

# Arlington Heights School District 25



## Community Engagement and New Superintendent Profile Report

SCHOOL EXEC  CONNECT

Dr. Tim Shimp & Dr. Bhavna Sharma-Lewis



# THE BOARD REQUESTED THE CONSULTANTS TO:

**01** Conduct Focus Groups with a wide variety of stakeholders

**02** Conduct an online survey to gather input from school staff, parents, students and community members

**03** Create a *New Superintendent Profile* based on information gathered from these sources



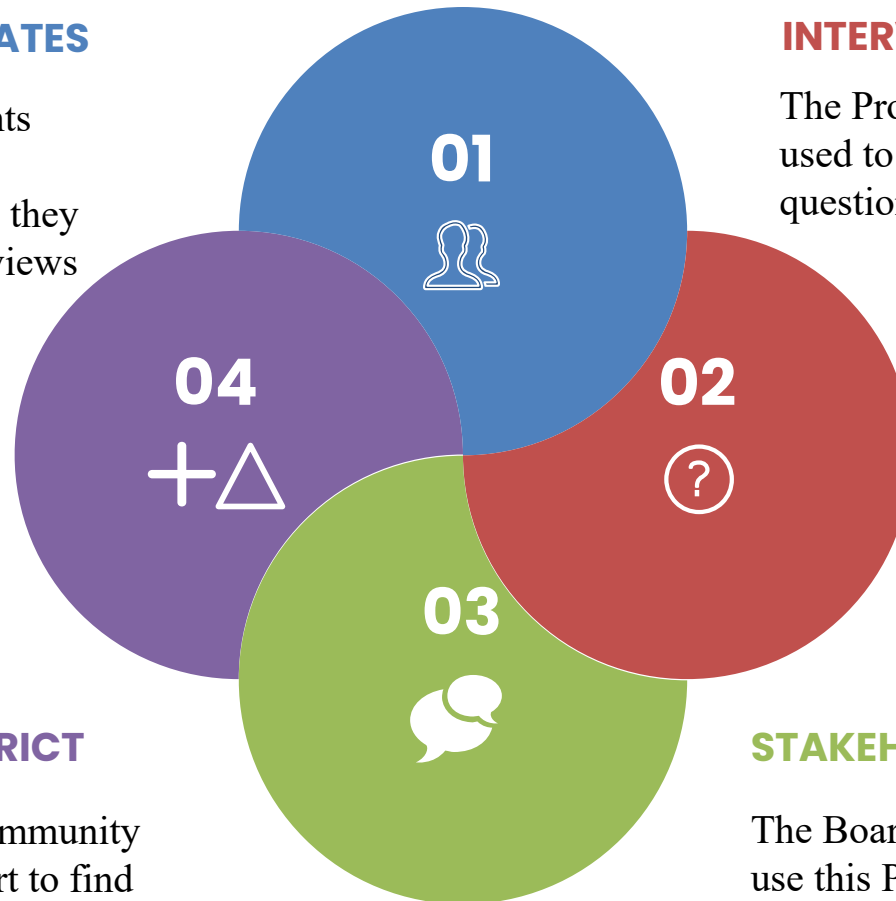
# HOW PROFILE REPORT WILL BE USED

## SCREENING CANDIDATES

The Board and Consultants will use the *New Superintendent Profile* as they screen and conduct interviews with candidates

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The Profile Report may be used to develop interview questions for the candidates



## KNOWLEDGE OF DISTRICT

The candidates and the community may use this Profile Report to find out about the strengths and challenges of the District

## STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE

The Board of Education may use this Profile Report to find out more about the thinking of the District's constituents



# SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION

## Focus Groups

200 Attendees

## Online Questionnaire

722 Responses  
Sept. 11 – Oct. 2

Due to sampling methods, the resulting report is not a scientific study and provides only the perceptions of those who responded or participated

In the survey report, percentages are rounded

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# FOCUS GROUPS & SURVEY

## 4 GUIDING QUESTIONS



What are your District's greatest strengths and attributes? (Why would a new Superintendent want to come to this District?)



What are your District's greatest challenges? (What should a new Superintendent know before he/she accepts this responsibility?)



