

Superintendent Needs Profile Report

**CENTER GROVE COMMUNITY
SCHOOL CORPORATION**

December 14, 2006

BWP and Associates, LLC

Center Grove Community School Corporation

SUPERINTENDENT NEEDS PROFILE REPORT

Shortly after the appointment of *BWP & Associates* as search consultants, we began the initial phase of the search process. A superintendent needs profile assessment instrument was prepared to structure data-gathering interviews and discussions. Copies of the "Superintendent Needs Profile" form were distributed to board members, teachers, support staff, administrators and parents of the School District. Ronald E. Barnes and Joan Isenberg conducted the interviews on December 12 and 13, 2006.

In the interviews, we sought to elicit opinions, comments, suggestions, and criteria from respondents about their perceived strengths of the District, leadership needs, background characteristics, and leadership traits to be sought in the next superintendent. We also received comments and suggestions regarding the search process. At the outset, we agreed that the consultants would report their findings to the School Board so that they might reflect on and consider this information as it further defined the search process. Throughout the discussions and the interviews, consultants made it clear that, while the Board sought opinions of others, the final decisions as to the preferred characteristics and the selection of the next superintendent rested with the School Board.

The interviews and discussions produced a clear sense of the views, priorities, and leadership criteria preferred by the School Board and other respondents. The profile instrument was the basis for all of the interviews, and the data are presented in the framework of the profile instrument. To more sharply focus on the profile responses, the aggregate responses of the School Board are followed by those of the other respondents in the following categories: Administrators, Faculty, Support Staff, Students, and Parents & Community.

It is important to note that this survey is meant to be part of a "search process" to assist the School Board in making judgments. Hopefully, it will assist them in identifying the perceived strengths and needs of the District. They may also compare the "needs characteristics" that they consider being significant with those identified by other participants. This process is not intended as either a management or a curriculum/instructional audit, as either or both would require a different design, a more complex process, and would serve a much different purpose. Although the interview process used is not scientifically or statistically designed, the informality and spontaneity of the dialogue yields information that is valuable to the search.

During the interviews, it was clear to the consultants that the participants cared deeply about the District and its programs. They were well informed and willingly and enthusiastically shared their views.

1. Strengths of the Community and the District

SCHOOL BOARD

- Community is family-oriented
- Clean and well-maintained facilities
- Parent support and involvement
- Community support for education—but demanding
- Easy to get people involved
- Quality of life in the community
- Excellent programs, both curricular and extra curricular
- Center Grove is the “center” of the community
- Low tax rates

- A good place to work—low turnover
- People move here for our programs
- One of the biggest businesses in the area
- Good relationships exist
- Looks like the Board will be stable for some time to come
- Strong Board could be seen as a weakness
- This is an opportunity to move corporation forward with a new vision
- No champion for academics

ADMINISTRATORS

- A high achieving school district
- Schools are the focal point of the community
- Outstanding extra curricular activities
- Strong parent support
- High expectations
- Low number of students from poverty
- Teachers come to stay
- Good community to raise kids
- High community values

- Controlled growth
- Good building leaders
- Great teacher leaders
- Curriculum innovations
- Principals have autonomy
- Kids are good
- Quality staff
- Working on a vision where high schools should be
- Staff recommendations for hires are honored

FACULTY

- Staff — professional, great, dedicated, hard-working
 - Great community
 - An excellent student body
 - Great co-curricular programs
 - Parental involvement
 - Clean and well-maintained buildings
 - Motivated staff
 - Stable teaching staff
 - Staff work very well together
 - We challenge our students
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- Families that care about and support education
 - Our reputation
 - Comfortable place to work
 - Respect between teachers and administrators
 - Support for special education
 - Achievement of our students
 - Good economic base
 - Good relationship between the teachers' association and the administration
 - High test scores
 - Fine arts

SUPPORT STAFF

- Amazing staff
- School Corporation has a great reputation
- A great community with parent support
- Students are eager to learn
- Excellent teachers
- People want to work here
- Excellent support for staff
- Big school in the country
- We continue to grow
- Open-minded staff willing to change
- Wonderful families live here
- We are all proud of our schools
- The current superintendent is very visible in the community

STUDENTS

- The administration is visible and helpful
- School sports and music programs
- Teacher-student relationships are good
- Students are active in the community
- Active student council
- Great schools

