" position. Please hire someone who seeks to make their career/star rise in SOMA - NOT someone who is looking to retire from SOMA. That isn't about age - it's about energy, engagement and a constant desire to improve, advise, manage, lead and learn.</p>
Parent	<p>I want a superintendent who will implement a gifted and talented program and will support acceleration of smart students and accommodations for those who learn in non-traditional ways. I do NOT want a superintendent who is hung up with racial learning gaps. ALL kids should be given the same level of education and support. Race should not be an issue.</p>
Parent	<p>I was very happy with the performance of Superintendent Osborne in our district and would like to see the next candidate continue to carry out and continue some of the reforms that</p>

	<p>began during Osborne's tenure such as the implementation of the IB program, efforts to de-level programs, and continued professional development for teachers so that creative best teaching practices are enhanced to serve all students in our districts. It is important that we DO NOT return to the days of complacency and bureaucracy. We need a very smart, superintendent, that will engage ready to take on a diverse district with a committed parent community.</p>
Parent	<p>I would like a superintendent who is committed to ensuring the best education for special needs children in and out of the district.</p>
Parent	<p>I would like more challenging coursework for high-achieving students - they are sailing through without developing the right study skills, enrichment, curiosity or love of learning. Coursework is too easy.</p> <p>SOMSD also needs more consistency across schools. For example, Maplewood Middle School offers an academic honors/recognition/award program and SOMS does not. Is the superintendent aware of and addressing this gap?</p>
Parent	<p>I would like somebody who is at least open to the concept that Gifted Education is worth including in this district's plans. That Gifted Education is not elitist; that provision of a real Gifted Education program can serve to help NARROW, not increase, the achievement gap. That Gifted Education is needed at the elementary school level, because significant damage is done if the needs of gifted students are ignored.</p> <p>I also want somebody who understands the very important role that technology plays in our students' future and will make technology planning a priority. Computer Science is one of the most viable career options for our students, yet our district does not offer any real Computer Science classes. Somebody who understands that Computer Science is not the same as "information technology" or "programming."</p>
Parent	<p>I would like someone who is focused on gifted and honors students and less focused on dividing students by race.</p>
Parent	<p>I would like someone who understands special education and the importance of helping those children with needs to feel successful and strive to be good students.</p>
Parent	<p>I would like the leader of this district to be a person who has a palpable passion for learning and the particular community of learners found in MWSO. What is needed most in our schools is to allow students and teachers more freedom to express their collective gifts and talents and to not be barraged with directives handed down from "the board". The amount of homework in this district and the push to "get ahead" is getting out of control. We need a leader to step in and stop the madness, someone with a clear vision of what a well-rounded public school education is all about. Someone who will not cow-tow to the big bully in Trenton. This culture of "academic rigor" is lending itself to children and families having less time to BE. Also, children should be moving and playing much more during the school day than they are now. We have great concern about our children sitting in school all day and then coming home to sit more doing hours of homework and projects! Save the projects for IN SCHOOL. I cannot tell you how stressed we were this past year with one project after another with our middle schooler. Finally, a leader is needed who is a supporter of teachers. One who understands teachers and involves them in the decision making process. If teachers in the district are unhappy, the classroom environment will suffer and we have heard a lot about how stressed teachers are these days. Choose a leader who is a teacher at heart, one who makes decisions as if his/her own child will be impacted.</p>
Parent	<p>I would like the new superintendent to listen carefully to all voices in the community, instead of being guided by only his/her own visionary plan, to see the whole picture. I feel that the focus has been largely on the achievement gap, and while this is a problem, it is not a Maplewood/South Orange problem - it is a nation wide problem that is very complex. I would like the new super to see not only this one issue.</p>
Parent	<p>I would like the next superintendent--like Brian Osborne--to demonstrate a commitment to providing students fair and equitable access to all educational experiences and services regardless of race, economic background, or scores on standardized tests. I also hope for a</p>

	continued commitment to de-leveling, as well as to a focus on authentic assessments (portfolios, teacher observations, etc.) as opposed to tests. Finally, I would like to see greater emphasis on social and emotional development in the younger grades (and increased attention to developmentally appropriate early literacy, with less focus on decoding and writing in kindergarten).
Parent	I would like the Superintendent who has a pulse on our peer school districts - Westfield, Mountain Lakes, Millburn, Summit, Chatham, Madison, etc. - and works hard to ensure that we keep pace in terms of G&T classes, continued leveling at the high school and top level academic achievers. In particular, I think our District needs someone who will ensure that high-level achievers receive the support and challenges they need.
Parent	I would like to see a leader hired who doesn't seem to have a personal agenda. I would like to see a superintendent focused on encouraging individual achievement.
Parent	I would like to see a strong manager that holds his team accountable for a system that is competent and effective. I would like to see clear eyed assessment of whether programs and reforms are working and where they are not the flexibility to make appropriate change and support that change with excellent communication, and support for teachers and building leaders and continued assessment for excellent outcomes.
Parent	I would like to see a superintendent with experience and a vision to address the needs of gifted and talented students. We have decided to remove our daughter from Clinton based upon the inability to keep our daughter academically challenged. She had been in "gifted and talented" programs before we moved to Maplewood from Chicago, and started First Grade reading at a Second Grade level. When we spoke with her teachers about this, it seemed as if they were very limited by the options available in the school and the district. In the end, we began to consider her regular school day as her focused on her social development, and but chose supplemental afterschool classes and at home tutoring to deliver academics. I would like to see a superintendent hired with the capability and agenda to address this gap.
Parent	I would like to see an experienced professional take on the role in South Orange Maplewood. Someone who appreciates diversity (both racial and economic diversity) and understands its challenges. Moreover, I want a progressive leader who can lead the town forward with the IB curriculum, STEM research, adding extracurricular, developing into a top notch education system.
Parent	I would like to see someone that is from the community that has a vested interest. In addition, their salary should be competitive, so would stay. The former superintendent was wonderful. The taxes are high enough, in South Orange/Maplewood. We should do a lot better towards our teachers and school administrators.
Parent	I would like to see someone who engages in and promotes continuing professional development for all administration and faculty, from the very top to the very bottom. Teachers should be current in theories of learning and instruction, administrators should provide opportunities and funds for teachers to participate in conferences (perhaps even creating opportunities through in-house conferences), and staff should receive frequent (re) training on effective communication and interaction with stakeholders.
Parent	I would like to see the district improve its offerings for gifted and talented students. We have opted to move our daughter out of Clinton based upon the inability of the school to offer her adequately challenging work that enriched her inquisitiveness. When we spoke with her teachers, it sounded like their options were very limited by the rules and offerings of the district. We ended up looking at her school day as primarily social development time, and started supplementing her academically with outside courses and tutoring at home.
Parent	I would like to see the incoming superintendent work with the BOE to deliver and execute a comprehensive, clearly articulated plan for Gifted & Talented students -- a special-need population who currently do not receive any services in the lower and middle-grade levels, contrary to New Jersey state law.
Parent	I would prefer to hire a superintendent who has been a teacher and who has been in the classroom. Too many superintendents re worried about their own PR efforts and not about the teaching community and the children.