What should the priorities be for the new Superintendent?



What are the most important personal qualities, skills, and experiences that are important for the new Superintendent to possess to be successful in District 25?



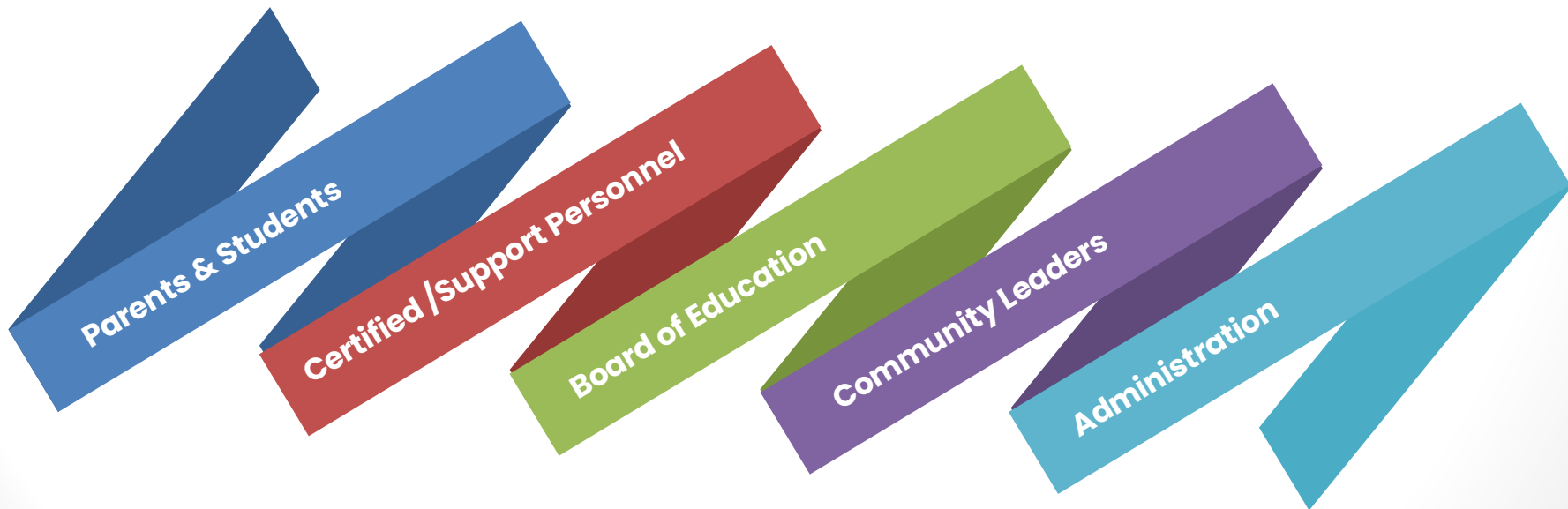


# Focus Groups



# FOCUS GROUPS PARTICIPANTS

21 Focus Groups  
7 Interviews  
200 Participants  
9 Schools  
District Office





# District STRENGTHS

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The District has a strong reputation, and overall student achievement is an area of pride; high value placed on meeting the needs of all students

## DESTINATION DISTRICT

A community passionate about education and willing to support its schools, District 25 is a destination district; the strong hope is that the new Superintendent will become deeply rooted in the community and stay in that position for many years.

## DIVERSITY

Parents and staff expressed pride in the diversity of the District, and hope that the new Superintendent will value that diversity and will promote equity and access for all.

## RESOURCES

The District has high levels of support from the community through school funding, and staff appreciate the opportunities to be innovative and participate in effective professional development





# District STRENGTHS

- Talented staff who remain in the district for a long time, forming a tight-knit, family-like environment; the education provided in the district is highly regarded, with fantastic programs and resources available.
- The community connection is strong, with a focus on utilizing community resources and support; known for its collaborative spirit, ethical values, and neighborly atmosphere
- The presence of multilingual programs serves as a great asset, as does the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- The community itself has a vibrant and rich culture, with strong community engagement, invested families, and a diverse social and cultural landscape. Pride in the diversity of the community is apparent; families move to the district for its strong academic program and attention to all student needs. The district enjoys well-funded schools and a high level of parent involvement, contributing to a high-quality education.
- The district is exceedingly well-organized, with extensive systems in place to support student needs with consistent leadership that is responsive and child-focused. It is a community that cares deeply about the education of its students and is dedicated to continual growth and improvement.