PARENTS & COMMUNITY

- People tend to stay in the community
- Quality parents
- Active parents
- Student have many choices
- Most students are well prepared
- Positive work ethic
- Dedicated staff
- Parental involvement
- Great community

- Teachers care about their students and go the “extra mile”
- Excellent facilities
- Parents are demanding
- High caliber faculty, staff and administration
- Nationally ranked programs
- Involved, active parents and community
- Excellence in and focus on selected sports
- High expectations for students
- Strong sense of community

- An area with many resources for children
- Low cost of living
- Low crime rate
- Passionate parents
- Strong values
- Current shift in Board puts more focus on academics
- Nationally recognized music program
- Strong theater
- Safe place to be
- The quality of the metro area

2. Challenges facing the District

SCHOOL BOARD

- Being good can create complacency
- There needs to be greater focus on academic achievement
- There needs to be a greater “balance” in our academic and co-curricular programs
- Media relations needs to be improved—there seems to have been a “bunker” mentality
- Concerning media relations, we need to get out in front of issues and be open about them
- Problem with special needs students not meeting AYP

- Students in the middle and low end of the performance chart getting lost
- Better corporation-wide communication
- How do we respond to growth
- Seeking academic excellence
- Improving our public image
- High school expansion—how will this be handled
- No diversity
- Technology issues
- Program issues—how do we maintain balance

ADMINISTRATORS

- Are we living on our reputation?
 - Decisions seem to always be questioned
 - Board should not direct the administration on operational issues
 - Too much administrative time is spend keeping the Board “happy”
 - Community, at times, is complacent
 - There are governance issues
 - Technology is behind
 - Must be open-minded and see all options of technology
 - Must have can-do attitude not a not can-do
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- Need a strong technology vision
 - Need more focus on lower performing student
 - We really have a chance to move forward with curriculum mapping
 - High school design process is ongoing
 - Need a stronger alternative program for failing students
 - Need to make adjustments in the program for middle and low achieving students
 - “Chain of command” is not adhered to
 - We are not poor enough for grants and not rich enough to do it with state funding
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- Too many staff development initiatives
 - Parents belly ache directly to the Board and they are not deflected to administrators to handle
 - There is no money for conferences
 - Staff development is not strategically planned
 - Salaries are low
 - Principals are overburdened with paperwork
 - No vision for technology
 - In reality, we are not as good as we think
 - Relationship with local newspapers

FACULTY

- Lack of goals for organization
- Elementary schools lack resources—some teachers purchasing items out of pocket
- Lack of alternative school for struggling middle school students
- Counselor/student ratio high in middle school
- Need to seek more grants
- There is little support for low achieving students

- Principals are in competition rather than cooperation
- Not much follow up on grand plans
- Technology—access, training, maintenance
- There appears to be no vision for technology
- Financial issues
- Communication issues
- No district-wide vision
- Trust issues
- Not meeting AYP

- There is little opportunity for faculty input
- More and more non-teaching items are being placed on our “plate”
- Morale is declining within the teacher ranks
- Lack of professional development and travel opportunities
- Lack of equity among buildings
- We are too reactive rather than proactive
- Most of the professional development opportunities are seen as extra work
- This place should be about teaching and learning

SUPPORT STAFF

- Lack of training for technology
- Limited technology staff
- Micro-managing Board
- Board needs to show their appreciation for staff

- Lack of staff development for employees
- New equipment arrives, and the tech support people do not know that it is arriving
- Funding issues
- Short-staffed everywhere—particularly the high school

STUDENTS

- Scheduling is confusing
- Grading scale is different from teacher to teacher, department to department

PARENTS & COMMUNITY

- Strong demands for highest quality academic programs
- Active, well educated and vocal parent body and community
- Some students are falling through the “cracks”
- Need to look for programs for at-risk students
- Technology—we are falling behind
- Need to integrate technology into the curriculum
- Better communication—community needs to be told what is going on with schools
- School corporation must have more political savvy

- School corporation needs to get out in front of issues
- It appears that athletics is over emphasized at the expense of academics
- Low number of National Merit Semifinalists
- No strategic planning or goals with an evaluation system to follow the planning
- We need to get back to a vision
- There is a need to re-evaluate the use for resources for all programs
- There appears to be a lack of uniformity and consistency among buildings

