

Leadership Profile Report
Georgetown Independent School District

July 9, 2007

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of the *Leadership Profile Assessment* conducted by Dr. Benjamin Canada, Mr. Butch Felkner, and Mr. Mayo Neyland from the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) Executive Search Services on June 20, 21, 25, and 26 for the board of trustees of the Georgetown Independent School District (GISD). The consultants met with administrators, faculty, community, students, support staff, faith leaders, and other residents to collect the data.

The *Leadership Profile Assessment* form was made available through the district, on the Internet, and from the consultant. Approximately 196 submitted responses through the Internet and 43 participated in the facilitated profile sessions.

The first objective of the profile-building sessions was to make sure that everyone in the community had the opportunity to participate, and that objective was accomplished through advertising, letters, and announcements. The second objective was to receive responses from a cross section of the community. Though some of the responses may be duplicates, we believe the 239 responses should yield that cross section.

In developing the leadership profile, the consultants sought general comments on preferred candidate traits and qualifications and district strengths, issues, and concerns that could bear on future leadership requirements and influence the selection criteria for the next CEO of schools. Those findings are included in this report for the board to use as it defines the leadership characteristics and selection criteria used in identifying the next CEO.

To highlight broad themes within each topic, data are aggregated into five response groups. Under the category "consistent" are the comments frequently heard from the participants. Comments heard less frequently are listed under the respective group. Under each group, the comments heard or provided with some regularity are listed randomly in no particular order. It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of a group. Items are included if, in the consultant's judgment, they were repeated by a sufficient number of respondents to warrant the board's attention.

We wish to express our appreciation to Carmen Domel for organizing the arrangements for the visit, to those with whom we met for their cordiality and responsiveness and to all of the respondents whose concern for their school was evident in their comments.

STRENGTHS

CONSISTENT

Close knit community; work well together
Fine Arts and Special Education programs
Excellent collaboration in the district and with the community
Supportive environment in the district and on campuses
Strong financial position
Supportive senior community; Sun City
Facilities
Strong leadership at the district and campus
High expectations for student success
Strong school board with a “do what’s best for students” attitude
Quality and longevity of staff
Good curriculum and instructional focus
The focus is on what students need; kids first; they all matter

ADMINISTRATORS

Outstanding campus administrators working together
Allowing teachers to be their professional self
Strong staff development
Passing our last bond
Good reputation
P.E. every day
Small classes
Balanced curriculum; good mix with many offerings

COMMUNITY

Wonderful community support system
Good athletic programs
The sizes of our schools make them manageable
Effective discipline in the schools; zero tolerance
Conservative traditions
Effective communication from the district to the parents and community
Small “at risk” population
Good academic ratings and test scores
Thinking and looking to the future; flexible
Openness of the district to the faith based organizations
Bussing programs—allow churches to rent buses

FACULTY

Technology to support staff and learning
Unified district—we all work well together for the students
Very dedicated staff
Willing to try new innovations
Good business partners in the town
Good facilities and maintenance department
Growing
Raises are appreciated

STUDENTS

Due to the low number of respondents, the data for this group is included with the community

SUPPORT STAFF

Meeting TEA accountability requirements in all reportable areas
"Open door" accessibility to leadership

CHALLENGES—ISSUES—NEEDS

CONSISTENT

Effectively managing the rapid growth that is here already *
Changing demographics; especially in the low-socioeconomic group *
New high school timing and location *
Improving technology
Rebuilding a stronger, more united district leadership team with a new superintendent
Lack of a vision for the future of GISD
Financial situation to support growth
Lower than expected state test scores
Hiring quality staff as we grow; fitting that staff into our traditions and expectations
Need to invest more on sports to reach more kids
Too much emphasis on TAKS
Teacher pay is declining relative to surrounding districts
** Clearly the top issues*

ADMINISTRATORS

Our current technology is modern but insufficient
Leadership at several of the campuses is weak
Splitting the community and district with a second high school
Maintaining effective communication as we grow

COMMUNITY

Power of the campus principals-leads to inequity or inconsistency in programs
Overcrowding in some elementary locations
Our HS curriculum is not preparing regular students for college; AP/GT are over emphasized
Focus on testing instead of educating
A comparable pay scale as a morale issue
Drugs in our schools is increasing; gang violence; bullying
There is an obvious East (older)-West (newer) divide in our town and district
Lowering performance expectations because of influx of less motivated students
Updating and modernizing some of our older facilities
Need a more diverse (gender; ethnic group) teaching and coaching staff
Weak math and science programs at the high and middle schools