Parent	I would seek someone with deep understanding of what it takes to create a positive climate for teaching and learning (much greater emphasis on social-emotional learning beginning with the earliest grades; appropriate counseling services and additional resources made available for the hardest-to-reach students including one-on-one positive engagement with and support for families including facilitation of connection to community-based resources; introduction of civics into the curriculum so that all students see themselves as integral partners in an inclusive educational community, etc.). And, someone who will ensure that effective professional development services and supervision are provided for poorly performing staff.
Parent	Implement programs to encourage academically gifted students to excel.
Parent	In addition to the qualities listed above, all of which are important, the new superintendent needs to look at the current organizational chart and examine whether the current structure of 18 direct reports and assistant superintendents having little actual authority over educational initiatives in our schools or operational problems, and the incredible authority of the business administrator is a viable management model or one that is actually conducive to the implementation of best practices - whether they are educational, financial or operational.
Parent	In touch with school principals and management.
Parent	Intelligent, good communicator, able to make those with different opinions feel that their concerns are being listened to...
Parent	Intelligent, intuitive, communicative, committed.
Parent	Involvement in the community. Fund raising: with continuing cuts into education budgets alternative ways have to be found to raise funds/tools/books Strive for smaller class sizes. My middle school child's science class has 34 students - this is unacceptable
Parent	It is difficult to pick just 8 important issues on the previous list. I feel that they are all important.
Parent	It is essential that the superintendent provide the leadership, strategic direction and accountability so that the school community at large (educators, administrators, stakeholder groups, etc.) are guided most prominently by how to help kids be smarter, grow in their abilities and learn to make meaning as owners of their learning. Far too much attention is currently placed on whether students are completing all the check boxes that teachers ask them to do in a very traditional approach rather than educators understanding students individual needs and strengths, and how to help them facilitate their intellectual growth. This is a challenge right now for the district and it was evident to me in many ways throughout this school year. Perhaps the most glaring example was when I asked a teacher why my daughter was having difficulty in math and he stated, "he did not know." He proceeded to hand me tests and asked me for my thoughts.
Parent	It is imperative that the new superintendent embraces new best practices such as adaptive learning and look at innovative ways to improve productivity and cut costs.
Parent	It is important that the next superintendent believe that all students deserve an excellent education. It would be best that this person come from a similarly diverse and affluent community so that they understand the uniqueness of SOMSD before dire mistakes are made in the name of ignorance.
Parent	It is important that we hire a superintendent that already has the credentials and deep experience. Though the district may not be competitive enough with the salary that can be offered, we offer an amazing community and an exciting challenge that offers a wonderful opportunity to enhance one's resume.
Parent	It is important that we hire someone who understands the needs of a diverse community and is willing to be a leader in convincing people of the importance of serving all children

	well in a fair and equitable way. We need someone who can create strategies that include teaching all children at the highest levels and that result in racially integrated classrooms from elementary to middle to high school. A rigorous academic program and an inclusive environment are both critical to serving the needs of all families in this district. This superintendent will need a passionate commitment to this and a leadership style and communication skills that can bring the different constituents together on these issues.
Parent	It seems that action preceded communication in the past, action taken by the superintendent and administrators. Whether intentional or incidental, communication needs to improve and be consistent across all age schools in depth of information provided, and in the timeliness of delivery. Parents of students need information earlier, and often in more than one way. Providing information proactively can reduce the amount of reactive communication or "complaints" from unsatisfied stakeholders who often make judgments before having all of the information made available to them.
Parent	It would be nice to have a superintendent who is more interested in our school district than trying to make a name for him/herself so they can move onto a higher paying/profile position elsewhere. I would also like to see a superintendent who is not fixated on the achievement gap and de-leveling.
Parent	Just someone who stays connected with the community and schools that they are managing. I also want someone who appreciates music and the performing arts, and is not test-based on their focus of how the teachers and students are performing.
Parent	Knowledge of education and running a business
Parent	Leader who is a visionary, problem solver, good communication skills, excellent track record, can think outside the box, has integrity, interpersonal skills, advocate for students, understand education system, administrator, one who knows how to work with a diverse community, someone who is Hands on
Parent	Less focus on test scores and rote learning, more focus on creativity, individual learning styles and mixed ability classes (rather than dividing children by achievement level, particularly in high school).
Parent	Less politics. More concentration on improving all the district schools. Candidate should implement real deadlines for all actionable objectives. Candidate should review tenure policies and make recommendations.
Parent	Manage school fields and grounds that is safe and respectful of neighbors
Parent	Maplewood/South Orange towns are very interesting in that there are many Blacks residing here. We are professionals; some of us are at the top of our game. We (I) want the same things for our (my) children as our (my) Caucasian counterparts. The district needs a superintendent who respects and celebrates diversity, someone who will challenge his administrators and staff to be the same. He needs to be willing to purge the district of any provincial minds, so that it can move on to a greater tomorrow.
Parent	More focus on basic core educational requirements - like making sure there is adequate substitute staffing and that the schools are secure. Less experimentation (IB, de-leveling, ST Math entirely replacing paper-based homework, etc.). More, at least more visible, efforts to obtain more state funding, grants, etc. Someone who has a clear long-term vision for Special Ed and Gifted programming, as opposed to the constant changes in direction that we've seen in the past. Someone who truly values open, honest communication with stakeholders.
Parent	More transparency
Parent	Must be visible in schools and hold principals accountable. Must make sure kids are safe. Help budget in money to fix up these old buildings and portable classrooms that are 40 + years old.
Parent	My hope is that the new Super will share Mr. Osborne's stated values and vision for an education that values multi-intelligences, eschews a reliance on skills, drills, and standardized tests, and promotes excellence through rigor and an expectation that EVERY student can achieve.

