

Stakeholder Input Report for

***Liberty Elementary
School District
Buckeye, Arizona***

submitted by

MCPHERSON *MJ* JACOBSON, LLC

7905 L St., Suite 310
Phone: 888-375-4814/402-991-7031
Email: mail@macnjake.com

Omaha, Nebraska 68127
Fax: 402-991-7168
Website: www.macnjake.com

February 2018



MCPHERSON *MJ* **JACOBSON, LLC**

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

7905 L STREET, SUITE 310 ♦ OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68127 ♦ 402-991-7031/888-375-4814
FAX: 402-991-7168 ♦ EMAIL: MAIL@MACNJAKE.COM ♦ WEBSITE: WWW.MACNJAKE.COM

**Liberty School District
Buckeye, AZ
District Stakeholder Input**

Executive Summary

On February 6 and 7 2018, consultants Aida Buelna and Larry Mason conducted meetings with 12 different groups from the Liberty Elementary School District including students, teachers, classified staff, PTO representatives, administrators, and community members. They received input from over 170 individuals in these groups.

Four questions were asked of all the groups and every response was recorded. Outlined on this page and the subsequent page is an Executive Summary of the major themes expressed by the participants. Following the Executive Summary are all the individual comments from the participants.

The final section of the report consists of the comments of (58) individuals who completed the on line survey responding to the same 4 questions.

What are the good things about your community?

- Growing community (Buckeye is the fastest growing city in the U.S.)
- Diverse and very inclusive
- Suburban / rural (small town feel)
- Weather
- Family friendly and safe
- Great location close to Phoenix which has culture, pro sports, colleges, etc.
- Multitude of outdoor activities including golf and biking and hiking trails
- Very affordable cost of living

What are the good things about the Liberty Elementary School District?

- 6 Signature Elementary schools, each with a different area of emphasis
- Open enrollment and transportation
- Dedicated teachers who are completely student focused
- Technology opportunities (one to one grades 6,7,8)
- High parent involvement
- Many extracurricular opportunities
- Before and after school child care 6 AM to 6 PM

What are the issues the new Superintendent should be aware of as he or she comes into the district?

- 4 Board members will be up for election in November
- Limited budget for many needs especially supporting the Signature School concept
- Gifted and Talented program
- Planning for expected significant growth
- Healing process necessary to reestablish professional relationships between all the stakeholders and the district
- Transparency and Trust
- Lack of sufficient State funding

What characteristics should the new Superintendent have to be successful?

- Visible and approachable in the District and the community
- Transparent and honest
- Student centered
- Creative problem solver
- People person
- Good listener
- Open minded but decisive
- Genuine - high level of integrity
- Visionary
- Promotes team work and collaboration
- Experienced in budgets and finances

Transportation/Maintenance (6 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Lots of growth
 - New communities are being built by our schools
 - Rural community
 - Affordable - low cost of living
 - Great weather
 - Good for your health
 - Friendly people
 - Good water park
 - Mountains
 - Different types of events
 - Stadium - Football
 - Golf
 - Spring training-baseball
 - Plenty of clubs for kids
 - PIR race car races

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Treatment from staff has been very good, they appreciate the job that we do
 - Good benefits for the employees
 - Open enrollment is good for parents
 - Good teaching
 - Extended day program is good
 - Teachers participate in the student events
 - Teachers make it to community events
 - Different programs at schools gives parents options
 - Sports programs are affordable
 - Transportation is provided for open enrollment

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Schools need to be fixed - (old schools)
 - District office is currently an issue - upkeep
 - Grounds at campus needed to be kept up (dealing with gophers)
 - Equipment needs to be updated (vehicles, lawn mowers, tires)
 - Buses need to be updated

- Shorthanded, need more staff
 - Difficult to find employees for 6 hours a day 10 month in transportation department
 - Custodians & maintenance are over taxed - work wise
 - Pay raises - surrounding district earn more
 - Treat classified staff as second-class citizens
4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Change agent
 - Step outside the office
 - Visible
 - More involved throughout the district
 - People person
 - Ability to listen
 - Speak to employees
 - Hands on with everyone (at all levels)
 - Open minded
 - Appreciation to what the district has to office

District Office/Leadership Team (19 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
- Diverse
 - Variety of communities within the districts - runs the spectrum
 - Hometown feeling
 - Family oriented
 - Everyone knows everyone
 - A lot of people attended school here and have returned to live and work in the community
 - Every major league sport is here
 - Golf, boating, fishing, snow skiing, hiking, swimming,
 - The weather encourages people to be outdoors
 - Buckeye is the fastest growing city in the US
 - More businesses coming into the area
 - A new Mall in Buckeye
 - Job opportunities
 - Very good schools in the area

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Individualize programs
 - Maintenance staff
 - Access to technology for students and staff (6-8 one to one) and close to a cart per grade level at the lower grades
 - Computer based assessment - throughout our district
 - Teachers
 - New curriculum in English Language Arts
 - Staff development/ professional development
 - Families are given options with transportation provided
 - Kid oriented
 - Provide opportunities for extracurricular activities
 - After school programs for students that need to stay on campus while parents work 2 locations for LEAP (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.) Runs all year - fee based program
 - Stable school calendar - weather is not an issue

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Our board is not community selected but chosen by the County superintendent
 - Four open seats will have to be filled in November
 - All programs are not treated equally
 - Students are not treated equally or given the same funds
 - There are needs and the budget is limited
 - New board members
 - Aging facilities
 - Rely on "Over-rides" that tax payers vote on

4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Transparent
 - Genuine
 - Good Listener
 - Visionary
 - Strong
 - With growth and change will need to know where to take us
 - Bring different groups together - inclusive
 - Resourceful
 - Visible
 - High level of integrity

- Vested in the Community, District and students
- Experience in education

Elementary teachers & staff (17 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Good weather
- Access to so many things all the time
- Live in a rural area but we can be in Phoenix in no time, close to airport, shopping, spring training.
- This is a family-oriented school
- Family is multigenerational
- Diversity in the district
- Options for different lifestyles
- Great community members, very involved, great partnerships
- Local farmers are very supportive of our school
- Parents are involved in the kids' education
- Attend open house, plays, conferences
- High retention of parents k-8 stay
- We have students who are now teachers at the school
- We have great kids
- Puts the kids' firsts to ensure that they become good citizens
- It's small and families know each other, anything happens and we know and support
- We are growing, business is coming into the area, name brand stores
- Tight knit community
- Job field is great
- Staff lives in the community
- People are down to earth, very approachable

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- We have amazing teachers all over the district
- We know all the staff from the other schools
- Teachers do so much more with so much less
- Teachers are learners and they want to get better at their craft, want to do better
- Teachers are here because they want to be here
- Family feeling
- Everyone knows everyone
- Each school has a specialty program, this provides teachers with different opportunities
- Principals do a lot with not a lot of resources

- We all do what we can with what we have and go into our own pocket if it will help students
 - My kids went through schools here and they are successful
 - Students are able to take what they learn, they make good decisions, they're ethical
 - Signature programs are great and successful
 - Our school has a theater
 - Parent support the signature program, donate materials
 - Students can get bused to other schools if they select a different signature program
 - Teachers have an impact on students
 - Teachers have left the district and then returned
3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Budget
 - Allocation of staff, short handed
 - Class size is to large (they advertise small because they average district)
 - All schools are not equal - some schools are set up for success - not a fair allocation of resources - unequal allocation - very difficult to go without because parents can't supplement
 - Families do not have internet access so why send home computers
 - We have a "override" coming up
 - Funding
 - Need to look at "pay" for our staff to make them competitive
 - Neighboring district pay significantly more so we are losing staff
 - Technology is an issue - we are behind the times, resources are not available
 - Signature programs, running an IB schools is not cheap, we have funding in the beginning but in order to expand and grow we need more funding
 - Special education caseloads are too large, insufficient staffing
 - Professional development has not been provided for the new programs
 - Other districts pay more which is why teachers leave
 - Involuntarily transferred
 - When you've been here a long time they make it difficult to continue to stay by moving you involuntarily, they transfer you to another school, change your grade level
 - Signature program isn't being funded to the level that it's needed to be successful
 - Visual & arts received from donations, did not receive funding from the school
 - Materials for the dual immersion program came from a foundation
 - Signature program doesn't get the necessary support, no training, curriculum, etc.
 - We don't have a library on our campus, a school should have a library and librarian
 - Teachers that teach computers are gone, 2nd grade have to take computerized tests, not sure if scores are due to computer skills or materials
 - Lack of teacher voice due to fear of repercussions and assumptions
 - Not sure if surveys are anonymous
 - Teacher advisory council did not have voice in the past
 - Lack of grant writer that could bring in district resources

