

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROFILE

Marion City Schools

November 1, 2022



Prepared for the Board of Education



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Marion City School District
Superintendent Search Profile Report
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This report presents the summary of findings from the Superintendent Search Profile forums conducted by K-12 Business Consulting, Inc. (K-12), on October 20 and on the 174 written search profiles submitted from various stakeholder groups. Once the Board of Education selected K-12 to conduct the superintendent search, a Search Profile Assessment questionnaire was created to solicit input from various stakeholders in the community. The Board and administration developed a broad list of community stakeholders to solicit input from as well as a general community wide invitation to meet with K-12 staff members Deb Campbell and Kathy Lowery to discuss the characteristics in greater depth. Any stakeholder who had a desire to express an opinion was welcome to submit a search profile and personally meet with K-12 at the open forums that were held at various locations around the district on October 20. The information obtained through these sources, and summarized below, should be used to assist the Board in identifying characteristics requested of superintendent candidates.

The Search Profile Assessment form was made available to the district staff, identified stakeholders, plus all individuals who attended the focus group sessions. In addition to the 174 individuals who returned written online search profiles, there were 143 individuals who participated in interviews and community forums facilitated by K-12. The results of the written Search Profile Assessment forms are included in this report along with several comments received in face-to-face discussions held at community forums.

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

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

K-12 would like to commend the Board of Education for its efforts to include many stakeholders of the school district in the development of the superintendent search profile. Many respondents expressed positive feelings about being involved in this process and the opportunity to help shape the Marion City School District. We would also like to thank Veronica Reinhart, CFO/Treasurer, and Amy Campbell, Administrative Assistant, for the

professional way all arrangements were made, including mailing invitations and Search Profiles, as well as contacting and scheduling the focus groups that made this profile possible.

STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

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

CONSISTENT THEMES

1. The teachers and staff are experienced, hardworking, dedicated and “care about the students”.
2. Marion City Schools music programs are amazing and a pride of the community.
3. Students in the district are talented and enjoy a variety of opportunities afforded to them.
4. The schools enjoy updated and provide an environment for students to grow and learn.
5. The district offers a wide variety of programs and course offerings for all students at all levels.
6. Diversity of the school population reflects the characteristics of the Marion community.
7. The school district enjoys strong partnerships with the city of Marion.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Marion City Schools provides leadership in the community and has a long history of success in challenging situations.
- The district has a strong core of experienced and dedicated staff who care about the students.
- The students are diverse, interested, kind and active in athletics, robotics, performing arts and in our clubs.
- Harding HS has 9 pathways for our students and many are career technology programs enabling students to find employment after high school.
- The district facilities provide a updated and comfortable environment in which to work and learn.
- The district financial situation is stable for the next 4 to 5 years.
- School facilities have been updated and provide excellent school buildings, athletic facilities, and administrative buildings.
- The performing arts program is amazing and creates a lot of pride in the community.
- There is a strong band program going back to 1990 and numerous awards annually in this area.
- There is a wide variety of academic programs that focus on meeting the needs of our students.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Teachers care about us as students and go above and beyond to help us.
- The district supports inclusion and diversity.
- Academic opportunities and wide variety of programs offer valuable choices for the students.
- The music program is amazing and a source of pride for the district.
- Students who choose to participate in the extracurricular activities find the activities valuable.
- The district offers career opportunities for all students and assistance in college selection.
- The spirit of the student body and idea of being a “prexy” is shared by many students.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

- District staff members are dedicated and knowledgeable and care about our students.
- The modernized facilities provide an excellent environment for students to learn and staff to work.

- Marion City School students are talented and enjoy many alternative programming to meet the needs of all students.

TEACHERS

- A strength of Marion City Schools is our inclusive community and the presence of loyal alumni, parents, and supporters.
- Our current interim superintendent has provided improved communication in the district.
- Instructional leadership throughout the district is a strength.
- The district has veteran teachers (many are alumni) who are dedicated, caring and support “at risk” students.
- Marion City boasts an excellent music, arts and robotic programs. These programs are a source of pride for everyone.
- There are a variety of programs for all students and opportunities at the high school level such as CCP and AP classes and “Gear Up” to place students into jobs after graduation.
- We love our town and our students and celebrate diversity.
- Marion City Schools students are great!
- The district supports the education and growth of the whole child which includes social emotional issues.
- The staff has a desire to improve education for all students.

