

Superintendent of Schools Typical Search Process

While this brochure describes a prototypical search, HYA customizes each search to meet the needs of the school district and the specific wishes of the Board. The changes desired during the search are discussed with and determined by the Board at/or prior to the planning meeting.

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Extent of Services & Guarantees

The consultant fee for the entire search process is fixed at the time that HYA's proposal is accepted and a Superintendent is employed. If there is a need to reopen a search because the chosen candidate decides not to come to the District or because the Board desires to see additional or different candidates, these search activities are provided at no additional consultant fee.

Additionally, if the Superintendent departs from the position within one (1) year of beginning his/her tenure, HYA will conduct a new search for the Board at no additional cost apart from expenses. If the "Comprehensive Search Plus a Full Year of Follow-Up Support" alternative is chosen by the Board (outlined below), HYA's guarantee is extended to two (2) years.

Furthermore, the Superintendent appointed with HYA's assistance will not be presented to another board as a candidate if it would result in his/her leaving the District in less than five (5) years unless the Board advises HYA that the Superintendent may seek another position or the Superintendent is no longer employed by the Board.

The Search Phases

- ✓ Planning Session and Criteria Development
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ Interview/Selection
- ✓ Appointment/Post Appointment
- ✓ Communication with the Board



The Planning Phase

The first step of every HYA search is to hold a formal *Planning Session*. At this session, HYA consultants and Board members work together to customize the search and its process based on the District's particular needs and requirements. More specifically, HYA and the Board discuss key issues and reach a consensus about the search, including:

- Board and consultant responsibilities for each phase of the search.
- The role of staff members and constituents in the search
- Search timeline
- Board options and preferences with regard to advertisements
- The compensation package to be offered to the new Superintendent of Schools
- The communication plan aimed at keeping the Board informed about the progress of the search, and alerting the consultants to any issues that may arise.

Searches of this nature generally are conducted in a 12-18 week period after appointment of HYA as the search firm. The actual timeline for conducting the search depends upon Board availability and will be developed in cooperation with the Board to ensure participation of all members. A tentative timeline includes:

- Planning session – within one week of selection of HYA
- Board/community input sessions – three weeks after planning session
- Presentation of slate of candidates to the Board – six to ten weeks after identification of criteria desired in the new superintendent
- Interview of candidates – within one to two weeks of presentation
- Selection of new Superintendent - within one to two weeks of interviews

CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT

Clearly defined qualifications of the position are crucial to subsequent phases of a successful search. To assist the Board in clarifying the desirable criteria for the new Superintendent, HYA conducts individual interviews with Board members, and other Board designees. HYA recommends extensive community involvement in providing input to the Board prior to establishing the desired criteria. Up to four consultant days are allocated for the purpose of soliciting input through individual interviews, focus groups and general forums (open to all stakeholders). In order to maintain objectivity relative to stakeholder values, perceived issues and desirable characteristics, it is recommended that the consultants facilitate the interviews, focus groups and general forums.

In addition to the personal interviews, HYA has developed an online survey that can be completed by any stakeholder in the community. The data collected from the online survey and the interviews is compiled in a *Leadership Profile Report*, which is presented to the Board. The *Leadership Profile Report* is used as a guide by the Board and HYA consultants to create recruitment material that incorporates the profile characteristics. From experience, HYA has learned that one of the most crucial aspects of a successful search is the careful and explicit formation and enumeration of the criteria used in the selection process. Overall, this leadership assessment process has been highly successful in determining critical attributes, while invariably building positive public relations.