Parent	My primary knowledge of the previous superintendent mainly concerns how badly he handled the Friday Night Live controversy a couple of years ago. I felt that the students' voices were ignored while "the offended staff member" needed to not be able to have so much power. I don't like seeing students treated unfairly. Just because someone is an adult does not mean they are right or should be defended. I would like the new superintendent to be willing to listen to the kids and be willing to stand up to staff who may possibly be in the wrong.
Parent	Need to hire someone who is willing and able to listen actively
Parent	Needs to be able to champion effectively for SOMSD within NJ government.
Parent	Needs to be able to make our teachers feel valued and that they are partners.
Parent	Needs to promote a progressive approach to learning and provide challenges for superior Performing students
Parent	Next superintendent should be someone who puts a priority focus on Columbia High School. Previous superintendents gave much attention to the earlier grades, e.g. elementary and middle. The high school needs the same level of emphasis on the quality of educational offerings, course rigors, support services for students, and the improvement of the physical plant.
Parent	Not succumbing to federal curriculum mandates that misrepresent history (common core) or stifle free and creative thinking.
Parent	One that comes with a plan that can reduce need for outside consultants, that inspires teachers to be exceptional in their performance and attracts good faculty
Parent	One trait not listed that I think is vital is for the Superintendent to be a champion for those working in our district's schools. Staff, teachers and administrators have a much wider, deeper range of tasks and expectations than ever before. One would hope we could bring on a leader who recognizes the challenges and promotes education for the valuable profession it truly is. Personally, I am looking to our BoE to be more visibly responsive to the community. The Board meetings as currently constructed are akin to a kangaroo court. I recognize time limits, but in no company I have ever worked in, is management allowed to sit mutely when asked questions by staff. If you are serious about effecting community engagement, you need to rethink the Board meeting process. No one wants to speak when no one is listening.
Parent	Open to new ideas, interested in developing a strong social and emotional learning program
Parent	Our community is diverse but the classes at the high school level aren't. Many parents of color opt to withdraw their children from public school after 8th grade because many feel students of color, especially boys, are ignored and/or deemed troublemakers. It's an unhealthy academic environment and has been for years. How will this change?
Parent	Our next superintendent needs to have a commitment to narrowing the achievement gap between black and white students; we also need a deep commitment to our special needs students, and need to work to avoid developing a two-tier system of education, one elitist and the other custodial. I think there should be a more open system in the acceptance of kids to AP classes and Honors classes should be more rigorous. Right now we are approaching a more elitist system with mostly white kids in AP classes. Children with mild to moderate learning disabilities are not given the same access to AP classes, as they should. The Honors classes are also becoming less rigorous and less demanding as a result. More attention is being given to those in AP classes. While APs are a good thing, we need to make sure we are working to raise the level of excellence at all of levels in our HS.
Parent	Our next superintendent should be an out of the box thinker, have excellent interpersonal skills, and be open to engaging with the community on a regular basis. He/she should have experience and be comfortable working in a demographically and economically diverse community. He/she should have had demonstrable success in increasing academic rigor and expectations for success for all students in previous job(s). He/she should have had experience successfully implementing differentiated learning methods/strategies in prior job(s). The search team must find a diverse slate of qualified candidates and should have

	both women and minority candidates in the final pool.
Parent	Particular focus on improving the quality of Columbia High School
Parent	Passionate about effecting change, decisive, understanding, sensitive towards teacher/parent/school board insight, open minded, full disclosure of positive and challenging topics/situations.
Parent	Place students and their education first. Enable EACH AND EVERY student to learn as much as possible. Everything else should just be a means to this end. Culture, accountability, diversity, communication...it all matters, but it all needs to be outweighed by the education of students. Anything that is in opposition to this overarching criterion should be beaten back (and yes, while there is not much a superintendent can do about it, this includes tenure policies that exist for the sake of teachers and not students).
Parent	<p>Please go back and re-visit this list. There is almost nothing in it that directly addresses the ability to make sure students get a good education. And there is almost nothing in that list that could be considered "plain language."</p> <p>"Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change."</p> <p>You mean "teaching"? Is that what "provide exemplary educational services" means? "Implement effective change"? What does that mean with regard to teaching? Why are they in the same item? And this is the only one that even seems to be about actual education!</p> <p>The rest of it IS important, but can't you please use plain, jargon-free language that doesn't sound like it came from the HR department of some undistinguished corporation? And can't you include in that list an opportunity for a parent like me to say that what I really care about is that my child gets a good education?</p>
Parent	Possesses a clear vision and able to facilitate implementation of policies that reflect not political correctness at the helm-rather best, common-sense practices that see the educational needs of students fulfilled.
Parent	Potential Candidate for a Superintendent role should embrace the genuine qualities and attributes of Leadership (High Integrity, Honesty, and a Passion for Academic Excellence and Performance. Superintendent should be able to develop, build and foster a climate and atmosphere of Trust within the School District among all stakeholders (Parents, Students, Teachers, Administrators, and BOE members. To deliver and meet or exceed expectations of achieving Academic excellence for all Students, including having the Vision to effectively plan and implement District Academic and School Budget Goals by seizing Innovative Educational opportunities to enhance Learning and Development among Students and Teachers with Parents as key stakeholders in our Communities.
Parent	Pragmatic, and make decisions based on facts, and analysis. And not be driven exclusively by politics and ideology.
Parent	Progressive in regards to where education is going and less attached to where it has been utilize funds efficiently for technology and the arts and control other costs which are indirect to education such as crossing guards, lunch aids, security, OT
Parent	Proven track record of accomplishment and success, self starter
Parent	Raise the bar for comparison benchmarks of SOMSD versus other schools...district schools should be evaluated against the top public schools in New Jersey, period, not the watered-down "schools of similar socioeconomic profiles" that previous superintendent espoused. The latter doesn't cut it with high performing students and their families. To achieve this the new superintendent needs intellectual leadership and fortitude.

Parent	<p>Recognize the fast pace of change, and the new ways of learning and new types of skills that need to be learned by our students.</p> <p>Recognize that students are individuals with personal strengths and weaknesses, not statistics that can all be handled with cookie cutter policies.</p>
Parent	Recognize the outstanding teachers and give them opportunities to share their techniques, tools, and ways of managing these diverse classrooms with their colleagues. Listen to the teachers who have proven themselves. We all know who they are--and they are the ones who feel their voices are not heard in board meetings.
Parent	<p>-Recognize the state mandated program that equally important to special education is a desire and willingness to expand "exceptionally able students who possess or demonstrate high levels of ability, in one or more content areas," and also be willing to educate staff about twice gifted educational programs (combo of special ed & gifted) "if they are to achieve in accordance with their capabilities."</p> <p>-Open channels to new and qualified curriculum/staff leaders who will revise curriculum in accordance with common core standards.</p> <p>-To recognize today's learning challenges and expand the school budget accordingly.</p>
Parent	Regarding approaches to learning/teaching, a superintendent with knowledge of the IB curriculum strategies would be ideal.
Parent	Respect the diversity of our community. Allow for academic leveling where appropriate or necessary.
Parent	Responsive to parent emails (I felt Osborne was). I hope they are familiar with the community and will address the facilities issues at the high school.
Parent	Responsive, attentive, broad-thinking
Parent	S/he should not be an ideologue or a fad-follower.
Parent	Seek to remove or transfer to desk job teachers who do not belong in a classroom after listening to feedback. Provide more info regarding college and other academic opportunities way before junior year. Should be more students training in how to study, how to get organized, etc. that even the more advanced students could benefit. The math acceleration track is lacking - students are tested in but then left to fend for themselves and more support is often needed for skipped material. Super should be approachable and respond rather than ignore emails. Should be more students driven rather than data or career driven and seek to truly benefit all.
Parent	Shared collaboration of teacher and administration
Parent	Should be an educational leader who weeds out poor and mediocre staff, administrators and subject matter coordinators. Less jargon and more action. Welcome parent input, figure out a process where high school students could opt up a level and provide them with the support to do so.
Parent	Should be knowledgeable and in favor of sustainability issues and ready to promote schools involvement in the new Sustainable Jersey for Schools program.
Parent	Should have some open door policies in place
Parent	Show an appreciation for ALL employees particularly the teachers who tend to be under appreciated for their time and expertise extended to the students.
Parent	Since we are launching the MYP in the middle schools, it would be helpful if the candidate has experience with or a deep understanding of that program.
Parent	Someone that believes in and is willing to rapidly implement a robust gifted and talented program.
Parent	Someone who can inspire teachers to do their best while building a community of learners. PS. this is not the best-designed survey at all. Not sure what you will really gain from the way this was designed.
Parent	Someone who can listen to and fairly consider the concerns of all of the parents, but also then make an educated and careful executive decision
Parent	Someone who has an open door policy and welcomes the input of parents and their