4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- In touch with the people
- Visible
- Approachable
- Someone who takes an interest in teachers
- Attends extracurricular events
- Attend community events
- People person
- Someone who will bring a sense of community
- Inclusive
- Set the tone and model expectations
- Listener
- Receptive to feedback
- Support site administrators - have their back
- Open minded
- Get us back on track and make us a competitive district
- A learner - will lead - model from the top down
- Wants to get to know our kids
- Personable with our kids
- Supportive of teachers
- Kids first
- Transparent
- Visibility
- Involved with district activities
- Understands 301 money and how it is distributed
- Happy
- Has teaching experience
- Personal touches for staff
- Understand culture of the community

Community Meeting (13 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Great weather
- Diverse community
- Unique experiences
- Rural community - use to be
- We are growing from rural to urban
- People moving in with different points of view
- Parents are invested in the schools - want the best outcome for the kids
- Community garnishes support from the parents, wanting their kids to do good
- Good schools
- Liberty has been a calling card for many years, people wanting to come in
- Potential to growth - land size
- Developable
- Buckeye is one of the fastest growing city & county
- Opportunity to effect change in the community and district
- Close to everything, sporting museum within reach
- Different areas in Buckeye, if you want city life it's there, country life
- Golfing, baseball parks, purposed water parks, rodeo, room for everyone
- Everyone gets along
- Part of the district is in Goodyear, it's a good city, with the development.

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- STEM school - boys have many opportunities that have to do with math, science, technology
- Signature programs at each of our schools
- flexibility that is offered students can attend any school of their choice
- Foundation in Liberty District -our children pride in their education can be heard in their voice
- Excellent teachers, some have been here a very long time
- 3 high schools - students can go to any of the high schools
- CTE -programs at high schools are excellent
- Athletes opportunities in the schools
- The IB program is wonderful

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Growth - economy is changing and putting up lots of boards and bricks land that will change the schools
 - Charter schools
 - Rebuild our district and community
 - Needs to build trust and be transparent with all
 - As an elementary school district, the relationship with the high school district needs to be articulated and both parties have to build this relationship.
 - Need to blend in to high school, that students are prepared to be successful when they enter the high school district
 - Challenge - with the trust in the community, need to be ready to build
 - Heal all the parties
 - Arizona has low funding
 - Out of box thinker and politically astute at the State level, clear understanding of AZ funding
 - School Board members are up for election (4 out of 5) in November
 - Title 1 school, if students don't have money they don't eat, if students are not in a safe place, if they're hungry they don't learn- need to look at the status and elevate these schools
 - The job is 24/7, it's a life style
4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Rebuilding trust
 - Transparency with all constituents
 - Technology
 - Funding of our signature programs because it's a challenge
 - Keep all parties happy and funded
 - Community minded
 - Bring on board people that are willing to help
 - Needs to reach out to others in the community, it's not a one-person job
 - Needs to be out and know what's happening in the community, with business
 - Knowledgeable about "override", funds
 - Someone who knows this community to properly fund our schools
 - Knows or background in fund raising to share with PTO's at the schools
 - Creative in bringing in funds (cooperate funds, sponsorships)
 - Compassionate - doesn't mind being around little kids
 - Need to look at someone who can come in with a breath of fresh air
 - We need to look at bigger opportunities
 - Thick skin
 - Moxie to make hard decisions
 - Understand personal agendas keep kids in mind

- Good listener to make decisions are good for district
- Transparent
- Good communicator
- Remember their roots, jump into classroom or fill in where they are needed
- Need to know the recent curriculum that has been purchased in the district

Students (30 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Lakes, events, parks, sports from lacrosse and baseball
- Family friendly
- Very inclusive
- Kept in order, very friendly
- Kind cordial very accepting
- Agriculture
- Good education
- Everyone's choice
- Parents and children care about their education
- Education and teachers are valued
- Extracurricular clubs
- School is fun, we have many activities and we are involved in school
- Communities care about how we are presented, we have pride in our community
- Volunteers, we care about how it looks and how people feel about the community
- We take advantage of what we have
- Community is helpful
- We have adopt-a-highway
- Safe community
- We have officers that keep us safe
- We have problems but come together to solve them
- Historic community

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Schools are inclusive
- We want to learn
- if we are being bullied we are kept safe, we are safe and feel we belong
- Schools specialized in different things - more of choice
- Students behave and respect teachers
- We feel we can talk to teachers and that they can help us, they are very understanding
- Schools want to provide balance

- We have academics, sports, so that we become well rounded
 - We can balance to participate in both academic and extracurricular
 - Schools teachers are very open caring and listening to us
 - Teachers believe in us and allow us to participate in courses that we don't necessary test into
 - We get to know our teachers because they listen to us, teachers are here to help us
 - My math teacher is very helpful, she slows down if one students doesn't understand
 - Communication is very important, teacher accommodate us with what we need, to slow it down or to accelerate the subject
 - Teachers bring subject matter to relevant to our lives, we see connections to everything around us, they are shaping us into leaders and make our world a better place
 - Here I'm happy because they made me feel like i belong
 - Every school has a way to raise funds for our schools
 - Astro camp - is for 6, 7, 8th grade and anyone can go if you have the fee to attend. It fuels passion for science
 - All schools have something to offer, builds the foundation for high school and prepares us for life rather than for a test
 - Every year we get to experience a different field trips (Astro Camp, Catalina,
 - Extra trips remind us of what we can get if we work hard
 - The trips are a reward, teachers are really motivated
 - A student court that handles "student strikes", student court determines the discipline, this will encourage them to do better
 - There is always one kid who doesn't want to learn and teachers help open their mind to it
 - Teachers challenge us in desert survival, how to take notes
 - Teachers don't look at this as just a job, teachers are here to make sure that you are the best you can be, even if you get an A you can still learn and move beyond
 - At Estrella we learn a new language, Spanish so it will help us help others
 - We've seen our school grow over the years, there's is a wide range of activities
 - To participate in extracurricular activities, they help us if we are struggling in grades so that we can participate
3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Poverty - some of the schools are not rich, new schools can afford things that others can't afford
 - Big issues, systems that are created students to do better, sometimes programs are started but not completed
 - We build a strong foundation but don't continue with the foundation
 - District has had cyber bullying and it hasn't been addressed
 - School & student needs have to be met, aware that some students need help
 - Programs get cut short - spread programs out so that they aren't at one site
 - New way to discipline student
 - Gifted students need to be supported - they have different needs that need to be met