Recruitment Phase

A key factor of a successful search is effective marketing and assertive recruitment of successful individuals who fit the criteria determined by the board. To this end, HYA uses its extensive network of over 100 nation-wide consultants to identify qualified individuals, and actively recruits them to consider this position. Identification and recruitment is done in a variety of ways including the following:

- The candidate search begins with HYA advising its contacts across the nation about the vacancy, and asking them to identify individuals who match the criteria the Board has identified as desirable in its next Superintendent. In addition, current superintendents, leaders of state and national educational organizations, university officials, foundation executives, state education department personnel, and individuals in business, government, industry and the military who have an interest in school ventures are included in any communication. Members of our firm are active in state and national professional organizations affording ongoing identification of emerging educational leaders with suitable talent and promise.
- Advertisements upon which the Board has agreed are placed in national and regional publications. Ad content is shared with the Board members prior to publication to ensure that ads reflect the intent of the Board. All material indicates that the District is an *equal opportunity employer*.
- Announcements of the vacancy are placed on the following websites:
 - www.hyasearch.com, which is linked to the District's website
 - The District's superintendent search page located on its site. This includes form for the *Leadership Profile* development
 - *Education Week* site at edweek.org
 - AASA and other educational wwebsites, with direct links to HYA and the District, if possible
- Subject to the Board's approval, all members of the groups with whom HYA consultants meet in the *Leadership Profile* Development process are invited to nominate individuals they feel are highly qualified for the position. While this may not ultimately identify the successful candidate, it does reinforce the Board's intent to have an open, unbiased search.
- Members of the firm contact prospective candidates who meet the criteria established by the Board. Additional candidates are sought through personal contact with a number of individuals who work with and/or are aware of a broad spectrum of superintendents.
- HYA aggressively recruits candidates for the position utilizing information generated from more than 900 successful executive searches, as well as, the specific nominations received. HYA staff members send frequent announcements regarding the search to all associates.

Because technology facilitates and enhances the application process, all candidates are required to apply online. The applications are reviewed and acknowledged by HYA consultants. During this phase of the search, HYA initiates communication with, and conducts preliminary reference checks on, the most promising applicants. All materials received for this search are considered confidential and provided to no one except on a need-to-know basis, in a manner consistent with both federal and state law.



Guided by the Board-established criteria, HYA reviews all application materials carefully– and typically identifies 10 to 15 candidates for particular consideration. These individuals undergo additional reference checks, and, as appropriate, initial interviews with representatives from HYA. ***It is the practice of HYA to personally interview all slated candidates.*** As in all phases of the search, HYA adheres to strict guidelines of confidentiality.

HYA’s examination of a candidate’s background reaches beyond the handpicked personal and professional references provided by the candidate. HYA’s ability to gain important background information regarding our candidates – beyond that which merely appears in an individual’s official file – is a unique and distinguishing characteristic of our firm. This is attributable, in part, to the integrity of both the firm and our associates, and the vast network of professional relationships built through years in the education field.

The Selection Phase

Upon completion of initial interviews, HYA presents a select slate to the Board. The number of candidates to be submitted is determined by the Board during the initial *Planning Session*. Prior to presenting the slate (or in a separate advance session, if preferred), the consultants conduct a seminar for the Board designed to prepare it for candidate interviews. This seminar includes written guidelines and protocols to ensure informative and comprehensive interviews. Approximately one-two hours in length, the seminar also reviews the steps in the final stages of the search.

Prior to this workshop, HYA solicits questions, hypothetical situations and/or areas of interest, identified by the Board as desirable topics of discussion for the Board’s initial interviews with the candidates. Such feedback is used to develop an *Interview Script*, which is reviewed and revised during the aforementioned workshop and then used by the Board during the first round of interviews. The second interviews are generally unscripted and designed to follow-up on topics and questions identified during the first interviews. They also include an informal session such as a dinner with the candidate and his/her spouse, as well as the formal second interview.

While consultants generally do not participate in the Board interviews, they are available for counsel or direct assistance to the Board throughout the interview process. In addition, consultants facilitate each decision-making session of the Board, if desired. Such involvement permits more active engagement by *all* Board members in both the general search process and the specific dialogue regarding the candidate pool. In facilitating the decision-making process, HYA assists the Board in assessing the abilities of the respective candidates in relation to the criteria identified by the Board.

After the Board identifies a preferred candidate, HYA arranges for an independent investigative firm to conduct a **comprehensive background check** on the finalist. This background review confirms degrees attained, any data on file with criminal and domestic courts, as well as, driving record and credit history. HYA also assists the Board in arranging a visit to the finalist’s community in order to ensure that the Board’s research is as comprehensive as possible.