	concerns. Someone who will admit a wrong in their decision making and open to correcting it or making a change especially when it will benefit the children; and someone who will seriously look at the racial diversity in the suspension boys.
Parent	Someone who is able to lead others through change, who promotes accountability and effective management with an emphasis on excellence in every aspect of district management and oversight, someone who questions critically how to prepare successfully prepare students for challenges of today and tomorrow's world.
Parent	Someone who is able to navigate the political environment and get things done.
Parent	Someone who is dedicated to the students and their academic achievement. He or she should focus on improving academics for all children while respecting their feelings as to what they feel they need. For example: Standing up for good teachers who the children love and want to remain in the school rather than ignoring their request.
Parent	Someone who is here for the long haul, not until they reach their salary cap. They need to have a clear vision of what should be done with our school curriculum and have experience with adopting and maturing the long transition to achieve the highs goals, especially when there is such a high turnover of principals in our school district. With so many new and inexperienced supervisors, some now needs to have a steadying hand, not to mention the fact tee are in a contract year. A newbie does not have the teeth to cut it in the present environment of SOMA.
Parent	Someone who is proud to work here. Strong leader. Proven track record of decision-making. Not someone who is swayed by one group over another. Someone who understands we are NOT an urban school. Let's look at the entire demographic and listen to all not just the squeaky wheels. I want to be proud of this district. Proud of the SAT scores that come out of Columbia. Proud of the athletic achievements. Proud of the number of AP courses we offer. Proud of the colleges the kids go to. Proud of the elementary schools scores. People and families make a town but no question; these scores help our house prices and attract new families. Enough talking and meeting. Ready for some action.
Parent	Someone who listens to all the members of our varied community, and who values and respects the teachers who guide our children every day!
Parent	Someone who values intelligence as well as students and families driven by the pursuit of excellence. Someone who will stop the brain drain of high achieving students to private schools as they advance through the grades.
Parent	Someone who will stay with the district long enough to effectively implement long term planning.
Parent	Someone with a healthy mistrust of standardized testing, a pragmatic approach to managing the state's occasionally draconian mandates, and a deep appreciation for the expertise and craft required of strong teachers.
Parent	Someone with experience navigating a community with diverse socioeconomic, racial, and religious differences.
Parent	Someone with vision Someone who can synthesize views of multiple parties and then independently identify salient points to create action plan or agenda Someone who can effectively use available resources Role model
Parent	State a clear vision for the district and support all school administrators in carrying out the vision
Parent	Stop spending money needlessly for programs that do not have real, and practical educational merit.
Parent	Strong & clear educational vision to develop rigorous, competitive curriculum based on the International Baccalaureate as well as integration of the arts in all aspects of learning.
Parent	Strong and effective communication skills
Parent	Student/Parent centered not Educational Theory/Academic Speak Prioritizer in Chief - establish attainable goals and reach them for the short/middle/long term. Find low hanging fruit and act immediately on it to establish momentum.

Parent	Superintendent should implement/activate an effective system for the speedy identification and removal of all “non-South Orange/Maplewood” students from South Orange/Maplewood Schools.
Parent	Support the arts and sciences at all levels of learning
Parent	Teachers need to have more accountability for how they present the materials to the class- they need to teach and not just hand feed notes to the students- so better evaluation and training for teachers. Also, if one teacher is really amazing and does something that could create a great model for the other teachers- that should be duplicated- instead of only one team having the great experience, the experience should be brought to the other teams- or teachers of the same subject- this way no student misses out on that great learning experience - a Principal as well as a Superintendent should recognize these amazing teachers and use them as examples for others to follow- more accountability and zero tolerance rule for any students that get into fights, do drugs and misbehave in class- our tax dollars shouldn't be paying to babysit kids- they should be used to educate them.
Parent	Thank you for offering this survey. Much appreciated.
Parent	The biggest issue faced by the Maplewood South Orange School District is large class sizes at the elementary and middle school level. An exemplary superintendent would focus on this issue. School districts in Milwaukee and Madison Wisconsin have seen significant gains among students of all backgrounds through the K-3 15 program that limits class sizes to 15 in the lower grades. A kindergarten class size of 22 is unacceptable and will result in social and academic losses for or students. In addition, the superintendent should continue to support the development and implementation of the IB program in the middle school.
Parent	The candidate should an advocate for the teachers and staff, understanding that these professionals have the same goal as the superintendent--producing successful members of society.
Parent	The candidate should be an instructional leader, aware of the value of professional development for teachers.
Parent	The candidate should possess a history of working in a diverse community where the needs of each child and family vary greatly. The candidate should also be an exemplary leader, communicator and team player with the ability to successfully manage the needs/demands/requests of parents, teachers, principals and the board - all while ensuring decisions are in the best interest of our children's education.
Parent	The characteristics that define an excellent superintendent is one that institutes a safe, cooperative and caring school values that sets a great importance on ensuring that students are effective in school and in life. Having these high standards is key to an excellent superintendent.
Parent	The effective superintendent embraces his/her function as the primary instructional leader for the district, prioritizing student achievement and effective instructional practices as the foremost goals of the district. The superintendent must hone a clear and collaborative vision of teaching and learning, one whose goals for student achievement and the instructional program represent a synthesis of relevant research and the specific needs of the district. Moreover, the superintendent must play an active role in evaluating the implementation of district instructional programming. He/she must clearly and regularly communicate expectations for learning to faculty, monitor district progress toward student achievement goals, and embed professional development and coaching into the school day. As an instructional leader, the superintendent also must be a leader of data-driven practice: he/she uses student achievement data to identify gaps in learning, examine instructional practice, and inform future curricular and instructional decision making.
Parent	The individual hired should continue to grow and move the district toward excellence and equity in our schools. This person should understand the community's social and economic diversity and have successes working in a similar environment. The person should be budget consciences and creative and have the where with all to combine these two drastically different abilities to create meaningful programing that all children can benefit.