- Some students want to stay at their school and not move because they are gifted, yet their needs are not necessarily met at the home school
 - Our programs were doing well but because certain things outside of our level became an issue we lost support - Issues surrounding the gifted program
 - Busing situation - they ride different buses and they get confused- they need to stick to certain bus
 - Kids are made fun of because they can't afford brand names
 - Our school is diverse we have an issue with bullying because we have different colors
 - We have attempted to solve it but the issue is race related
 - Financial problem that we have not enough funding
 - Schools have more funding, they have all these programs, we don't have all the programs that other schools with more funding can afford
 - Issue with schools that have opportunities that other schools don't
 - Electronics at schools is not equal
 - Build upon the gifted programs, if you tested in, then you should receive support for all your years, later in the 6-8th grade the program isn't as strong
4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Active with the students and teachers
 - Responsible and caring about what the teachers think
 - Enforce the rules but not be a jerk about it
 - Experience on how to deal with issues
 - Work with whatever needs to be dealt
 - Financial knowledge
 - Kinds, responsible, know how to handle situations
 - Problem solver
 - Ready for what they will face
 - Keep his word
 - Good Listener
 - Voice for students
 - Fair and unbiased
 - Experience and able to do the best for our district and all of our schools
 - Care about our district
 - Good communicator
 - Put together events to deal with racial issues, or other problems that come up
 - Encouraging to employees
 - Engage with students
 - Visit schools
 - Someone I can speak to
 - Engage in the community, teachers, and students
 - Help fix our problems
 - Well rounded
 - Visible and present at events and classrooms

- Website have email so they are accessible
- Students and parents need to have access to the individual
- Directly involved with us
- Experience at the school level
- Take input from others and then make decisions
- Active, poll students,
- Like kids
- Confidence
- Willing to try new programs and ideas
- Someone that will connect with you
- Not in their office
- Student Focused
- Open minded when it comes to students and teachers when it comes to sharing input
- Superintendent should be visible so that students know who they are

Principals (5 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Long and storied history
 - Growing community that embraces its history
 - Small and family feeling
 - People make the place
 - Lots of small business - family owned and committed to their schools
 - Small business if committed to the district
2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Signature programs
 - A little something for everybody
 - Money is going where it belongs - the kids
 - District does what's best for kids
 - Rainbow is very isolated and a neighborhood school, don't draw from outside of the community
 - Campuses are k-8, 8th graders take care of younger students
 - Staff
 - Amazing staff from all levels, committed to schools
 - The time and energy that teachers put into the kids is great
 - This is not an 8 hours job for our employees

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Board relationships - that this relationship doesn't overpower the relationship with employees
- We are holding together our facilities, buses, with a shoe string
- We are short bus drivers
- We are lean at the top, but this hurts us
- Need a plan for maintenance, buses, need to prevent things from happening
- Need to address student achievement before it becomes critical
- Maximize our resources
- Need to plan for choice
- Well received by our community
- Choice was supported in the beginning but it's difficult to continue to fund program with budget constraints
- Gifted program is a hot topic
- There are so many other kids to advocate for them and it hasn't happened
- Budget
- Anticipating growth is not always accurate

4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Skills set to bring the different groups together to communicate with others
- Listener
- Understand & believe that Liberty has a history
- Ask for input
- Visibility
- Interact with students, teachers, administrators
- Someone who will give us feedback
- Encouraging
- Coach
- Accessible
- Direct communication
- Feedback and complements

Elementary teachers & staff (67 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Estrella mountain community is family oriented, it's growing
- Beautiful community, teachers work and live in the community
- Weather is great
- Rural community close to metropolitan area
- Spring training - Cleveland Indians, Cincinnati Reds
- Football stadium
- Opportunities for people
- Retired and child rearing community
- Biking, hiking trails, golf
- Motorcycle community - bikers
- Very diversified
- Everyone is welcomed in Liberty!
- High quality of life
- Cost of living is very affordable
- Facilities for all age groups
- Youth sports
- Training for warriors
- Close knit community
- Cultural events
- Symphony
- Everyone is invited to the events
- Phoenix international raceway
- Small town family atmosphere
- Scenic
- Diverse setting (rural, suburban)
- Less traffic
- Great views
- Phoenix for shopping
- Long standing relationships with our community
- Trust from our communities that we serve
- Quiet and relaxing
- Fast growing community
- Lots to do outdoors
- Drive and be in the snow and beach areas
- Golf

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Each school has its own signature program
- Support all kids and their needs
- Excellent teacher hiring
- All teachers are dedicated at all schools
- Kids first
- Devotion and Compassion for students
- Many years of experience
- Support from principals and each other and the community
- Volunteers
- Parent involvement
- Clean campus, well maintained
- Longevity of staff - experienced
- Technology at one to one at middle school
- Athletic programs at the schools
- We have the carnival, and community events at the schools
- The school is a place for gathering of the community
- Weddings have taken place on the campus
- Our students are well mannered
- Nicest population of students very loving they don't tolerate bullying
- We are close enough to schools that we can visit the schools
- Good relationships between teachers, between grade levels
- Students return to work in the district
- Students are now parents of students

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Need to bring computers to lower grades
- Parents can be very verbal when they are happy and when they are unhappy
- They speak their mind
- Understand the needs of each program at the schools
- Lack of State funding for schools
- Teacher pay is dead last in the US and school funding is low
- Teacher shortage
- Compensation for all levels is very low
- Gifted program in need of serious look
- Intervention teachers for our kids - special services across the board for non-title 1 school
- Non-title 1 schools have the issues, we don't have counselors Title 1 school do have
- Lack of nursing services
- Lack of collaboration among the schools

- Negativity among staff because no one knows what the other is doing
- We have a serious issue in hiring specialized teachers
- Signature program lacks the funding, we need a model that provides the funding to carry out the signature program
- Contracted out services for Special services (speech, OT, etc.)
- Some campuses have difficulty because of the remoteness
- All non-title 1 have very little para support
- 1 mentor teacher to support brand new teachers to district or to the profession
- Difficult getting substitutes, we need to spread students to other classes when we don't have subs without compensation
- Special Ed numbers are growing by 2nd grade is being bumped up because we don't have intervention programs for students
- We are not keeping up with surrounding districts
- Our school psychologists are over worked 1 psychologist for 2 schools or 3 schools
- Diversity can become an issue (economically may not be good for all schools)
- Discipline, funding, is not always equitable
- Discrepancy between what is said and what is at each of the schools, don't know who to speak to
- Lack of trust
- Disconnect with teachers and district administration
- Lack of professional dialogue
- Lack of professional development
- Started a reading program and we haven't kept up with the training needed
- Great teachers need great help, high EL population and don't have EL assistance
- Special needs programs have never been good, wasn't research based
- 14% identified special needs when we should have only 10%, kids are being pushed out that shouldn't be pushed out.
- Parents have been unable to provide enrichment to students before coming to school
- Language issues
- Parents need to work 2 jobs, if we have 2 parents in the home that both work
- Most of our population is bused
- 72% free and reduced lunch, no computers or internet at the home, no cell phones in the home
- We don't have library support for the library that exists on campus
- PTO can't solve all the issues
- We needed to make choices (counselor, librarian, etc.)
- We have the haves and the have nots
- Unified group of principals, it was a team, this has not been permitted, principals are functioning in isolation

4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Honest
 - Integrity
 - Transparency
 - Not yes person
 - Question things
 - Open door policy willing to talk to staff
 - Good listener without judgement and consequences
 - Listen to all stakeholders
 - Will build up the principals
 - KIDS First not business
 - Trust the staff, doesn't make decisions in a silo
 - Start program and let it run for several years to determine if it's going to be successful
 - Heart of a servant
 - Promotes collaboration, team work
 - Values all strengths and individual skill
 - Proactive not reactive
 - Experience taking a district out of difficulty
 - Collegiality
 - Positive change for everyone
 - We want someone that will bring us together
 - Someone who understands Arizona and its difficulties
 - Communication
 - K-8 schools experience
 - Successfully raised their own children
 - Bilingual or accept translator if they aren't
 - Motivational
 - Build team work and encourage collaboration
 - Humility to understand that you don't run the district any more than the lunch or custodial staff
 - Experience in the classroom
 - Knowledge is not theoretical but they need the practical experience
 - Appreciate what we are doing well and help to change the negativity
 - Experience in all areas rural, urban, suburban
 - Up for the long haul
 - Fight for the teachers and the funding they need
 - Support our staff