SUPPORT STAFF

- There is a strong base of veteran teachers and staff who stay in the district long term.
- Our schools have a passionate and dedicated staff who care about students.
- There are multiple opportunities and pathways for students academically and in career placement.
- Cultural diversity in our district provides enrichment for the students, staff, and community.
- The schools and its partners are willing to solve problems together.
- The students trust the staff members and there is a trust and friendship among the staff.
- Alternative programs are available to help all students be successful.
- Teachers and staff understand how to care for the homeless population and students with special needs.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- The district provides a dedicated, high- quality staff that delivers an excellent education for our children.
- Marion City Schools Performing Arts Department is a source of pride for the district.
- School buildings are modernized and provide a strong infrastructure for teaching and learning.
- Marion City provides diverse, working-class communities which bring with them many cultural resources.
- The district provides a wide variety of resources/programming to help all students grow and learn.
- The school district is one of Ohio’s legacy cities and American Workforce Development Capital and provides many opportunities for graduates of Marion City Schools.
- The current Board of Education.

IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING DISTRICT

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

CONSISTENT THEMES

1. Student behavior and consistency in discipline is a “major issue” in our district at all levels as there seems to be an unwillingness to enforce disciplinary policies and the code of conduct.
2. Retention of support staff, teachers, and administrators must be addressed as well as recruitment of high-quality professionals.
3. There is a lack of clear direction, communication and collaboration between the central office personnel and the staff in the buildings.
4. There is an element of distrust between the staff, community, and the Board of Education, and the Board is viewed as divisive.
5. Marion City Schools should provide additional initiatives to increase parental involvement in the schools.
6. There are many initiatives within the district with expectations that seem unmanageable to the teachers.

BOARD MEMBERS

- Student behavior and discipline policies must be addressed, supported, and enforced consistently.
- Marion City Schools must focus on retention and recruitment of staff to provide qualified teachers throughout the district.
- An effective communication plan is needed to reach all stakeholders.
- Too many people in the community do not value the district as they think student behavior is out of control.
- Transparency in how the taxpayers’ dollars are being spent needs to be communicated.
- Academic programs should be reviewed and evaluated to determine how to improve student achievement and performance.
- The Board of Education should present a united front and treat each other with respect.
- There appears to be a shrinking enrollment and a shrinking tax base.
- Strong leadership is critical at the superintendent level.
- There appears to be division on the board of education.
- Rebuilding trust at all levels of the organization would lead to higher morale among staff.
- The district should create ways to involve parents more frequently at all levels.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- Student behavior is “out of control” and there needs to be a focus on discipline in our schools.
- Attendance of students and students skipping classes/school is a problem that needs to be addressed.
- There is a disrespect for adults, destruction of the restrooms, and an increase in vandalism and bullying.
- The curriculum should be reviewed so that academic improvement can be attained.
- Counseling services should be increased in the school district as mental health is important to students.
- Social media posts create negative images of our school district.
- There is an understaffing of certain positions such as bus drivers and substitute teachers.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

- Student behavior, discipline and attendance must be consistently enforced by all staff members.
- The constant turnover of support staff, teachers and administrators must be addressed.
- The Board of Education should treat each other with respect and dignity, publicly and privately.
- There is a lack of clear vision, goals, and direction along with too many initiatives.
- Schools should make a concerted effort to improve student rigor and academic performance.
- Programming for special education students need to improve to meet all student's needs.
- Increased parental involvement would be an asset to the schools.
- There seems to be a negative perception regarding the schools.

TEACHERS

- There is a lack of discipline and lack of support regarding student behavior which is negatively impacting education in the classroom.
- The staff turnover in the district does not provide a consistent education critical for our students.
- The student behavior affects the safety of students and staff.
- Teachers are concerned about student attendance.
- Clear communication/direction are necessary as there is a disconnect between the central office and the staff.
- There is a lack of trust between the staff and the board of education members.
- Creative ideas to increase parental involvement in the district should be tried.
- Literacy is a concern at the K-3 level and professional development is needed in this area.
- The district needs to focus on the positives and work to dispel the negatives that appear in the newspapers and on social media.
- The special education program and services need review so that students get the help they need.

SUPPORT STAFF

- Student behavior and discipline needs be addressed immediately as there is a lack of respect for adults and continued abuse of staff members.
- There is constant turnover of staff at all levels which does not provide a stable and consistent environment.
- New employees of the district must have training and support to be successful in the classroom.
- The district should provide clear communications and expectations.
- A focus should be placed on academic outcomes for students.
- The teachers need help in the social emotional skills area to work with students effectively.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- Student behavior and discipline should be addressed so that policies are followed consistently and fairly.
- There is a need for improved communication to district staff and the community.
- The divisiveness of the board of education creates an atmosphere of distrust and negativity.
- Staff recruitment and retention is an issue that needs attention; increase staff diversity.
- Academic achievement and performance on the local report card could improve.
- Create a culture of learning and a strong educational environment that is safe for students and staff.
- The district must regain a positive image and reputation in the community.
- Dedicate time and resources to improve the relationships between administrators and educators.