FACULTY

Increasing the amount of technology to support learning
Increasing numbers of "special needs" students
Limited funding
Lack of parental involvement for low socio-economic groups

SUPPORT STAFF

Principals have too much power on campus
Losing good teachers to other districts due to pay scale

CHARACTERISTICS DESIRED

CONSISTENT

A confident leader with experience as a superintendent in a fast growth district
Experienced dealing with a board of trustees
Someone who will get out of the office and learn the district; not a desk sitter
Courage and tact to confront difficult groups and issues constructively
Willing to commit to Georgetown ISD for the long term and get involved in the community
A team builder who can unify the staff, faculty, and community
Approachable, visible, enthusiastic, sense of humor
Capable strategic planner who can help the board articulate and achieve a vision for the future
High expectations and standards for performance from both students and staff
A progressive thinker willing to listen to others and integrate new concepts and ideas into the district
A doctorate or MBA is preferred

ADMINISTRATORS

Strong personal convictions
Do what's right for kids
Hands on
Respected by the district
System's thinker
Provide specific feedback on issues
Ability to praise
Financial experience
Humble
People person
Integrity; ethical
Goal directed

COMMUNITY

Authentic
Can let go of ego
Openness to a variety of lifestyles and values
Willing to listen
Integrity
Experienced fiscal manager and administrative leader
A systems thinker
Not afraid to explore doing new or different things; let go of what doesn't work
Great communicator who can keep accurate information flowing
Strong desire to work independently
Honest, competent, inspiring, intelligent, fair-minded, courageous, straight-forward, and imaginative
Focused on measurable goals
Strong family person with Christian values
Good politician; able to persuade groups in order to move the district forward
Comfortable being in the lime-light and can handle the pressure

FACULTY

Trusts professionals to exercise judgment without excessive oversight
Stays in touch with the campuses
Supports professional development
Not ready to retire
Someone who tends to stay in place for longer than a couple of years

SUPPORT STAFF

Bi-lingual would be a plus
Knowledge of Central Texas and the coming growth
Understands the importance of balance in a curriculum and a district
Visible as much as possible

SUMMARY

The strengths and challenges confronting GISD were consistent in both the completed assessment forms and group interviews.

Generally, GISD is in very good shape and there is a strong sense of esprit throughout. Respondents are pleased with the academic achievements in the district and optimistic the district will continue improving. Citizens are proud of the extracurricular activities, and there is a widespread belief that GISD can continue on the pathway to higher student achievement.

Based on the concerns repeated most often by the respondents, a three-phase process for successful entry by the new CEO seems appropriate. The initial phase should focus on the board and CEO designing and then executing a deliberate transition plan. The new CEO will be following in the path of a previous CEO who was extremely well liked and respected. Most respondents appear willing to give the new CEO the benefit of the doubt but the expectations and standards are very high. Therefore, the transition planning should focus on systematically meeting as many district and community members as possible and getting to know each other. This process will begin to address the issue of opening communication in the district and community. Information concerning this process is available from Executive Search Services who will provide whatever support it can.

Phase Two consists of a team building session with the board and new CEO to clearly identify respective roles and responsibilities and putting board operating procedures in place to reinforce these roles and responsibilities. It should be clearly understood that this is a new team that must spend time exploring how they want to work together. The old rules may no longer apply. This workshop should occur within a month of the arrival of the new CEO and will serve as a good way for the new team to step off in the right direction. It is intended to address some of the profile groups' concerns about the board and CEO working together effectively. The teambuilding workshop is available from TASB's Leadership Team Services.

Phase Three involves the board and CEO agreeing to begin a community-based strategic planning process early in the 2008-09 school year. The process is complex and requires that the board and administration be dedicated to going through the entire process. Therefore, it is best to wait for the initial transition period and new school year to settle before undertaking this last phase. Strategic planning will address several of the major issues or concerns outlined by the profiling process including the lack of vision, dealing with growth, facilities, the new high school issue, and building unity of effort throughout the community for taking whatever action the community planning team deems appropriate. Again, this service is available through TASB's Leadership Team Services who can provide detailed information and answer questions.

It should be noted that every community has diverse expectations and desires regarding a new CEO. No individual is ever able to meet or address all the expectations of a community that has divergent opinions and beliefs, regardless of how homogeneous the community might appear to be. To this end, the board should not build up expectations that it will be able to find someone who excels in or even possesses all of the criteria. The task that the board and TASB face is to find someone with many of these desired skills, characteristics, experience, and personality necessary to address the opportunities and challenges awaiting the next leader of GISD.

Respectfully submitted,

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