PTO (7 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Safe neighborhoods
- It's a community
- You know your neighbors
- Friendly neighborhood
- People are involved
- We have many volunteers from the "snow bird" community
- Great parks and community centers
- Very diverse community (minorities, economically)
- Everyone pulls together
- People say what needs to be said
- It's a small district because of the small-town feel
- There are a lot of families that are 2nd and 3rd generations in our district
- Rural, suburban areas and this adds to the community feel
- People care about what happens here
- Lots of personality at the schools
- Open enrolled in this district- I choose this district because it's very caring about the whole community
- We are close to Phoenix that we can attend events
- Arts and cultural is close to us and we can attend
- We chose this area because of growth, rural community and safe neighborhoods
- Different choices for individuals to come together
- We have wealthy pockets that help out those that are less fortunate
- We need each other
- Major sports are here (hockey, baseball, football). Buckeye is fastest growing and wealthiest in Arizona

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- IB program
- All of the signature programs at the schools
- IB Program is a great model would love to see this at schools, with the positions and financial support
- Teachers are amazing, 2nd to none, they are dedicated, they love the programs that they work in
- PTOs are very good
- Great volunteer program due to the program director
- 700 hours of volunteer at Estrella in a month
- We do have great principals that have dedicated their lives to our schools

- Individuals work above and beyond their job description
 - I totally trust my children with the teachers
 - A lot of parents can't volunteer because of different situations
 - Staff takes care that students are ok, the same values we have at home are supported at school
 - Teaches them to be good people
 - More teachers are coming in, their kids are going to school, and live within the community
 - Our parents and family look out for our kids
3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Lack of trust in district
 - Lack of transparency
 - Deal with the past so that we can move forward
 - Embrace the minority community
 - Need to bring community together
 - Lack of communication
 - Lack of parents to feel heard without being judged, being grouped and label
 - Teachers being fearful about speaking up
 - There is no policy of walking teachers off campus
 - There is no policy of principal being walked off campus without explanation
 - Need to communicate policy
 - Lack of respect for the stakeholders
 - Lack of respect for the knowledge that stakeholders have
 - Funding is an issue
 - Severe funding challenges
 - District is fragmented
 - Schools are being pitted against each other
 - Schools are fragmented due to unequal funding
 - Miscommunication is given to community
 - Inequity with funding, with class size,
 - We have a handful of kids with major discipline issues that are not being dealt with
 - Need to enforce policies that are in place especially for inter-district transfers
 - Issues to open enrollment
4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Open minded
 - Team player
 - Communicator
 - Out of the box thinker
 - Risk taker
 - Humble

- Listener
- Ethical
- Honest
- A good leader
- Let us know what's going on
- Transparent
- Fiscally and mindfully responsible
- Law abiding
- Support your PTOs
- Good track record
- Comes from similar demographics as ours
- Strong minded and open
- Willingness to listen to the board within their administrative position
- Do not micromanage
- Opposite of what we had, up for a challenge
- Educated, innovated, even handed
- Will listen to parents
- Democratic
- Honoring the stakeholder, parents
- Honoring parents as equal
- Heart for teacher
- Compassionate
- Champion their teachers and principal
- We need someone who will lead us
- Someone who loves our kids
- Ethical
- Positive
- Supports volunteers in general
- Someone who is open to having volunteers on campus
- Someone who can lead
- If there is something wrong with a school we need someone who will take care of it and make the situation better
- Problem solver
- Someone who attends events and talks to the kids
- Involved with the schools and with the community

Community meeting (10 individuals)

1. Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Some parts are rural, suburban, feels like a small town
 - Diversity is a positive
 - East end we have West Star to the west Rainbow each school is unique in its own way and represents its diversity
 - Mountain hiking, and biking
 - It's great outdoor activities
 - Climate
 - Close to Phoenix
 - Fire department
 - Crime rate is low - it's safe
 - Housing is very affordable
 - Different housing options
 - Culture events are available

2. Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)
 - Community involvement in the schools
 - Accommodates the needs of students because its the right thing to do
 - Open enrollment options
 - Signature programs at the schools
 - High number of volunteers and they are open to this
 - Having the extra hand is appreciated by staff
 - Community participates in a hands-on way
 - Provide events for parents to participate
 - PTOs are good for the schools
 - Extracurricular activities give students opportunity to be involved and participate

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
 - Lack of gifted program
 - We had part of a program and now its nonexistent
 - Lack of stability
 - Lack of trust because of previous issues
 - Parents, students, and teachers are not trusting
 - Lack of communication from schools to parents and from district to teachers

- Class size is different throughout the district need to have equitable class size throughout the district
 - How to keep families engaged and students here so that they do not go to charter schools
 - Funding for everything
 - Teacher recruitment and retention
 - Teacher shortage
 - Substitute teacher shortage
 - Lack of communication
 - Lack of transparency from the top down
 - Lack of accountability
 - Concerns have been brought up and have not been resolved adequately or in a timely manner
4. What skills, qualities, characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)
- Advocate for teachers
 - Support teachers in doing their jobs
 - Open to input from different individuals (parents, teachers, principals)
 - Listens and cares
 - Fist pumps go a long way
 - Approachable and down to earth
 - Visible on campuses
 - Active in the community
 - Willing to get creative and find alternative financial options
 - Think out of the box
 - Proven track of record that is able to work with city, local business and exploring funding options
 - Superintendent in the middle of new business coming in
 - Needs to bring together and collaborate with everyone
 - Communication skills regardless of the school, population or stakeholders
 - Consider policy that helps all students not just individual groups
 - Understand that they are part of a team
 - Team builder
 - Foster an environment of cooperation with meeting the needs of all students
 - Strong communication skills
 - Public relations
 - Not a dictator
 - Personality
 - People person
 - Sense of humor
 - Puts kids first and makes decisions based on if its good for kids
 - Support our teachers
 - District level experience/administrative experience

- We need someone with experience with rapid growth or a larger district
- Be ready for rapid growth and need to build schools with experience and foresight to see what will happen when growth happens
- Proactive rather reactive

*Survey Monkey Results for Liberty Elementary School District
February, 2018*

*(NOTE—these responses have not been edited,
they are printed as entered by the stakeholders)*

(58) Responses

Administrators

No Responses

Classified Staff

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Being new to the area it is extremely family driven and having worked at a place that was that way it mean a great deal to people that work here and that translates to the other staff and students and educating them.
- The rural nature of our community keeps us close knit and most of us are like minded. We value families and we get to know them well.
- The community help each other
- Friendly community
- When help is needed we usually can count of parents to come out and help especially during a big event.

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- I am still learning about it and also I am impressed about the schools have a great deal of support in use their specific areas of specialty to make students successful.
- A lot of the kids have been exposed to the Leader In Me training and show the habits.
- Everything is good about Rainbow,
- Friendly
- our students are taught to be respectful and polite. The teachers have the best interest for the students. And have been told by subs and counselors for the high school that our students are the best out of the district.