- There is a lack of Spanish interpreters.
- There needs to be an effort to invest money and resources in Marion City School’s racial justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion work.
- The curriculum should be revised to equitably represent ALL student groups, including special needs students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW SUPERINTENDENT

Question #3: Please tell us your two or three characteristics that you think the Board should look for in a new Superintendent.

CONSISTENT THEMES

1. A people person who is knowledgeable, honest, insightful, ethical, and has integrity.
2. An excellent communicator who engages the community and connects with all levels of the district stakeholders (students, parents, staff, and community leaders).
3. A superintendent with strong interpersonal skills and understands how to build relationships.
4. A leader with experience in central office who is willing to “roll up their sleeves” and accept the challenge of working with staff members and the community to make changes that are needed.
5. A leader who is willing to stay in Marion City Schools and commit to the school district and the community.
6. Someone who understands our socio-economic situation and has experience in this area.

BOARD MEMBERS

- An honest person with integrity and high moral character who can demonstrate fairness in decision-making.
- Marion City Schools needs a person who is honest, ethical, insightful and is “people person” and can build strong relationships with staff.
- An excellent communicator who engages the community and connects with all levels of the district stakeholders (students, parents, staff, and community leaders)
- A person who understands school finance and will bring transparency to the financial expenditures.
- Someone who has experience with diversity and economically-disadvantaged populations.
- A person knowledgeable about union issues and works well with others.
- A superintendent who will stand up for what is right in the district has thick skin.
- A leader who understands the process of decision making and the consequences of those decisions.
- The superintendent should have a strong presence in the community in a positive way.
- A leader who has commitment and understanding of our diverse population, understands equity, and inclusivity and is well versed in identifying curriculum that models these philosophical beliefs.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

- A superintendent who places students first and really cares about students and our schools.
- Someone who will be visible in our schools and will get to know staff and students.
- A leader who is kind, honest, passionate, organized and has new and innovative ideas.
- A strong communicator who will listen to all sides of an issue and be open-minded in decision making.
- A leader who will address major issues in the district to resolve them in an expedient manner.
- A superintendent who respects the teachers input into issues and instruction.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

- A strong dynamic leader who is personable, trustworthy, honest, ethical, and knowledgeable.
- Someone who will share leadership and involve those who are affected by the decisions being made.
- A superintendent who will encourage the Board of Education to unite in a common cause and to respect each other.
- A leader who is inspirational and can communicate clearly and concisely.
- A superintendent who is devoted to Marion City Schools/community and will stay in the district long term.

SUPPORT STAFF

- A person who will address student behavior, discipline, and attendance using a consistent process.
- A leader who is people oriented and committed to the district and the community.
- Someone fully immersed in the community who will make a long-term commitment to the district.
- Marion City Schools needs someone who is honest, dedicated, approachable, energetic, ethical, and moral.
- A superintendent with experience with poverty and diversity and has taught in the classroom.
- Our leader should be open-minded and have an open-door policy.
- The superintendent should be highly visible in the district and the community.

TEACHERS

- Someone who is honest, ethical, trustworthy, energetic, open-minded, approachable and has integrity.
- A leader who has strong interpersonal skills and can build relationships in the district and the community.
- A team player knowledgeable about shared leadership, collaboration, and servant leadership.
- A person who cares about students and wants to improve educational experiences for students.
- A superintendent loyal to the district who will make a commitment to remain in the district long term.
- A leader who will be highly visible in the buildings and in the community.
- Someone who can demonstrate strong communication skills.
- A person who has experience at the central office level and with socio-economic diversity.
- Someone who will share our good news in the community and create a positive image of the district.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- The superintendent should be an experienced leader who is a people person.
- The leader must invest in the Marion community and school district long term.
- The new superintendent should have excellent communication skills.
- The district needs to hire someone who will invest locally in the exceptional talent and visionary leadership already found within our district and community.
- We need a superintendent who will be loyal to the Marion community and provide consistency in leadership.
- The district should hire someone who has experience in socially and economically diverse populations.

