

IRVINGTON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

IRVINGTON, NEW YORK

LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

NOVEMBER 30, 2011

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in November 2011 for the new superintendent in the Irvington Union Free School District (IUFSD). The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

Group	Personal interviews or focus groups	Online Survey
Board	5	1
Administrators	10	1
Faculty	11	19
Support Staff	15	6
Community/Parents	83	246
Students	10	NA
Total	134	273

The responses provided by the individuals and focus groups during the interviews are listed in two ways. “Consistent Themes,” which are listed beginning on page 11, reflect the comments that were consistent across the groups interviewed. Following those items is a listing of all of the ideas shared at individual and group meetings. They are listed alphabetically with no attempt to prioritize them. A separate section lists all comments made by survey respondents sorted by stakeholder group. Negative statements about a single individual have been redacted.

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants’ judgment, they warranted the Board’s attention.

Strengths of the District

When asked about the strengths of IUFSD, all groups noted the particular character and benefits of Irvington's small and engaged community, where school and village groups work collaboratively to support the growth of its students. There was expressed appreciation for the efforts of a highly involved parent/volunteer population. It was noted that a number of people who were raised in Irvington remain as community members even after their children have graduated. It is not uncommon for people who work in Irvington to live there as well. This all supports a palpable feeling of dedication to the children and schools of Irvington. Education is clearly valued, and all Irvington constituency groups are proud of its high academic standards. The schools reflect hard work and a strong, supportive community.

There is strong academic performance, based on traditional measures. The community notes responsiveness to both student and parental needs and is very appreciative of the broad array of services and offerings both in academic and extracurricular programs. The teaching staff was recognized by all groups as a strength in the district. It was observed that the majority of the staff is excellent and highly committed to students. The staff has demonstrated resiliency and consistency during periods of turmoil and transition.

Parents, staff members, and administrators acknowledged that strong leadership is now in place at each of the four schools. Many stakeholders view the changes made in building level leadership over the past few years as a core strength of the District and believe it sets the stage for moving forward in a positive direction. Stakeholders also expressed the view that Dr. Roelle's leadership at the district level has set a new tone in Irvington at both the district and Board levels, which is being very positively received.

At the present time, IUFSD is administratively lean. Several different stakeholders stated that Irvington has had the lowest percentage tax increases in Westchester County over the past few years. Citizens have been willing to provide the resources necessary to support the schools and have consistently supported the budget as evidenced by the recent 64% approval rating for the budget. While reductions made in administrative staffing were viewed positively from a financial perspective, many stakeholders raised significant questions about the impact of these reductions, particularly in the area of curricular and instructional leadership.

Irvington Union Free School District presents a unique leadership opportunity in the fact that the District is seeking a leader who will help move it from good to great. The District has strong foundational building blocks – engaged students, active parents, talented and committed staff members, strong building-level leadership, and a community that values and supports education. The District wants to find a leader who desires to build a legacy by defining and implementing a course of action that will help all students maximize their potential and will establish a national reputation for Irvington as an outstanding school district.

Challenges/Concerns/Issues Facing the District

While there are many perceived strengths, there was a healthy openness among respondents to share issues, needs and concerns with us.

There was focus on the various concerns related to leadership struggles and transitions in the District. There was a universal expression of the need for a superintendent who will succeed and provide consistent leadership over a significant period of time. The absence of steady management, in spite of Dr. Roelle's excellent stewardship of the District on an interim basis, has been felt in a variety of ways. There is a lack of articulation of the goals and standards that are driving the delivery of education. This has been most strongly felt in the area of curriculum development and alignment. In particular, English and Math were cited as two subject areas in need of improvement. The lack of consistency in expectations, approach, and procedures from classroom-to-classroom and level-to-level was reported by community groups and some staff members. Administrative and teaching staffs expressed a lack of systems and processes for the operational work of the District and schools. Additionally, the Irvington community needs to consider whether it is yet measuring student performance and success in a way that is highly valued by most stakeholders.

The district is currently so administratively lean, and though a strength from a budgetary standpoint, presents yet another challenge to the delivery of services and the development of a coherent program. Several groups expressed support of a more robust infrastructure. And finally, there were concerns expressed that the district has become reactionary to problems and issues, rather than proactive regarding needs and opportunities. Some attributed the change in approach to the fact that there is insufficient administrative staffing to fulfill the operational requirements of the District and the customer service needs desired by stakeholders. Others suggested that one approach to address the administrative service needs of the District would be to investigate shared services with other neighboring school districts.