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Always want people look at the whole child but also knowing that Technology is extremely important for students to know.
- The former administration was disconnected from the schools and I feel the district needs to clean house of those employees still connected to the former superintendent. Additionally the school within a school at Estrella Elem. put a hardship on the remaining 5 by taking teacher positions from them.
- Need to be aware of new students records to be able to get the proper services right away.
- Just to be truthful and get the teachers help
- To listen to the parents and their concerns fix the relationship of the parents with staff and the higher up.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Caring Strong Leader Strong Visionary Allow your staff to work after you provide the Vision.
- They should be flexible, open minded, transparent and trustworthy.
- Nice and friendly and treat all employees equally.
- Friendly and truthful
- Be able to listen, explain , speak, personable approachable and friendly

Community Members

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Many outdoor activities in or close to the Liberty Community ie, golf, MLB spring training baseball games, NFL games, hiking, biking, Nascar
- The community is diverse and growing. We are located in one of the fastest growing communities in the fastest growing county in the country. We are located close to many attractions.
- Growing, nice people, great weather

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Each school has its own Signature Program, great teachers, great systems in place, fiscally sound
- We have several good teachers.
- Wonderful students, dedicated teachers, some campuses are very nice and well maintained

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Newly appointed Governing Board members (4) and the possibility of four new members in November 2018. Lack of trust fabulous Governing Board members, a micromanaging Board, State of Arizona school funding
- We have had several years of a failed school board. Our current board is mostly appointed as opposed to being elected. The board that selects the superintendent quite possibly will not be the board for whom the superintendent works for. Our current board lacks vision, is not educated on the issues facing the district. We have a rogue principal in the district who continues to work against the district.
- Some schools are older and not clean looking, needs to stay in positive communication with involved parents, teacher shortage/retention issues, lower paid district in area

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Be visible, not a “yes” person to the Governing Board & special interest group of parents, someone who wants what’s best for ALL students
- Leader, familiar with growth, needs to be familiar with funding sources and how to achieve alternative funding. Needs to be able to educate a board and work with them so that they can see the light and learn what their jobs really are.
- Honest, proactive when problems arise (deal with professionally instead of intimidating parents and staff), transparency is a must, visible, comes to work every day on time and stays as long as the staff does

Parents

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Potential for community growth both businesses & population. Affordable housing. Access to I-10 and I-8 for travel.
- The community is still rather small and rural (LES and RVES). People are generally supportive of education and value the education their students get in the Liberty Schools.

- More "rural" and small town feel - with all the benefits of a big city within 30-45 minutes. Generally safe communities with a diverse student population. Growing area.
- Our community is small, many families know one another and people look out for one another. News spreads fast.
- We are a tight community who likes the outdoors and encourages our children to get involved in many different kinds of activities. We have an amazing sports program (EYS) where everyone participates in a variety of sports throughout the year.
- Quite, growing, mix of middle, upper class and agricultural. Families involved in children's lives and vested in education. As far as I know there are no apartments that feed into our school district.
- Wonderful place to raise children.
- Safe. Clubhouse amenities. HOA. Schools, however, schools have some students who don't live in Estrella...for example, they give a grandparent's address as home, but actually live outside of Estrella community.
- ESTRELLA Mountain is a great community, full of families from all over the USA and made up of people of all walks of life. The school our child attends has some of the best teachers and an incredible principal
- When I think of our community I think family oriented, healthy life styles, intelligent and caring.
- Our local community enjoys high levels of support and parental involvement. This may not be true across the district, but locally it is present.
- It is close knit and feels like a family.
- Estrella Mountain Ranch has a small community feel but close to the big city for anything you could want.
- Extremely close net community with strong commitment to education
- Community helps out others in need. They come together in many ways.
- Estrella is an amazing community offering resort style amenities, the feeling of living in a small town, and there's a great sense of pride among our residents.
- Low cost of living; great weather; friendly people; overabundance of outdoor activities for an active lifestyle; Estrella Mountain ranch is very safe
- Safe community
- EMR feels like a small town. It is easy to get to know parents vis school events or sports.
- We used to be a district of collaboration and closeness. We had a sense of family among all the schools. The district as a whole has a desire to be great!
- lots of sunlight small town feel golf is available year round
- Weather, Leisure Activities
- The previous override passed with a record approval rate. There is support in the community for the schools.

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- STEM and gifted programs, diverse demographic population
- Good kids. Caring faculty and staff. Opportunity for community involvement.
- Parents appreciate the individualized signature programs but feel the last Sup't used these to create competition between the schools rather than complementarity among the schools.
- You have teachers/staff/parents/kids that are willing and able to make something great. Provide them with the tools to do so.

- Our schools are smaller than most in the valley. We like small class sizes and extracurricular activities, including a competitive sports program for all students in all schools in 6th-8th grade which includes basketball, volleyball, softball, baseball, cross country and soccer. NJHS, Student Government, Science Olympiad and others should be part of each school's activity list. We should have music (choir AND band), as well as drama (plays) and art shows at all the schools. Solid teachers who know their content, as well as care about our students, should be hired and re-hired each year.
- Great school facilities, technology for student learning, new curriculum (reading series), each school has a special attraction about it, school choice within the district, school safety with security features, sports/activities for kids to be involved in, the extended field trips offered are amazing and something most kids in other districts don't have the opportunity to do anymore. The teachers are dedicated and work very hard to ensure student learning.
- Some Great teachers who deserve to have someone fully in their side
- We have some wonderful teachers.
- Safe. Police involvement. Mostly great teachers, BUT some are not so good, for example: based on our child's and friends' experience, some teachers in the 6th - 8th grades (this includes ancillary and subs) have used swear words, have lost patience and hollered, showed biases and favoritism, and have not always been good role models.
- The schools in the Liberty Elementary School District are top notch. Westar, being a STEAM school, is a fantastic place for students to learn
- The individuals that I have met care about the kids and the community.
- Westar has strong, stable leadership (principal) and a strong teaching cadre.
- The staff, teachers, students, parents all feel like family. Everyone genuinely seems to care for other students, parents, teachers, staff, etc.
- Westar has a small community feel.
- Extremely dedicated teachers and staff. Rigorous curriculum in place at Estrella with the exception of Spanish. Principal is approachable and fair. Awesome field trips for each grade level.
- Schools are quality and give a good well rounded education.
- LOVE our teachers! We've had the pleasure of having our 4 children enrolled at EMES (3 currently attending), and I tell everyone that it's the teachers that have made learning fun and truly created an engaging culture at EMES.
- International Baccalaureate program at EMES; dedicated, experienced teachers
- Good, caring kids Good, caring teachers
- Teachers who work really hard to reach every kid, and get them to be great.
- better this year is the 1:1 technology for the kids Amazing teachers but many want to leave because they have too many kids in their classes
- Variety of programs at the school
- Excellent staff. Innovative Signature programs.

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Issues from the past that have been unresolved which has led to trust issues. Budget shortfalls and state funding issues. Poor teacher compensation and recruiting and retainment issues

- Building conditions. (DO is currently unoccupied. Two buildings on LES campus are unoccupied due to predecessor using bond money to build new campus rather than the advertised renovations to existing facilities). There is a different clientele at the different campuses. RVES and LES are similar.
- This district used to be very united and considered one of the best. We have a preponderance of committed teachers. We need a servant leader who will work actively to unite not only the district, but work jointly with the community and the high schools which we feed into to ensure students needs are addressed for long-term success - a key challenge when there is not a unified school district K-12. The parent group that initiated the rip in the community fabric had some valid concerns - but the manner of their approach has lead to financial challenges, hard feelings, parents afraid to run for the board or openly share communication if they not hold this group's views - for fear of personal reprisal and/or other negative impacts. They seek transparency - but only if it accomplishes their goals. ...in other words, there is still a lot of mistrust. It is further exacerbated by the fact that 4 of our 5 school board members are appointments and the current school board is not diverse - with all members residing in a single school's boundaries. The only school currently thriving and competing against the Charter School growth is Estrella Mountain Elementary - especially their IB Academy - which grew their school 20% in one year. However this focus on "equality" among the schools may deter the success of this program. As I have to tell my own children - fair does not always mean exactly equal or the same. So, Westar has an amazing \$1.5M Science lab - it doesn't mean we build that for every school. Las Brisas has an amazing theater, we don't build that at all schools. Estrella gets extra funding (and needs additional teachers to support IB - both Spanish and the electives schedule for the IB Academy - which means a lower student/teacher ratio than other schools). Freedom, Liberty and Las Brisas receive Title 1 funds, so they have funding and benefits not available to the other schools. POINT - we need a new supt that understands there is complexity.
- Teachers are underpaid. The Gifted Program, which technically should be provided for 6-8 has not existed. Liberty Elementary is in dire need of repair or being demolished and rebuilt. Also there is a self contained class of special needs children there that are in a classroom that does not provide a sink or bathroom. Not sure if this is breaking any laws. Per a aid that works in that classroom, all or most of the students are in diapers and require being tended too. No one can wash their hands - no bathroom provided. Meanwhile, Las Brisas has brand new classrooms and not at capacity and less than 2 miles away. These kids should be transferred and provided with basic necessities.
- One of the best things about Estrella Mtn Elementary for us was the enrichment and the "outside the box" teaching. Our kids have been challenged and completed countless projects, individually and in groups. Today, many of our schools focus on reading and math interventions, but EMES has been able to provide more higher-level thinking activities and more difficult classes than other schools.
- There is a rift between the current members of the school board and parents in the community (especially parents of gifted children) and there needs to be clear transparency along with involvement of all stakeholders in order to repair this issue. Many schools received the letter grade of a C school mostly because students didn't make the growth model (not that they were performing low but just staying flat in student growth) there needs to be PD around this and time for schools, teachers to learn how to track and move students so it brings letter grades up to accurately reflect how well the kids are actually doing in our community.