# District CHALLENGES

- Fiscal responsibility and effective management of all services, including addressing substitute shortages and hiring staff, are crucial issues.
- Concerns related to full-day kindergarten construction plans, particularly in terms of planning and execution (a general concern is that all will go well). The district also faces challenges related to an increasing special education (SPED) population with growing needs, which requires careful resource allocation and support.
- Board of Education and administration must seek methods to ensure all voices are heard and considered, while remaining focused on the established mission, vision, and core values of the district.
- Supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives is important, as well as ensuring that this work remains an integral part of the district's identity.
- The district must continue to address the increased academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students, and ensure the effective management of programs like full-day kindergarten
- Addressing any challenges and barriers effectively will require the Superintendent to navigate complex community dynamics, allocate resources wisely, support staff morale, and prioritize DEI initiatives, all while maintaining a strong focus on student achievement and continuous improvement.



# PRIORITIES IN THE FIRST YEAR

- The new Superintendent must craft a careful transition plan, becoming familiar with the district's programs, initiatives, and practices. Significant time should be spent with district employees, parents, students, and community leaders, closely listening to their past experiences and hopes for the future.
- Respect the strong foundation of progress and success, assess what works and what can be improved, and plan for incremental change rather than wholesale replacement of existing programs and practices.
- Ensure school safety, and focus on student growth in reading, writing, and math through careful examination of data is essential, as well as address the mental well-being of students and staff.
- A focus on follow-through for initiatives supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).
- Important considerations and attention include navigating the transition to full-day kindergarten, measuring the success of programs, being data-driven, and understanding the district's strategic plan.



# PRIORITIES IN THE FIRST YEAR

- Build strong teams and establish effective working relationships with administrators and teachers, providing support for building principals and seeking their input on a regular basis.
- Help all parents to become engaged in a positive way with their children's schools, welcoming everyone, and plan meetings that are accessible to all; treat all schools equitably and get to know staff and students in each building.
- Develop and communicate a clear, ambitious strategy for the future that is supported by the staff and community.



# DESIRED SKILLS & CHARACTERISTICS

- Characterized by authenticity, strong character values, and a commitment to equity, respecting all individuals and communities within the district; foster an approachable, open, and feedback-friendly environment, allowing staff and stakeholders to share their perspectives.
- A proven leader with identifiable accomplishments, the next Superintendent should be hard-working, proactive, transparent, visionary, and strategic; experience in the classroom and leadership at the building level are important.
- The new Superintendent should display humor, compassion, warmth, and approachability while also showing humility and a willingness to listen; be genuine.
- A leader who celebrates the unique strengths of each school and community members, while aligning with the expectations and standards of the high schools District 25 students feed into.
- Maintain balance in prioritizing various stakeholders while always putting students first is vital, along with ensuring continuity and consistency across the district.



# DESIRED SKILLS & CHARACTERISTICS

- Manage the political aspects of the job, understand the economic development and city planning, and demonstrate energy and passion for building collaborative partnerships.
- The Superintendent should be the face of the District while sharing the spotlight, recognizing the work of others and providing opportunities for growth among all staff.
- A key to success for the new Superintendent will be understanding the economic and racial diversity of the district and supporting programs that promote equity and inclusion; understanding the changing demographics, community values, and being open to disagreement and discussion while upholding longevity and stability is crucial.
- District 25 is a destination district; the strong hope is that the new Superintendent will become deeply rooted in the community and stay in that position for many years.
- Ability and desire to gain a deep understanding of existing programs and practices while also inspiring the entire community with a clear and articulated vision for the future of the district.