Parent	<p>The last superintendent implemented many new programs. I think a real weakness in our district is a failure to evaluate whether these new programs are effective, especially IB. I had a child the new IB program this past year and can't see any benefit, except they had more Spanish. I think the IB funds could be better used elsewhere. Would love to see somebody without agenda evaluate whether removing the levels from the middle school has helped or harmed students or had absolutely no impact at all. It's not enough to make changes for the sake of making changes. We need improvements and progress and less rhetoric about so-called "equity" and so-called "excellence." Many changes were made that neither equitable nor excellent.</p>
Parent	<p>The leader should have demonstrated, boots on the ground experience in educational change management especially in unionized setting with older workforce, knowledge of effective instructional practices and pedagogy (national school-wide and instructional innovations and reforms that have worked in other districts), and demonstrates concrete ability to skill and effectiveness of instructional and school leadership staff.</p>
Parent	<p>The most important characteristic for our incoming Superintendent to have is an appreciation and understanding for our diverse community and to take action to ensure that all teachers, staff and outside consultants that interact with our students appreciate the diversity as well. All staff employed by the SOMSD should have frequent and required diversity training to work in our district. This will help to raise the expectation levels for all of our students including our special education students. When expectations are raised, students will rise to those expectations and results will follow. Currently our district has too many educators that have low expectations for our students of color...which happen to be the majority of our High School. The dynamic needs to change. We should not only have high expectations for the few that are performing above level...but for all! The best and most effective teachers should not only teach those who are performing at high levels but also teach those that are struggling. There should also be opportunities for students of color to move from a lower level to a higher level more easily. Once a student shows improvement or mastery in a level they should be encouraged and allowed to move to another level. As a result students will continue to increase their skills. The person to fill this position must be one that is willing to put our fractured district back together. He/She must be willing to hear both sides (parents /staff that are disgruntled with the district and parents/staff that are happy with the district) and find a common ground that will serve all of our community. He/She must also have an open mind and be willing to include the growing community of homeschoolers in SO/Maplewood that have chosen to do so because the district has been unable to meet the needs of their children. While this may seem a hard task. These families are also a part of the SO/Mplwd community and our Superintendent should strive to include the homeschool community as well. Attachment of a law referring to homeschoolers participating in district activities:</p> <p>New Jersey Homeschoolers do not have a statutory right to access public school classes or extracurriculars. On November 9, 2011, however, the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) amended their bylaws to make it clear that local school districts may allow homeschool students to compete in interscholastic sports, provided the student (1) resides in the district for which he is playing, (2) obtains approval from his local school board and principal, (3) demonstrates that he is academically qualified and is receiving an equivalent education, and (4) complies with all requirements imposed on other members of the team. (See page 75 of the NJSIAA Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, and Regulations.) http://www.njsiaa.org/REFERENCES/11-12ConstitutionByLaw.pdf</p> <p>Similarly, the New Jersey Department of Education's website states that local boards of education may allow homeschool students "to participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities or sports activities." (See question 10 of the Department of Education's FAQs.) http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq_homeschool.htm</p>

	If a public school allows private school students to come onto public school property to receive special education services, they must provide the same access to homeschool students. <i>Forstrom v. Byrne</i> , 775 A.2d 65 (N.J. Sup. Ct. App. Div. 2001).
Parent	The most important, though by no means the only, element of good schools are good teachers. With Common Core, PARCC and teacher evaluation reform, as well as middle school reforms, still being carried out, the ability to support our teachers in meeting the challenges is probably the most important quality in ensuring a high quality education for all of our students.
Parent	The new superintendent must be technology and social-media savvy. Think "Cory Booker" savvy. Our principal, has no understanding of social media or its benefits for communicating with multiple constituencies. The current technology resources, ST Math, app recommendations, keyboarding software and hardware at Tuscan, are antiquated, ineffective and unworkable and the staff and administration do not have a grasp on it at all. As a result, our students are behind in this crucial area.
Parent	The new superintendent needs to build on the work done by Brian Osborne in ensuring high expectations for all students. Our district is approximately 50% African American and while we've made progress, we have work to do to ensure that all teachers, counselors and professionals have high expectations for all students, work to ensure that ALL students reach their highest potential and are not foreclosed from the opportunity to take challenging classes. We need to have our professionals receive training around implicit bias, given the disparate suspension rates and severe underrepresentation of Black students in AP and advanced classes.
Parent	The new Superintendent needs to have an intimate understanding of what makes our community unique.
Parent	The new superintendent should be able to communicate with all groups, especially addressing the achievement gap with the minority students and families. He/She should engage the community in an open and honest dialogue to develop a plan to raise academic achievement for all children.
Parent	The new superintendent should have a long and successful background in education and a demonstrated ability to manage teams and affect change without disrupting all of the great progress that SOMSD has made in the last decade. Superintendents that come from fields other than education don't understand the issues that impact students, teachers and building leaders on a daily basis. Therefore they will lack credibility with and empathy for their staff. A great superintendent needs to be grounded by the experience of holding various positions within the field of education - a teacher, principal, curriculum coordinator, etc. Also, be careful not to hire a serial superintendent. There are many bad superintendents out there that are making a career of bouncing from one district to another every two or three years. Ideally, we should hire someone relatively local that has a tie to this community and a long-term outlook for the position. Of course candidates will claim that they have a long-term outlook, but examine their histories. If there is a strong internal candidate, hire someone from within, someone that has proven him or herself over time, has already demonstrated a commitment to our community and our schools, and already has the respect of our school district staff and community.
Parent	The new superintendent should support opportunities for excellent programming for ALL students, particularly equity in access to challenging programs. While providing equity in access, there needs to be an expectation that there will be increasing equity in outcomes, and diminishment of achievement "gaps" aligned with race and class. Being a savvy user of data and having a willingness to evaluate the success of programs or initiatives is important, as well as being willing to both eliminate programming that appears ineffective and promote programming that appears effective -- both of which, depending on circumstances, can be politically challenging, especially without reasonable evidence (i.e., decent evaluation). It is also necessary for the next superintendent to be willing to FOCUS -- do a few things with commitment and do them well, and avoid doing too many things without enough emphasis or effort, which will sabotage them by having energy and attention