- Be aware that the loud voices of a few can cause problems, and eliminate the nepotism that is rampant in the schools.
- The class size are over crowded way too many children in one class making it very difficult on the teacher but also for the children. This is my fifth state I've lived in and it feels like the curriculum is so much, they are cramming and rushing through it. I feel after talking to different kids that attend our music and art program needs help those kids are bored of the same thing year after year.
- Needs: civics course, rule that teachers be NEUTRAL regarding election candidates or don't present or discuss political view at all, bigger gym or place for school presentations wherein family are invited, improved air circulation in the classrooms, lockers for 4th - 8th grades, more covered benches on campus, smaller classes, some teachers have "favorites" and this results in part to nonuniform enforcement of rules, art teacher does not take enough time to explain components of projects, school counselor, basic writing/penmanship starting in lower classes, sex education starting in 7th grade, typing class, basic home economics. Also, the parents/guardians and visitors should have front parking...the current situation is "reserved" parking for principal and district and teachers all park up front. All school staff should have to park farthest away. Another point: front doors to school are not handicap accessible, as well as other building entrances. PLEASE take the terrible carpeting OUT of classrooms and hallways!
- The District has had it's troubles with the past Superintendent. This has caused stress between families and schools. There are a lot of bridges that need to be fixed. The administration of the District needs to be changed, as the people that they will be working with, unless they clean house, have not been honest with the whole community. They have lied to parents, families and students.
- Improvement needs to be addressed in hiring Good teachers, establishing options for educating our kids in extra curricular activities, improving our "grade" as a school, establish time to be seen and heard by the community and school, improve school cafeteria menus and make a new gym separate. Improve communications between individuals. Our students education needs to be priority.
- The board has been in turmoil and the county superintendent's choices for appointments may not have been the best for the district. Good people have been treated badly and people have used coercive, threatening techniques to push good people away. The district wasted funds by buying out the superintendent from his contract. A change of leadership could have been accomplished without a buyout.
- That as a group of people that genuinely care for each other and for our kids, that we all need to work together, not independently of each other for the good of our kids and our schools.
- The gifted program (GATE) is a complete disaster. There is a lack of discipline of students. There is a lack of school funding. There appears to be a poor relationship between the board and the principals & school staff. There are a lot of unhappy families right now looking for someone with strong leadership skills, common sense, integrity, and honesty to step up and pull our district together. These issues have caused many families to leave the district schools and choose charter schools.
- 1. It feels like we need a separate Junior High School 2. I feel we are unprepared for school shooting. I hope this never happens but I have seen a lot of schools actually drill this scenario with local hospital, ems, and law enforcement. Our kids and staff don't really know what to do. 3. Inconsistency on "bully" prevention across teachers. I think students are confused too on what bullying really is. 4. Lack of development of kids

conflict resolution skills especially if teacher is involved. Kids aren't listened to as much as they should be. 5. Lack of quality for foreign language classes.

- How the last Superintendent cut teaching positions that were deeply needed. He also gave bonuses where many people believed did not deserve it.
- Our students deserve a top notch education, so they need great teachers and the best resources possible.
- Teachers have not been taken care of very well. Very negative principals that spread little to no joy.
- Liberty schools are competing with top notch charter schools such as BASIS and Great Hearts. However, I am very pleased with Westar.
- That the last superintendent left the district in a state of "every school is an island." That rumors and lies were spread about administrators and teachers in the district.
- Classroom sizes don't meet the published benchmark numbers of the district. benchmark for some grades is 28 and they want -2 to equal 26 BUT many classes have 30+ kids for 1 teacher with no aides principals & teachers feel over worked and under appreciated. some schools in the district appear to be better funded than others. budget items aren't always explained well by district staff the Board itself has had almost complete turnover since March 2017 District lawsuits for not responding to public records requests or open meeting violations Parents have been removed/trasspassed from Westar over the last year. It is odd that a principal would be allowed to retire from the district and return to her same position as a contract employee Review outsourcing to see if some areas could be brought back in (Special Ed, Para-professionals) Students that don't receive Special Ed service or Gift services seem to be lost in the shuffle
- People on the board with Personal Agenda's(Improving the Gifted Program at the expense of the IB Program)
- The Governing Board is micromanaging and is controlled by an outside group that is not looking out for what is best for all kids.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Proven leadership skills, dynamic and forward thinking, transparency of processes and practices. Critical thinker, accountable, trustworthy.
- Focus on promoting students to high school with better mastery of basic skills. Driven. Not afraid of rocking the boat. Do away with the "signature programs". Send kids who can read, write, and do math to high school.
- Servant Leadership, Communication, Listening, Collaborative, and preferably familiarity with AZ funding/overrides, etc.
- Actually dumfounded that this would be a question. What are the job requirements - the district should be well versed in what is required/desired/needed. Check out BUSD = they seem to be running things quite efficiently. Lower the base pay for this position and make sure they are earning any raises. The Liberty district needs a big dose of common sense for starters and a 3rd party to insure that the board and the Superintendent are doing their jobs. If possible put a clause in the contract so that once they are fired/resign they can not continue to collect their salary. Also, establish work hours and make them accountable for their time.
- Some of the most important skills, qualities, and characteristics a new superintendent should possess might be: knowledge of curriculum, relationship skills, management skills, flexibility, open-minded thinking, budget skills, creative thinking and managing of

staff and monies, as well as so much more! Be willing to listen to input from staff and teachers, as well as parents. Attend each school's activities, as much as possible.

- Open Door Policy Transparency Finically Conservative Puts Students Best Interest First Advocate for Teachers Knowledgeable with Curriculum and Best Teachers Practices (Be great if they had a curriculum background not just a business background) Someone who believes in Professional Learning Communities for Teacher Development Someone who understands the unique opportunities our students are still afforded and is looking to add to those and not take them away
- Hoping he/she can silence the influence of parents whose individual issues take priority over what is right for the school.
- Family oriented and understand all the needs we have.
- Project development, past proven experience as a teacher and principal, can verbalize personal and professional core value systems, honest, negotiation and conflict resolution experience. How has candidate handled teachers' union disputes? Experience in developing policies and procedures? Experiences with disciplinary action of teachers, other staff and subordinates? Who would candidate see as his/her support system? Any past experience with crisis management? How would candidate improve achievement gaps? What is candidate most passionate about? What is candidate's opinion of an "annual report to the communities" in the district, especially focusing on student success/achievement? How would candidate show leadership in terms of fiscal accountability: balanced budgets and safe reserves? How would candidate seek state, federal and other funding for educational services (also, any past experience or successes in applying for funding)?
- A great communicator, knowledge of a Gifted Program and being available to families in the community to go over any questions they may have. I would like an honest and caring Superintendent and one that is knowledgeable of the AZ Board of Education.
- Communicate efficiently. Know our schools. Know the community. Have conservative values.
- The new superintendent needs to value collaboration and needs good people skills to be able to bring the board together and "calm the waters." Stability at the board level is needed to then focus the district on educational issues and needs.
- Good people skills, personable, approachable, genuine, compassionate, caring.
- Strong leadership skills, integrity, honesty, common sense, collaborative skills, willing to fight for and stand up for teachers and students, willing to fight for funding and making our district a top district.
- While we are a close community, which is an asset , but it can be easy for administrators to get too close to families thus altering their judgement. Need experience but with fresh new ideas. Not far removed from class room.
- Be open to listening to parents, the public and school personnel. Research facts and such before making decisions.
- Proven success/track record, solid character/ethical, emotional intelligence, and strong people skills.
- Open-minded, hard-worker, puts kids first before politics, not a "yes" man, objective, progressive, understanding that magnet program may need time to develop (IB)
- Positive Instructional Leader, Compassionate, Humble, Backbone to deal with needy parents