# Community Survey



# QUESTIONNAIRE DEMOGRAPHICS

Some participants identified with more than one stakeholder group



- Parents (current/past) 67%
- Students 1%
- Teacher/Licensed Staff 19%
- Community Member & Business Leaders 15%
- Support Staff 7%
- Administrators 3%
- Other 4%



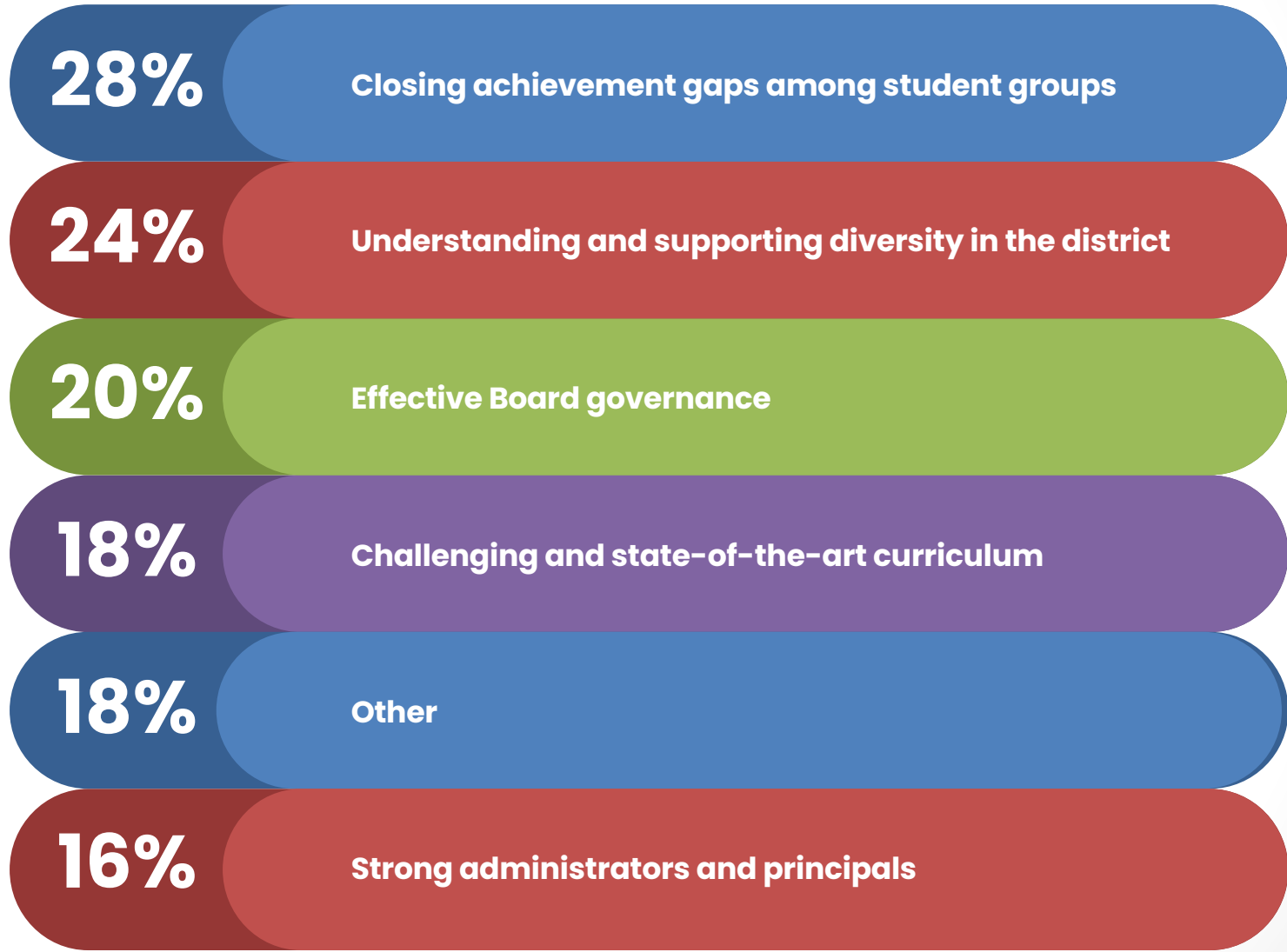


# District 25 STRENGTHS





# District 25 CHALLENGES





# GOALS TO ACCOMPLISH IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS

**38%**

**Maintain programs for all student achievement levels and needs**

**24%**

**Maintain high levels of student achievement**

**35%**

**Strengthen our academic program and curriculum**

**24%**

**Assuring student well-being (emotionally safe and confident)**

**32%**

**Focus on 21st century curriculum (communication, collaboration, creativity, innovation, critical thinking, problem solving and media and technology literacy)**