SUPERINTENDENT CHARACTERISTICS BY RANKING

1 = MOST IMPORTANT TO 10 = LEAST IMPORTANT

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

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

1 -5 MOST IMPORTANT

TO

6 - 10 LEAST IMPORTANT

RANK

TOP 5 CHARACTERISTICS

- 1 Ability and willingness to deal fairly with teachers, staff, and parents.
- 2 Personal involvement and interest in the community.
- 3 A leader with strong interpersonal and public relations skills.
- 4 Experience in socially and economically diverse student populations
- 5 Effective at creating and implementing a vision for the district

RANK

BOTTOM 5 CHARACTERISTICS

- 6 Effective organizational and management skills
- 7 Effective at both written and verbal communication.
- 8 Effective in design and implementation of curriculum and instruction.
- 9 Successful experience as a superintendent.
- 10 Fiscal management expertise.

SUMMARY

The information gathered through surveys reflects the Board of Education as well as responses from the staff's eight focus groups regarding the strengths, issues and concerns facing the district, as well as the characteristics desired in the next superintendent.

The top strengths of the district include: (A) The teachers and staff are experienced, hardworking, dedicated and "care about the students"; (B) The music programs are amazing and a pride to the community; (C) The district has great students who are talented and enjoy a variety of opportunities afforded to them; (D) The facilities an up-to-date environment for students to grow and learn; (E) The district offers a wide variety of programs and course offerings for all students; (F)The diversity of the district is a strong characteristic of Marion City Schools and Marion community.

The top concerns and challenges facing the Board of Education and the new superintendent in the future – which surfaced repeatedly – included: (A) Student behavior and consistency in discipline is a "major issue" in our district at all levels as there seems to be an unwillingness to enforce disciplinary policies and the code of conduct; (B) Retention of support staff, teachers, and administrators must be addressed as well as recruitment of high -quality professionals; (C) There is an element of distrust between the staff and the Board of Education, and the Board is viewed as divisive; (D) The district should provide additional initiatives to increase parental involvement in the schools; (E) There is a lack of clear direction, communication and collaboration between the central office personnel and the staff in the buildings; (F) The district has many initiatives that seem unmanageable to the teachers in the district.

It was difficult to capture all the characteristics that respondents were looking for in a new superintendent. It is certain that no one person could possibly embody all the attributes that were mentioned. Most respondents expressed the need for the new superintendent to have the following characteristics: (A) A people person who is knowledgeable, honest, insightful, ethical, and has integrity; (B) An excellent communicator who engages the community and connects with all levels of the district stakeholders (students, parents, staff, and community leaders); (C) A superintendent with strong interpersonal skills who understands how to build relationships; (D) A leader with experience in central office who is willing to "roll up their sleeves" and accept the challenge of working with staff members and the community to make changes that are needed; (E) A leader who is willing to stay in Marion City Schools and commit to the school district and the community; (F) Someone who understands our socio-economic situation and has experience in this area.

It is important to note that there are 3 issues discussed in almost every focus group as well as reported on many of the surveys. Student discipline and behavior is an issue that the new superintendent must address immediately to provide an environment conducive to learning. The environment must be safe for students and staff. The second major theme that should be addressed specifically and immediately is staff retention and recruitment of new staff. The final issue that surfaced throughout the discussions was the dysfunction that appears to create divisiveness among the board of education members. It has a negative effect on how the district is viewed by the community and work should be done to correct this situation. It also contributes to low morale in the district with the staff working hard with a diverse student population.

We believe the Marion City School District is approaching an important period of transition in the next couple of years. This will require the new superintendent to balance stakeholder expectations to improve student achievement, while keeping a realistic eye on available resources. This individual will not only have to possess

effective communication skills and will have to be able to effectively implement the vision of the district and move the current initiatives forward. The new superintendent will have to demonstrate a high level of energy to stay abreast of the current initiatives while evaluating what is needed to improve academic success. A skillful superintendent will have the opportunity to help the district navigate through future issues, and the district must do so if it is to thrive and engender community support. We will look for this key set of skills, and ones that complement each other, in candidates for the next superintendent.

The Marion City School District serves a community that is full of pride about their school's curricular and co-curricular activities. Community members genuinely care about their schools. The school district offers much to its residents and it has well-established community values. We believe that the right candidate for superintendent will recognize the opportunity this environment has for him/her to really be involved in making a difference in the lives of children and bringing a community together. This position will be of interest to the right superintendent candidates. We believe we will find the right potential candidates who have the attributes outlined herein, possess the skills and energy needed to address the concerns and issues expressed by respondents, and who will be happy to lead the Marion City School District community into the future.

Respectfully submitted,

K-12 Business Consulting