	<p>scattered.</p> <p>I am happy to participate as is helpful in the search process. I used to be director of research, evaluation, and assessment for Evanston School District 202 in IL (one of the other MSAN districts) and currently work as an education policy evaluator (thus some of my bias towards evaluation and evidence informing program/policy decisions by a supt).</p>
Parent	The next superintendent must have a specific plan with goals, benchmarks and timeline for narrowing the achievement gap within the district. The budgets presented must identify that this is a priority within our district. No superintendent should be hired unless they have proven experience in this area.
Parent	The next superintendent needs to listen to, engage and partner with parents and teachers. We need a more inspired leadership that works from a position of mutual respect for all our districts stakeholders and who can establish this as a predominant cultural trait among all our administration including our school principles.
Parent	The next superintendent should be committed to increasing the use of technology in education in meaningful ways. Teachers should have the necessary resources to be able to integrate technology with their students. In addition, I think the next superintendent should be mindful that test-preparation should not be a huge part of students' daily school days. A superintendent should be someone with a vision of the skills our students need in this 21st century (collaboration, critical thinking, synthesizing information). Students should be developing global perspectives and technology is a wonderful tool to help them do this.
Parent	The person would ideally be a member of the community who lives in our district
Parent	The previous question offers an option of managing all day to day. This person should be a leader, not manager. Why is it taking until September to get a focus group together? This should run like a corporation not the bureaucracy that is happening here. Shame on the board for not having the best interest of our children.
Parent	The previous Superintendent had an appreciation for the Arts. He supported the Arts to the highest degree. I would like the next Superintendent to have the same passion.
Parent	The superintendent must have a strong background as an educator in public schools. They must support ALL students: those with IEPs and the gifted students who are currently marginalized until they reach HS. Focus on solid basics and not trends.
Parent	The superintendent needs to understand the importance of a strong academic curriculum and access to challenging coursework appropriate for each student. Each student should be given opportunities to achieve their potential at whatever end of the learning continuum they are -- from struggling student to gifted. The district schools need to be centers of learning where academic achievement is valued and where character development and civic responsibility are cultivated. In grades 6-12, peer culture dominates and students do not receive enough adult mentoring and guidance. As a parent, I cannot do it all -- I need adults in the school to help my child develop into an informed and responsible citizen.
Parent	The superintendent of the South Orange-Maplewood School District should have as a primary goal the continued promotion of enriching educational and extra-curricular opportunities for advanced learners. The superintendent should also put great emphasis on college counseling and placement, both in terms of fostering relationships with colleges and universities as well as working with individual students to help them choose excellence in higher education.
Parent	The superintendent sets the tone for the district. She/He is vital to lead through collaboration with all stakeholders (including students and parents!) through a process where our schools are known for their high level of instruction and self-directed learning. This person would be instrumental in creating a district where students learn from a variety of ways. A place where children love learning and become global citizens and problem-solvers.
Parent	The superintendent should be a perfect balance of an intellectual educator and an informed businessperson who understands how to hire well, manage people and expectations, and allocate funds appropriately and effectively with a goal first and foremost to provide access to the highest quality education in a safe, secure and pleasant environment.

Parent	The superintendent should be a strong proponent of early intervention for students with special needs.
Parent	The superintendent should be an educational leader who can communicate his philosophy about education not be swayed by the latest educational fad. She/he should be able to control the budget and have a positive relationship with the teachers and community.
Parent	The superintendent should be an effective communicator, and develop better district wide communications.
Parent	<p>The superintendent should be an individual who cares about all of the student population regardless of race. He/she should be willing to communicate with parents regarding issues that arise with their children. He/she should also be willing to resolve issues between faculty and parents.</p> <p>The new superintendent should be willing to work with the community. All in all they should be a fair and moralistic person.</p>
Parent	The superintendent should be focused on four things 1) Recruiting and retaining the best teachers and principals 2) improving academic performance and learning among students 3) managing budgets well and limiting administrative overhead and 4) keeping schools safe and supportive. Everything else about "stakeholders" and "community engagement" is code for process driven BS.
Parent	The superintendent should be highly experienced, and have a successful track record for high student achievement. He/she should be well versed in preparing high achieving and high aspiring students for admission to highly competitive colleges.
Parent	<p>The Superintendent should focus significant energy on creating and supporting Gifted & Talented programs, in accordance with State Law, which the previous administration flaunted. The district devotes vast resources to Special Education, but basically nothing on the other end of the student body. The District has a legal, professional, ethical and moral obligation to support the individual learning needs of all of its students, not just one group.</p> <p>The result of the districts program as it currently stands is to push everyone to Average. Average should not be the objective of the district. The goal should be "above expectations" for each child.</p>
Parent	The superintendent should have a clear vision to guide him/her. Superintendent hopefully will have worked in education and preferably as a teacher. It would be great if superintendent has strong convictions and is not easily pressured to do things just to bring up test scores.
Parent	The superintendent should have a vision for the district--in terms of curriculum and instruction--that is aligned with best practices, and a belief in the ongoing education of the teachers in the district. Teachers need learning opportunities themselves, through professional development and by building internal professional learning communities. The superintendent should hold principals accountable for the growth of their staff--both their effectiveness, and their willingness to learn new ways of teaching and reaching their students.
Parent	The superintendent should prioritize implementing practices that are known to result in excellent educational outcomes rather than pandering to squeaky wheels in the community.
Parent	The superintendent should provide an overall vision for meaningful and inspiring education for all students. As part of this the superintendent should ensure that all school principals are strong leaders. Instead of being guided by standardized tests and producing favorable data, the super should find other ways of considering the economic/racial achievement gap especially in terms of the different amounts and degrees of academic support and enrichment children are getting outside of school. A superintendent should also be willing to listen to and respond to parent dissatisfaction with school principals and teachers and have a means of directly responding. Although there are many wonderful teachers and leaders in our district there are others, many of whom the board and Super have retained who are inadequate and detrimental to the educational growth of our community. Academic rigor