- Approachable. Honest. Students first. I have witnessed supers come in a clean house with principals. This would very much upset parents. Westar, at least, has great leadership. Please consider appropriately staffing the front office. Lastly, but most importantly, small class sizes are critical to student success.
- Have a unifying quality, to get Liberty back to the great district that it was.
- Transparency Strong Leadership skills - but not an iron fist ruler Based on the current atmosphere, a female might be better suited to mend some fences Open ears and a willingness to listen to staff, teachers, school board, parents, students
- The ability to not "cave" to the board members and make decisions based on what is best for the entire district and not just one school(Westar)
- The ability to lead with integrity and stand up to the board.

Students

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Engaged parents Bright students

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Motivated teachers

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- Previous drama has cast a very negative cloud around this district. Inconsistent expectations at school sites. Board members, with specific agendas, including getting rid of certain individuals & programs are now running the district.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- Resiliency Mental toughness Willingness to create a new culture focused on instruction Ability to see through agendas of specific board members Focus on what is best for all students Public presence Rebuilding of the district office team Consistent expectations at all buildings..focused on high quality professional development & instruction for all students

Teachers

Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Very diverse. Lots of partnerships with local businesses. Involved Parents
- We are a supportive community.
- Small town feel in a big community. Growing quickly. Wide array of income within the district.
- My community has a variety of people with many different backgrounds. Each one has a different level of value for education but most have a belief that it is important.
- We are a "small town" within a big town. Our families come along side each other during hard times and in general look out for one another. We are a diverse community with many strengths as well as needs.
- Our community is family centered. We take care of each other.
- Nice weather. Friendly people.
- Well established farming community. Diverse neighborhoods and school areas. Growing quickly - lots of houses being built; lots of room for growth in the future
- The concern and involvement of the community in our schools and a commitment to provide the best of everything for our community.
- Many parents are involved in the educational process.
- Our community believes in the teachers at our schools and many choose to stay rather than flee to charter schools because of the relationships they have built with teachers through the years as their children move through the grade levels. It's great when a teacher has multiple siblings from a family and the parents tell you we would never consider anyone to be his/her teacher but you.
- It is small and generally simple. People tend to focus on others and the pace of life is a little slower.
- The people truly want the best. There is more involvement and everyone is looking to better the community and the future for the kids. Our kids are great and have a lot of potential. We have a very diverse population from social classes to languages spoken which is wonderful.
- Small town feel, but big city amenities.
- Thriving, Growing quickly, varied areas and populations.
- Our community knows everyone because it is a small community. Parents are very outspoken; teachers are very outspoken. There is hiking, parks, Estella mountain, etc.
- The community is very diverse.
- Buckeye is a rural community with a diverse population.
- small town feel
- Liberty has a collection of different communities, everything from very rural farm families to inner city section 8 housing.
- We want what is best for the Rainbow Valley community, and especially the school. The school is the central hub of all the community activities

Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

- Various specialty programs. Great teachers and staff Students care about learning
- We are in our 3rd year of opening and we have a diverse student population and very skilled staff members. We all help one another and are supportive with resources.
- Teachers are not under pressure from administration. Many opportunities for additional stipends. We love our principal, Toni Reynolds. Every school has a different focus. Positive relationships between staff from all schools. Availability of technology. Teachers have the freedom to be creative in their classrooms. Sports are widely available to all students. 301 money goes to the teachers.
- Each of our schools have a different type of community which leads to each being unique. They also each have a focus which helps students gain specific skills for the future.
- We have a family feel with high expectations for our students. We are also a Kids at Hope school and believe that all students are capable of success, no exceptions!
- Our schools are much like our community. Each campus has a unique "specialty" and we are invested heavily in them.
- Signature programs that are both good and bad, depending on funding and equity among teachers and schools.
- Each have a unique signature program; before and after school program available; sports; art/music/pe classes
- Committed teachers and healthy parent/teacher relationships that benefit all students.
- Dedicated teachers willing to go the extra mile to help students.
- We believe every student can and will be successful regardless of where they came from or when in the year they arrived. Our reading intervention team is key in helping to move students from below level to benchmark.
- We have a great principal and staff. We have nice buildings and classrooms. Everyone is working together for student progress.
- The schools are open enrollment. This allows families to find schools that fit their needs best. The schools have special programs and the teachers are proud of what their schools have to offer.
- Las Brisas, Freedom and Liberty are doing a good job of educating students even with large Title 1 populations.
- Close knit family Great Principal support Friendly
- Teachers are excellent. Commitment to families and excellence. Variety of programs.
- Our schools can be family when we have the right leadership and collaboration. Teachers are always wanting to give up free time to engage in after school activities and carnivals.
- The school has a very collaborative spirit. There are support positions for students struggling and for new teachers. The principal is very involved but doesn't micromanage.
- The Liberty district is interested in educating their students. Because of our rapidly changing society, Liberty invests in technology to ensure students understanding and competency with it.
- Specialty schools are wonderful, giving choices to the community.
- Diverse population student activities
- I can only speak for my site (freedom) but we have a group of people working together to accomplish a common goal. That goal is to do what is best for our kids. I say our kids as

a collective too, because we at Freedom have created a culture where every teacher feels comfortable talking with every student, and all students interact with teachers of all grade levels.

- We are trying to do the best we can with what we have and know we are in this for the children. We want to see them succeed.

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

- We have title 1 schools. There are 6 different signature programs at each school. The school's socio-economic communities are not equal. There has been a lot of turnover at schools due to unhappy employees. There has been a lot of negative publicity and gossip due to employees not being told what was going on at the district level. There is not a lot of parent support at the title 1 schools.
- Principals need to be looked at. There is no fair or equal treatment.
- Possible struggles each school has with their specialized programs
- Great teachers are leaving our district because we aren't getting raises like nearby districts. Many teachers who have been loyal to this district for years are being paid less than new teachers (including long term subs + non-highly qualified teachers) coming into the district. A real example at our school this year: How can a teacher who's put in 9 years in our district make LESS than a new hire that is a long-term sub coming in to teach their FIRST year of school?! This 9 year vet has been an incredible asset to our school, even winning Teacher of the Year at one point. It's heart breaking to watch her apply for other jobs in a different district.
- Huge division between the schools, lack of communication and honesty, the board is divided and has an agenda, schools not being united regarding curriculum with no accountability.
- We have many opportunities for growth in our district. Because we span a large area, sometimes there is the idea that there are schools that are privileged and schools that do not get the resources they need because of the population they serve. I see this as an opportunity for a new superintendent to bridge these disconnects between communities and to bring some balance. Additional support staff is also needed for the changing climate of our students' lives. Depression and anxiety is at epidemic proportions among children and having guidance in social/emotional intelligence will help our students learn to navigate these feelings and the additional stressors of their lives so they can be productive citizens in their communities.
- Our numbers are high and our salaries are low. Due to low pay, we have a hard time recruiting quality teachers who want to stick around for more than one year. The stress level is high across the district due to unrealistic expectations on classroom teachers and a lack of resources and help. We struggle to provide everything our students deserve. Test scores suffer because we've lost sight of what is important- the kids.
- A certain school has what is known as a "school within a school." All other schools lost positions to staff this program. They have 15 students in a class and 90 minute preps, while other campuses are sitting at 38 kids with a 30 minute prep. Unfair. This needs to go. We are so short staffed, we have people with master's degrees doing an hour and a half of duty a day, instead of working with children.
- Corrupt school board members who regularly break policy; school board micromanages yet they have no knowledge of laws, best practices in education, etc.; no commitment to

district wide initiatives - some principals do what they want and aren't held accountable; no focus on the underprivileged kids; there is still a "good old boys" network;