The Appointment Phase

After the Board has selected its finalist and is satisfied with the successful completion of the due diligence review, its next step is to reach agreement on the contract terms to be offered. The HYA consultants assist the Board in facilitating mutually agreeable terms with the preferred candidate. Once terms are determined, the consultants are available to work with the Board and/or its attorney in the preparation of a draft contract. It is highly recommended that the final contract be approved by the District's legal counsel prior to presentation to the candidate.

After the successful candidate accepts the offer, HYA assists the Board in making the appropriate announcements and introducing the candidate to the community. HYA consultants contact all applicants, confirm the appointment and extend the Board's appreciation to all candidates. HYA advises that the Board president send a letter to the candidates personally interviewed by the Board.

POST-APPOINTMENT

In addition, if desired, HYA can assist the Board and new Superintendent in developing and implementing a successful transition plan. These services, which include a roles/goal setting workshop, facilitation of the first year superintendent's evaluation and mentoring support throughout the year can greatly enhance the success of the new superintendent as s/he assumes the leadership role in the organization. The costs associated with these additional services are described in the cost section of the proposal, and can be adjusted based on the level of the services desired.

HYA is also able to provide its clients with a wide range of information management and accountability services to help support board governance and superintendent appraisal. Examples of such services include, but are not limited to 360-degree evaluations, strategic and long-range planning, community dashboards, and value-added impact analysis of programs and personnel.

DEBRIEFING AND TRANSITION

Subject to the Board's approval, the consultants meet with the new Superintendent to debrief him/her on what the consultants have gleaned about the District throughout the search. They also meet with the Board, if desired, to review the search process and how the Board members and Board felt it might be improved or modified when serving future Board clients.



Communication with the Board

HYA believes that communication and organization are critical to successful searches. These elements begin even before the *Planning Session*. Prior to this meeting with the entire Board, each Board member receives a detailed *Planning Session* agenda. A successful search relies on two-way communication throughout the search. In addition to the preparation of the agenda and meeting for the *Planning Session*, the following are the formal and informal communication expectations for this search:

- A search manual is provided to assist school board members in preparing for search activities and organizing all related material.
- A clearly defined *Planning Session* is held, during which all aspects of the search process are discussed and decided.
- A comprehensive summary of the *Planning Session* is sent to each Board member within three days of the meeting.
- A *Leadership Profile Report* is sent to each Board member. The *Report* summarizes the input received from the interviews with each Board member and the individuals and groups with whom the Board requests the consultants to meet.
- The consultants provide an oral report on the *Leadership Profile* findings and respond to questions at a public meeting to be determined by the Board.
- A workshop is held with the entire Board to develop specific criteria to be sought in the new Superintendent. The criteria is developed utilizing the findings of the *Leadership Profile Report* and the knowledge of the Board members relative to the District's future needs and challenges.
- Each Board member is asked to identify questions, hypothetical situations or topics of interest that are important to consider in selecting the new Superintendent. These are drafted into an *Interview Script* for the Board to review and revise, and eventually use to interview candidates.
- A workshop is held to prepare Board members for successful candidate interviews (the curriculum for the workshop will be Section 3 of the *Search Manual* each Board member is provided at the *Planning Session*).
- The slate is presented to the Board in person. During this session, each Board member is provided comprehensive written and verbal information relative to each candidate being recommended for an interview.
- The consultants meet with the Board after each set of interviews to assist the Board in its debriefing and selection of preferred candidates, and ultimately a preferred candidate.

In addition to the above formal communications, HYA provides progress reports via email or regular mail to all Board members, as agreed upon during the *Planning Session*. The consultants assigned to the search also are available as needed via phone. Board members receive the business, home and cell phone numbers, as well as the email addresses, of the consultants. HYA's office staff, which is highly knowledgeable and pleased to assist at any time, is also available to the Board toll free from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST, Monday through Friday – 877-724-8465.