**19%**

**Improving staff morale**

**28%**

**Secure a sense of belonging for students by cultivating effective diversity, equity, and inclusion measures**

**18%**

**Engaging students through best instructional practices**



# ATTRIBUTES/SKILLS NEEDED FOR NEW SUPERINTENDENT

**41%** Has a deep understanding of curriculum, instruction, and how students learn

**21%** Is a strong decision-maker who uses data and information

**31%** Is student-centered

**19%** Has warm people skills, is approachable and easy to talk to

**30%** Is a collaborative consensus-builder and able to work with all constituents and viewpoints

**14%** Can recruit and support outstanding staff members

**30%** Builds a great team and brings out the best in others

**12%** Is open-minded and flexible

**23%** Is equity-minded with a deep understanding of how to cultivate a sense of belonging for students, staff and community members.

**12%** Has excellent communication skills, in all mediums



# New Superintendent Profile



# NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

## The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Possesses an authentic, warm, caring, and approachable demeanor; excels at fostering trust and cultivating a positive and student-centered environment.
- Wholeheartedly embraces the current customs and traditions of the District 25 school community, demonstrating a keen understanding and appreciation for the community's diverse residents and students.
- Immerses deeply in the life of District 25 schools and the school community, maintaining a substantial presence within schools, classrooms, district events, and community activities.
- Leads with both intellect and heart, leveraging a track record of accomplishment as an educator and leader to effectively influence student success and district achievements.



# NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

## The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Displays profound expertise in PreK-8 pedagogy, innovation, self-assuredness, and resilience, and has a strong understanding of how students learn.
- Serves as a role model for active listening, champions stakeholder involvement, and nurtures collaborative decision-making; high value placed on transparency, openly acknowledges contributions from others, and celebrates their achievements.
- Constructs cohesive teams and brings out the best in others through collaborative efforts, consensus-building, mentorship, and the articulation of targeted expectations; empowers principals, administrators, and staff to fully realize their professional potential, fostering a student-centric approach.
- Demonstrates exceptional communication skills, ensuring timely and transparent interactions with internal and external stakeholders; enhances the District 25 image through persuasive speaking, adept writing, and by demonstrating social/multimedia proficiency.



# NEW SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

## The New Superintendent Should Be a Person Who:

- Makes challenging decisions with the well-being of students at the forefront; conveying choices with clarity, logic, and empathy, considering input from stakeholders.
- Collaborates effectively with the Board of Education, aligning decisions with the District 25 vision and objectives transparently, and with unwavering perseverance; articulates a compelling vision for the district's short and long-term future, and can motivate others to adhere to high standards for all students and staff.
- Prioritizes the recruitment, advancement, and retention of high-quality educators and leaders; places a priority on getting to know and value staff on both a personal and professional level, while embracing diversity within the workforce.
- Possesses a comprehensive understanding of the operational dynamics of a PreK-8 school district, and proactively seeks opportunities at local, state, and national levels to secure resources and cultivate collaborative partnerships.





## NEXT STEPS

Consultants conduct interviews and reference checks, October 11- November 10, using the *New Superintendent Profile*

Consultants recommend candidates to the Board, November 14

Board conducts first interviews; chooses finalists: November 27 – December 1

Board facilitates second round interviews; candidate presentations; December 4-6

Board makes selection of finalist; conducts reference checks, negotiates the contract, makes announcement

New Superintendent  
begins duties on  
July 1, 2024

# QUESTIONS



**Dr. Tim Shimp**

**(630) 327-1765**

**tim.shimp@schoolexecuteconnect.com**

**Dr. Bhavna Sharma-Lewis**

**(630) 670-4140**

**bhavna.sharma-lewis@schoolexecuteconnect.com**

**[www.schoolexecuteconnect.com](http://www.schoolexecuteconnect.com)**