	means nothing without educators that know how to engage in learning and develop community within classrooms.
Parent	<p>The superintendent should strive to create schools that meet the needs of ALL students. Currently there is no gifted and talented program for the elementary students. As of 2005, it is required that all public schools have a gifted and talented program, starting in Kindergarten. By not having this program, SOMA is limiting its own students and discouraging others from moving to the town.</p> <p>The superintendent also needs to ensure that all schools have greater security systems in place. The recent incidences at Marshall and Tuscan show that this has not been a priority in the past and that it should be one for the future.</p>
Parent	<p>The superintendent should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Communicate well with staff, parents, board, etc. 2) Fight for every student to achieve their best 3) Create and execute their vision in a cost effective manner
Parent	The superintendent's needs to be results oriented and data driven. No more decisions in a vacuum.
Parent	There are so many things a superintendent needs to be an effective leader. As a parent from Tuscan school, I am hoping for someone who understands security concerns, along with the day-to-day operation of a school district. We all want our children and teachers to be safe in their learning environment. I guess this person needs to be an effective leader, who is able to come up with and follow through with their vision in the budget provided. Effective technology strategy is also a concern, our PTA has granted many pieces of technology to the teachers, and it needs to be properly taken care of by the district. Good luck. :)
Parent	<p>There has been a recent push to hire administrators from diverse ethnic backgrounds, in response to criticisms that the SOMSD is failing to effectively educate our students of color. Of the recent hires, the Principal at Marshall is African American, the Assistant Principal at Marshall is Hispanic, the Principal at Jefferson is African American, and the Principal at Maplewood Middle School is African American.</p> <p>I hope that the search committee, and the Board, are focused on finding the BEST candidate to lead our district, and do not succumb to pressure to hire a candidate in order to appease one group or another. I'm not suggesting that the BEST candidate can't also be a person of color, I'm simply saying that the focus should be on selecting the most educated, experienced, and effective leader- completely regardless of their ethnicity.</p>
Parent	There needs to be an appreciation for what the teachers are currently doing, rather than the reprimanding and lack of faith & trust that is currently in place. We have hired these teachers to give our children an education. They need to be allowed to do that, and trusted to do that. Some of the administration in this district is not out for the best needs of our children, but for their own professional gains. It goes against the district's mission statement and what education is all about.
Parent	There needs to be more projects based learning rather than worksheets. Please encourage this across the district.
Parent	This district faces three key challenges: combating the achievement gap; raising the level of materials and instruction to meet the demands of the Common Core; budget squeeze. A leader will need to balance these imperatives. It is crucial that s/he provides leadership in all three areas and not focus on any one to the detriment of the others.
Parent	This Superintendent should re-evaluate each Principal of the schools, regardless of Tenure. A couple of them have been in a long time and seem unaware of the impact their communication styles have on parents, teachers, students or the community anymore and believe they are omnipotent.
Parent	To answer this question, I will reference the best attributes of the superintendent of the district where I work. He recognizes and appreciates creativity. He strives to be ahead of the curve in educational technology. He cares more about student learning than about the metrics. He communicates well with parents, teachers and administrators while always

	appreciating our financial supporters. And he is well over 70 with tons of experience and dedication to our district.
Parent	To be able to relate to teachers needs in the classroom and allow room for independent curriculum and learning that does not focus solely on test scores. Teachers with long standing experience need ample time to use their expertise to develop a curriculum that focuses on how the students learn and react to learning.
Parent	To be available to parents at all levels of the education system. To not just be a figurehead in a big office. Manage the principals with a strong hand to ensure they are managing their schools effectively and that they are not doing their "own" agenda.
Parent	To see each student as an individual. To count the students state of mind/happiness as important as test scores esp. in elementary school.
Parent	To the extent possible, we should seek a person who is committed to seeing major initiatives through to completion.
Parent	Tough job. Someone smart and flexible and personable
Parent	Treat Music and Fine Arts as equally important components of a balanced education to Math and Science. Understand the importance of, and foster development of Foreign Language programs beyond Spanish. De-emphasize the importance of standardized testing and re-emphasize the importance of student connection to curriculum.
Parent	Understanding and celebrating the unique blend of cultures, diversity and differences our district has. Ideally, someone who is involved in our community, outside the district. Sometimes visible at the school level. Able to set academic goals as well as maintaining and recognizing the importance of the cultural/arts programs that are so celebrated in our district schools.
Parent	Unfortunately, Columbia High School's reputation has taken a beating. I believe it is due to the inability to track and ensure that students actually live in the district and to monitor effectively, the dress code for the students. It is also rumored that there is increased gang activity and recruitment.
Parent	Values the needs of highly achieving students as well as those with special needs. Providing additional challenges and opportunities for those students should be an element of our district's educational policy.
Parent	Vision and experience to help our District accelerate in the area of 21st century teaching and learning. It still seems like most student experiences are from the 20th century model. Great listener and communicator.
Parent	Vision for the future. Trusting and empowering the principals at each school to work effectively. A true understanding of what is happening in the classroom as well as in the future of education.
Parent	We are a very special district. We are one of the most diverse higher performing districts in the country. We need a superintendent who lives and breathes that every day. Our diverse populations are our strength and yet our differences can at times be a point of weakness. Having pride and celebrating that diversity is key. That said, the realities are that national rankings and stature factor into federal funding and with an emphasis on testing and the introduction of math and sciences as a barometer for "high achieving" schools the district must prioritize its investment in these areas. STEM will be the differentiating factor for many schools in the future. Our new superintendent needs to be facile and versed in these growing areas of importance.
Parent	We are increasingly losing high achieving students. This is especially true of African-American students. The district needs to do more to support the needs of high achievers starting at the elementary level going all the way through high school. I am amazed that our middle school does not even recognize honor roll students in any way and that graduation

	<p>students are made by students who write a good speech, not the top two students. The district also needs to do a better job of retaining athletes who want to play at a competitive level. We lose a lot of high performing students to schools with more competitive athletics. The superintendent needs to understand how these issues are exacerbating the achievement gap.</p>
Parent	<p>We are not a traditional district, so sup might do the math on how to apply resources and not just do what has been successful in her/his experience. We have a relatively greater interest in the arts vs. sports; let our budget and efforts reflect that.</p> <p>She/he must have the integrity to do what's best overall, not just appease the loudest voices. Have the communications and people-skills to get families to do what it takes to send students to school motivated, willing and able to learn, so that we may all strive for academic excellence.</p> <p>Able to develop and engage volunteer programs to provide effective support, where needed. We are a resourceful, engaging community, partner with us for success. I think there has been too much self-praise of self and staff. I have encountered too many teachers who are not well-organized, sloppy and poor communicators. They are examples to their students.</p>
Parent	<p>We are such a diverse district socioeconomically; the superintendent will need to manage all aspects of that spectrum. Parents are very demanding in this district and superintendent will have to be able to communicate effectively while keeping overall district priorities in order.</p>
Parent	<p>We are very concerned about the number of people fleeing our public school system for private schools! We need to maintain academic excellence in order to retain families.</p>
Parent	<p>We have more than enough managers throughout government. The schools need someone that will lead them, not manage them; someone that has a clear vision and agenda of where education needs to be.</p>
Parent	<p>We need a confident and experienced personnel manager -- someone who has experience developing the talent we already employ, and also holding those who are not performing accountable.</p>
Parent	<p>We need a progressive thinker, who looks at education holistically. This includes developing the entire student -- intellectually, physically, emotionally, culturally.</p>
Parent	<p>We need a superintendent who recognizes the importance of providing appropriate academic experiences for children who are academically advanced, especially in the early grades! As an African American parent of a highly academically advanced young child it has been frustrating to view the issue of supporting gifted children as being an issue of supporting only white students. There are gifted minority students in this district and they desperately need support in the early grades.</p>
Parent	<p>We need a superintendent who understands the complexities and needs of our large and diverse community. We need a superintendent who will make changes to improve academics in this district and will stick around long enough to see them through. We need someone who is dedicated and forward thinking, but most of all, someone who cares.</p>
Parent	<p>We need someone who can lead in both closing the achievement gap and providing great opportunities for high achieving students. While these two should not be in conflict, at times the district can focus too much on the gap. It has led to a steady exodus of families who we want to keep in the school system.</p> <p>It would be great to get someone who has direct experience in the system, such as having kids in the system.</p>
Parent	<p>We need someone who fosters a positive working environment, yet isn't afraid of confrontation. Not only teachers, but also administrators should be held accountable for job performance.</p>
Parent	<p>We need someone who is fully committed to the district and will stay the course. We have a lot of work to do here. We need a creative, lifer.</p>