- Each building has a different level of security
- A lack of rigor for all ability students
- A lack of diversity
- Some special education issues—like changing teacher of record every year
- Growth
- Funding
- Special education teachers’ case loads appear high
- Inclusion issues
- Communication is a key
- Need more students taking AP exams

3. Qualities Sought in a New Superintendent

SCHOOL BOARD

- An honest and ethical person
- Detail minded
- Excellent communication skills with all constituent groups
- Open, approachable person
- Promotes a respectful, caring environment focused on student learning
- Skilled in planning
- Visible
- Politically savvy

- A visionary, someone who thinks “big”
 - Resilient and optimistic
 - Proven track record as a leader
 - Collaborative, consensus builder, yet strong leader—can say “no”
 - Cheerleader
 - People person (charismatic)
 - A strong operational manager/leader
 - A person who is not afraid to take a position that may be unpopular, but what is best for the District
 - Strong financial acumen
 - Sense of humor
 - Insightful
 - Inspires confidence
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- Sensitive
 - Fair
 - Being “in sync” with Board
 - Team builder
 - Dynamic
 - Confident
 - Flexible to Board and community needs
 - Person who understands and can address diversity issues
 - Active listener
 - Someone with drive and enthusiasm for the job
 - A delegator
 - A good communicator who does not put their own spin on things
 - Can follow Board’s direction, even if they disagree
 - Good PR
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- Ability to adjust—flexible
 - Problem solver vs. defending what is in place
 - Need to deflect issues to the principal
 - Energy—Passion
 - Staying power
 - Views academics as a priority
 - No baggage
 - Someone who views job as a challenge
 - Someone who will increase our expectations
 - Manages by walking around
 - A good listener
 - Strong interpersonal skills
 - Articulate
 - A person who can develop a synergy with the Board
 - Someone who understands change in today’s environment
 - Will to be able to change the culture
 - Can buy into a vision

ADMINISTRATORS

- Someone with central office experience
- K-12 experience
- A great personality, but can keep the Board focused on their role
- Someone who will take time to build relationships
- Someone who will be visible in the schools and the community
- Community minded
- A very good teacher
- Someone who can lead a collaborative process
- One who has confidence
- Strength
- Loves kids
- Empowers others

- Articulate
- Open door
- Makes best use of available talent
- Communicator
- Politically savvy
- Risk taker
- Listener
- High integrity
- Trusting
- Not intimidated by a strong Board
- Can utilize all of the talents in the district
- A person who can keep the flow of information open

FACULTY

- Honest, sincere, hard-working, and a good person
- A person with high emotional intelligence
- Someone how understands research
- A person that walks the walk
- Consistent
- Someone comfortable in dealing with tough issues
- Collaborative/team oriented

- Someone who can give direction
- Person who can lead the Board
- Social skills
- Visibility
- Warmth
- Personable
- Charisma

- Demonstrated success
 - Educational leadership
 - Visionary who can communicate a shared vision to the community
 - Accessible
 - Able to withstand pressure of special interest groups
 - Financial acumen, but not at expense of people person
 - Approachability
 - Open-minded
 - Compassionate
 - Respect for special areas
 - Ability to delegate and let people do their jobs
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- Be able to come into a building and fit in
 - Know staff
 - Speak to staff
 - Smile
 - Ability to look at both sides of issue
 - Support teachers
 - Involve people who will be affected by change (not superficially)
 - Have decisions reflect input
 - Respect what has worked well here
 - Respect judgment of people who are here
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- Willing to participate in community events (community involvement)
 - Planner
 - Open to suggestions
 - Empathy for staff
 - Trustworthy
 - Create optimal environments for learning
 - Ego is under control
 - Knowledgeable about technology
 - Be willing to delegate
 - Must be able to put finger on the pulse of the community
 - One who will trust the professionalism of the staff
 - Demonstrated results
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- Understands how to get grants
 - Savvy and committed
 - One who can set limits
 - A cheer leader
 - Someone who is out in front of issues
 - Next superintendent must lead the Board and stop the micro-management
 - Caring for kids
 - A diplomat
 - A passionate person

- Has a world view
- Has a sense of community
- Will stay

SUPPORT STAFF

- Someone who understands and utilizes current teaching skills
- Commitment to children first—politics last
- Strength of character
- Can make themselves heard
- Fair
- Open door
- Visible
- Business background with balance
- Big school experience
- Sense of humor
- Approachable
- Proactive
- Team-player
- Can follow through on issues