- There has been a history of distrust and abuse of power by the superintendent. And a lack of communication and support of school employees by the district. Teacher and administrators are made the scapegoat and left to pick up the pieces or poor decision making by the superintendency. Our middle school programs need a major overhaul. Middle school students are not being adequately serviced by being shoved into the elementary school paradigm.
- Gifted program at Westar. There is a wide social-economical difference at many of our schools. Finances.
- Classrooms are over crowded starting in kindergarten. It is very difficult to pull small groups in the classroom when many students have significant behavior issues. Even without behavior issues, the bigger the class, the larger the small group which defeats the purpose of small group. Reading Intervention pull out has been tremendously successful but each year we have a smaller reading team and less kids are serviced. We need to address needs when we identify them early. We need a preschool. Our kids do not come to us prepared for a rigorous program. We are not in favor of early entrance kindergarten. If you track these students, many of them have been huge behavior issues, struggled academically and have been retained in first or second grade. We used to have a technology teacher and not only did the kids love it but she taught them skills they need. Lower grades do not participate in the chrome books on a cart. We have a teacher laptop and that's it. Students need technology in schools especially if we say we are providing a world class education. Are we really preparing them for a technological world? Each year we have more and more students with significant behavior issues. The counselor is overwhelmed. A behavior technician or a crisis intervention team would be great.
- There is a big transition with families and students which causes unrest. There are a lot of lower income families and quite a few problem kids, many foster kids.
- The biggest struggle we have is funding and where it should be used. Las Brisas doesn't have a library or computer lab. There are no text books for science classes and the social studies curriculum at the upper level is weak, at best. A lot comes down on what the teacher is willing to spend/can afford.
- He or she should attend to class size issues. Hiring and being able to sustain teachers. Clearing or reducing what is on "teacher's plates" so that the focus is overall instruction. Instilling a teaching of building a work ethic based on student and parent responsibilities. Perhaps taking a hard look at "more is better" as opposed to the fact that "less may be better"
- The superintendent needs to be aware that there is a vast difference between the schools in Estrella and the other schools. Unfortunately, Westar seems to think it is better than the rest of the district and seems to get preferential treatment. This needs to stop. The School Board needs to be balanced so that it representing the interests of all students.
- Unstable No discipline
- Teacher retention. This district does not pay it's teachers enough. Re unification after the recent unrest within the different schools and the loss of the superintendent.
- Teachers and parents are very outspoken. SpEd is in need of qualified teachers, someone that actually is certified to teach SpEd.
- There is opportunity for growth at all schools. Parent involvement differs from site to site. Schools have different student populations and different challenges so it is

important to be experienced and well versed at supporting students, parents, teachers, and administrators across a very diverse population.

- The District has a lot of diverse student needs from low income to advantaged. Additionally, because many have left the "city" we have "inner city" family units as well as farming family units (single parent/low parent involvement - extended family units/ a lot adult supervision)
- Clearly teacher retention is important
- divide among schools- schools are like islands lack of communication
- We have very very very different campus life. What is a regular at Freedom is unheard of at Westar. The one size fits all approach to leadership will not work, and will not be respected by teachers. We need individual attention from our superintendent.
- The previous superintendent tore us all apart into separate islands and we did not have communication between the schools like we used to. He also made so much money disappear and didn't truly have what was best for kids at heart. We have stripped our district of so much it is truly sad. Or schools have minimal services or resources available anymore.

What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

- A superintendent that is visible and attends events at schools. Someone who is transparent and listens and acts on the needs of their employees and families. An active listener, honest, makes eye contact and tries to get to know the names of his/her employees. Someone who allows parents to communicate and talk at open board meetings and listen to concerns.
- Open minded Fiscally Knowledgeable Ready to get to work! Ready to Listen Ready to take care of ALL STAFF and ALL STUDENTS, not just the kids and staff "up the mountain"
- The population is very diverse. Open communications with all stakeholders would be important. Take time to learn about each of the 6 schools and their specific needs.
- A great leader recognizes the fact that if he/she does whatever they can to make their staff happy, their staff will then go out and do the best job they can. Our district has seen its fair-share of authoritarian leaders who got mixed into the political realm. We want a superintendent who listens to the needs of the people who are in the trenches.
- Honesty, down to earth, willing to hear EVERYONE, working at a school level, being visible
- The superintendent must be relational. Getting into the schools and learning the names of the staff and students in which he or she serves is essential to this community. We thrive in leadership that is warm and approachable. This individual should be discerning, being able to make wise decisions based on the input of many groups of stakeholders. Empathy is also important. It is difficult to follow someone who is unable to understand what it is like to walk in my shoes or at least try to see my point of view. A leader who leads from the front, doing time in the classrooms, spending time with students and staff getting to know our unique traditions and qualities and seeing them as strengths not something to eliminate. Liberty is unique because we are not a business. We are a family and we want the best for our students because we treat them like our own.
- A person who is intelligent, humble, and driven.
- This district is in bad shape and has been for many years. The previous super pushed his agenda which cause major animosity among district personnel and schools.

- Puts all kids first in their decision making; won't be swayed by online parent bully groups; has experience at a high level district office position; understands budgeting and allocating all resources effectively; one who regularly visits classrooms and celebrates the great things that the effective teachers are doing; holds principals accountable; someone who won't tolerate board members micromanaging and breaking policy for their own personal agendas
- A listener. Someone who realizes that the concerns of parents need to be heard. Loyalty to and support for teachers and an appreciation for the work they do "in the trenches" every day. A desire for excellence and the ability to cast vision and encourage employees while implementing initiatives.
- Someone who is experienced. Someone who hasn't lost touch of what goes on in a classroom and a school on a daily basis.
- Staff should not feel they will get reprimanded if they respectfully voice their opinions on issues. Administration should listen to our concerns. It takes a village and a team who is in this together.
- They need to treat teachers as professionals and trust they are doing their job. (more paperwork takes away from student planning and focus). They need to be seen and involved in the campuses. They should be encouraging and happy, with a great open door approach. They need to be teacher advocates yet hold true to the letter of the law.
- We need a superintendent with "big picture" thinking. Who knows what they want the end goal to be and how to get there. With everything that has happened, having a superintendent who is direct and simply lets everyone know what is going on and is transparent would be very appreciated as we are all concerned with what the future will look like. We need a superintendent who is creative and has new ideas and approaches to help foster relationships with the families of our community as well as help branch out and bring in new families as well as funding. There is currently some division among our community. We need a way to bring everyone back to the same team and focus on the greater good.
- Patience for sure - and also being able to stand up to some of the Board members to do the right thing. DON'T hire a yes man who will give in.
- Someone who is present in the schools, wants the best for students and teachers, and someone who has an open mind to what teachers need for success.
- Flexibility. a history as an educator, commitment to the student first.
- Have an understanding of SpEd not just general education, Have a background in SpEd of some type or we do not want to his or hers two cents about SpEd.
- A strong candidate should have experience in leading schools across the SES continuum in addition to Title 1, ELL, Gifted, and school specialization. In addition, the superintendent should be prepared to develop long term plans with a district that is growing but very rich in tradition.
- Student focused!
- effective communicator open/honest data driven student centered
- I would love to have a superintendent that see's the difference in all sites, and uses what makes us all great to be even better. We obviously want someone who is fair and honest, and cares about teacher needs as far as pay and insurance. But the day to day things need to be addressed as well.
- BE HERE!!! Be present at all the schools, the old super was NEVER around, anywhere. Truly have what is best for kids at heart and bring back some of our much needed staff

and resources. Be in the classrooms talking to the teachers, they know what they really need. Let us all become one connected district again and collaborate among schools.