Parent	We need to provide excellent education for our children. We need a superintendent who can accomplish this regardless of the challenges and other demands of the role.
Parent	We need to raise the academic standards of the district
Parent	WE seek a person who is open to considering student feedback regarding their experiences of teachers, curriculum, and areas for improvement. We also want someone who will encourage students through and through, as well as include students at all levels of school district processes. We greatly value someone who has a keen appreciation for development of the music and language programs in the district.
Parent	We want an innovator who will help develop an all-inclusive high achieving school system.
Parent	Well educated and accomplished; well versed in current excellence in education research and willingness to implement changes in an evidence-based way; empathic and emotionally intelligent; open to constructive criticism and alternative ideas
Parent	Well I would have probably checked off every box for question 1 because they are all pretty much attributes/goals you want the new superintendent to have/pursue. I know we were asked to keep it to selecting our top 8 but many of the answers seem to overlap. You want someone with most or all of these qualities if possible and I think we're all hoping to attract that kind of person. Mr. Osborne seemed like he did a good job while he led the district so hopefully we'll find someone to take the district to the next level, while maintaining good relationships with everyone and trying to get the most from what we pay for through school taxes.
Parent	What a waste of time this survey is.
Parent	Willing to address the needs of all students, from G&T CHI students to special needs preschoolers. Ability to look beyond politics & federally-mandated testing to provide students with a well-rounded education Support teachers, teacher's aides, school therapists, etc. and others involved with the day-to-day education of our kids. Open communication with parents, General common sense. An experienced educator who actually taught kids, not just a professional administrator.
Parent	With Three African-American boys heading into the Middle School in three years, I am very concerned about the achievement gap and the low number or minority in the advanced-level classes. I have heard horror stories of bright Black children simply devolving as a result of district policies. I need a superintendent who is caring and passionate about this issue and will re-examine policies that are undermining the children and implement new ones that will support them.
Parent	Would prefer that a new superintendent focus on all children, high and low and mid achievers. Too much focus right now on treating kids as statistics in the achievement gap. Too much focus on race right now. It's dehumanizing. It would be better to focus on the district as a whole. It would be better to focus on kids as individuals. Also let's finish current programs rather than trying to do more new initiatives. Lets focus on basics not shiny new programs and buildings. Less ideology more back to basics.
Please indicate your role:	Please add any additional comments you wish to make regarding what you believe are necessary characteristics for a superintendent.
Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approach education as a holistic experience that develops students' minds, bodies and spirits 2. Develop creative solutions to common problems. Try it, observe it and, if necessary, change it. 3. Demonstrate transparency and candor
Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	Driven, articulate, focused, strong and stern, with a balanced temperament ideal for leadership in a diverse district.
Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	Driven, articulate, visionary, skilled, sternly focused, and strong with a natural balanced temperament imperative for leadership in a diverse school district.

Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	Experienced in running a school district successfully; experienced in turning a school district around academically and financially.
Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	Not a racist. Not a homophobe. Interested in student learning beyond testing and mandates. A rebel.
Specialized Community Group (Clergy, Government Leadership, Business Leadership)	The next superintendent needs to lead with a strong vision and also quickly garner the support and trust of the school administrators and instructional leaders to continue to advance the district by taking all educational opportunities to pursue the mission of the SOMSD. We need another strong educational leader.
Support Staff	An experienced person who is as "wise" as he is "Intelligent".
Support Staff	Leader who speaks with honesty.
Support Staff	The previous Superintendent was very divisive. The new Super has a task ahead of him/her to be able to renew the District and foster a sense of belonging and respect among the staff in the District. The working environment created by the previous Super and the Board was more aligned with that of a dictatorship as opposed to a supportive collaborative respectful environment that has been portrayed in the public. This District used to be a well-respected, prideful place to work, and over the past 5-6 years all of that has been washed away.
Support Staff	The superintendent should be visible in all buildings not just ones he/she chooses to be should confront issues and not run away from problems be people-oriented and human!!!
Support Staff	To really consider the children in all aspects and backgrounds
Teacher	There are many important characteristics, quite a few of which were mentioned on the previous page. One that was not: I would like to see a superintendent who strives to always be open-minded when hearing the concerns of faculty and/or building administrators. Those of us "on the ground," so to speak, often have understandings and insights that are not immediately apparent to other district stakeholders. It is important for those concerns to be truly heard, even (or perhaps especially) when the superintendent is starting out with a different idea. I do believe that Dr. Osborne demonstrated this quality to some degree, especially when it came to listening to the school principals.
Teacher	A Constructionist leader
Teacher	Creating, promoting, supporting a culture of trust and respect between and among all stakeholders.
Teacher	Professional and understanding of teacher needs.
Teacher	Prospective candidate should possess a complete understanding about the level of diversity within our community. He or she should also be acutely aware of changes (such as de-leveling) in our district.
Teacher	Strive to achieve Equity and Excellence
Teacher	The South Orange-Maplewood Schools District requires a superintendent that is cognizant of the diverse needs of all populations: students, staff members, and parents. In particular, our students that have special needs and that are economically disadvantaged require even more attention.
Teacher	The superintendent should care for the community and listen to the people of the community. Should be in constant communication with the not only board members but parents, students and the staffs of the schools. Should be able to express their ideas and vision in a clear and precise way that all can understand. Should be able to listen to complaints and answers those complaints in a timely fashion and not run off to a conference. Will look out for the students and the best for them no matter who they are and what their problems might be. Will believe in the public schools over all
Teacher	This may seem overly specific, but privatization of the paras and lunch sides has been the worst decision made for this district, and I would like to see it reversed, despite the budgetary challenges.

	It has had many unintended and unexpected negative consequences, and negatively impacted the district.
Teacher	<p>To be open and honest with the BOE always.</p> <p>To not have any hidden agendas.</p> <p>To be open and receptive to all stakeholders in celebrating successes and handling problems, not just the "chosen few"</p>
Teacher	Visible presence in the school buildings.
Teacher	We need someone who has a clear vision, who understands the core challenges facing the District (most notably the achievement gap and fiscal constraints), welcomes the District's diversity, who is an educator at heart, who can build relationships and meaningful consensus, and who will be relentless about placing students' best interests before all other concerns.