STUDENTS

- A good decision maker
- Should live in the district
- Confident
- Supportive of staff
- Not a micro manager
- Flexible
- Visible
- Able to relate to students
- Do not be afraid to take snow days or delay school start
- Vision for the future
- Someone who can deal with our growth
- Someone not pressured to make decisions

PARENTS & COMMUNITY

- Personality
- Approachable
- Accountable
- Visibility
- Accessible
- A person who can balance what is best for students and what is affordable
- Strong leadership
- Person who can create an atmosphere for democratic decision making
- A person who will be part of the community
- A listener

- Ability to work with all agencies and people of all types
 - Willingness to be responsive
 - Ability to inspire
 - Trust builder
 - Person who can get along with principals and teachers
 - Educational leader, not just a manager
 - People skills
 - Positive mindset
 - Passion for kids
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- A planner
 - A delegator
 - Good judge of people
 - Empathetic
 - Organized
 - Strong interpersonal skills
 - Successful experience with referenda
 - Labor negotiations
 - Chief educational officer
 - Person who will listen
 - Needs to understand community
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- Customer orientation
 - Willing to share responsibilities, consult with teachers, parents and staff
 - Successful record in district of similar size
 - Inspirational—cheerleader for education
 - Leader, not manager
 - Leader who will hire other than “yes people”
 - Mentor
 - Good at PR
 - Leader/manager/educator
 - Ability to know when things “bubble down” and when they should “bubble up”
 - Open
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- Experience with curriculum
 - Good track record of responding to concerns in timely manner
 - Interact with the community
 - Ability to increase academic performance with increasing requirements coming from legislative and regulatory mandates
 - Effectively work with the communities that fund the district and the public and private feeder districts
 - Exceptional community relations skills who has experience working in a diverse community

- Someone who understands that the learning or achievement gap is an issue that is solved on a PK-12 basis; not an elementary district problem, but a combined problem for both districts to solve

SUMMARY

Data from interviews, group meetings, and written responses revealed substantial agreement across the groups with respect to the School Corporation's strengths. Many challenges and concerns were common to all groups, and in some instances, we found responses to be influenced by what may be the respondent's role in or relationship to the School Corporation. Agreement with respect to leadership needs and preferred characteristics is high, providing a pattern which should prove useful and reassuring to the School Board and the consultants as the search moves forward.

All groups identified the community as an overriding strength and cited the quality and good reputation of the School Corporation and the caring, well-qualified teachers, administrators and support staff as major assets. Other most frequently mentioned factors in this category included involved parents and community, breadth of programs, the quality of the students, and the quality and quantity of cultural and enrichment activities in the metro area.

All groups placed significant emphasis on future school funding, growth, and technology as issues facing the Board and new superintendent. They also discussed the Board's role in setting the correct course for the future of the school corporation. Planning is a must and a strongly articulated vision is necessary to help all understand the future path the School Corporation is taking.

Across all groups, preferences for the superintendent's special competencies, behavior, and style were consistent, suggesting that certain attributes will be valuable as the schools continue to improve with a new superintendent. There is the expectation that the new leader will be a warm, friendly, open person who will enjoy working collaboratively with members of the School Board, staff, and community. They expect the person to be a dynamic, passionate educational leader in the District and the community. The person should also be one who values the people in the organization. Such a person is seen as one who will continue to promote and ensure the educational and social well being of the youth of the School Corporation.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Isenberg
Ronald E. Barnes

Characteristics and Qualifications for Center Grove Community School Corporation Superintendent

- A strong educational leader who will move the corporation to the highest levels of academic achievement
- A dynamic people-person who exudes passion and excitement and is very visible in the schools and the community
- A visionary who will develop goals to meet the school corporation's challenges
- A leader who will preserve the best while making those changes that keep the school corporation strong and competitive
- A confident educator who is able to communicate effectively with the Board and all the stakeholders in the school corporation and the community
- A collaborative educational leader who will energize the Board, the staff and the community in the best interest of our students
- An individual of the highest moral and ethical character whose sense of integrity is seen as a model for staff, students and community
- A problem solver who will work with staff, parents and the Board to develop strategies to provide optimal learning opportunities for all students
- A leader knowledgeable in school funding and alternative sources of revenue
- A relationship builder who will develop strong partnerships throughout the school community