Another challenge universally expressed was around school finances. The combination of current international economic challenges, plus the 2% tax cap recently imposed by NYS, may result in future local cuts in services and/or personnel. Concerns were shared about the difficulties of maintaining high levels of performance while exercising fiscal constraint. Though the budget has traditionally been supported (last year 64% of those voting supported the budget) by the community, some consider the tax bills to be very high. There is also a question by some community members regarding the value of services provided versus the costs paid. A critical issue for the next superintendent will be to assess the current situation in the District and to share information regarding the cost/benefit equation for the District so that community members truly believe they are getting exceptional value for their tax dollars.

All groups felt challenged to improve the working relationship between the Board of Education and other stakeholders. There were concerns expressed about the micro-managing behavior on the part of the Board, perceived polarization within the Board

regarding approaches to be followed, acrimonious community discussions at Board meetings, and a lack of respect sometimes communicated by the Board for the work done by employees. There was strong hope and agreement among several groups that the District will benefit greatly from a strong partnership between the new superintendent and the Board. Stakeholders expressed the desire that a new Superintendent/Board team could focus attention on continuous improvements in areas of need while also honoring and respecting the past accomplishments and strengths of the Irvington Union Free School District.

Desired Characteristics

In all of the focus groups, the most energized comments centered on the necessary characteristics of the person who will succeed as the new Irvington Superintendent of Schools. Many participants clearly see this as an opportunity to move the District ahead in a meaningful way. People from several groups acknowledged that the current interim superintendent's well-received management and people skills have already gone a long way towards rebuilding a culture of trust within the educational community.

The phrase most often used in this section of the discussion was, "strong leader", which meant different things to different people. But the suggestion invariably implied a consistent need for someone "compelling, effective, persuasive, important" ... a true leader.

Board members, administrators, staff and community members all expressed the desire for a leader with educational vision. Many perceive that a compelling vision for the District has been lacking in the recent past and that programs and decisions have advanced in an ad hoc, incoherent manner. Participants stated that the new superintendent must be able to set, articulate and implement a vision and plan to help Irvington Schools continuously improve and prepare children for their future. It is important that the mission be clear, understandable to all, and reflective of the desires of the community. Several expressed the wish that this include an authentic commitment to academic excellence. Some stakeholders expressed the view that a "systems-thinker" was what was needed to truly retool the District and move it forward.

All the key stakeholder groups described the importance of the superintendent building and sustaining an effective team that has Board, administrators, staff leadership and community leadership all working for common purposes. In all of these relationships, it is important that the superintendent respect and motivate those that he/she is working with, in order to bring out the very best in those around him/her. The superintendent needs to be able to work with the Board of Education and to establish clear expectations for the Board's role and the superintendent's responsibilities. The current administrative team, including building Principals, is considered quite strong, and much value is placed on the superintendent being able to continue to develop and support this leadership group. The teaching faculty expressed a desire for authentic inclusiveness and for a leader that would advocate on their behalf. They seek a leader with a collaborative leadership style that will involve then moving the District forward.

Community members cited the importance of a good listener who is able to engage stakeholders and resolve issues in a respectful manner. In this regard, the need for someone who is decisive, has the courage of his/her convictions (including the ability to say “no” even when that response is unpopular) and to diffuse tension is highly valued. Community members described the desire for someone politically astute, but not politically driven. It is true that Irvington, like many communities, is often of many minds about its goals and its means to achieve them. A leader who can be honest, straightforward, and move difficult discussions ahead while building consensus, will serve the process well and will help to re-establish trust. Students expressed that they should know the superintendent and understand his role in the community. This was consistent with the feelings expressed by many groups that the new leader be visible and engaged in the schools and in the community.

Participants from many groups expressed the importance of a good communicator, someone who shares information regularly and effectively with the staff and the community, has good speaking skills, understands the value of community outreach, and will listen to and respect the input of others. Both highly effective written and verbal communication skills were viewed as critical.

Specific areas of proficiency were noted with some frequency. Some expressed that a viable candidate, a strong leader, would be someone who is respected for his/her knowledge and expertise in both instructional leadership and district operations. Others cited a strong educational background as being critical, and someone particularly knowledgeable regarding good instructional practice for high-performing districts, as being a good fit for Irvington. Most groups put a strong value on someone with fiscal knowledge, who would be able to guide the financial direction of the District. Several participants, across multiple groups, expressed the desire for a creative thinker. They expressed the value of a leader willing to take a fresh approach, someone with an open mind to new ideas.

With regard to background and past experiences, there was a range of opinions. Some participants want to consider the person with the best fit in terms of leadership skills and were open to the idea of a first-time superintendent. Others believe the candidate should be someone already experienced and prominent in the profession. Some community stakeholders expressed the view that someone with strong academic credentials from a highly-regarded educational institution and/or experience outside of traditional public education institutions would be highly desirable. While a few participants expressed a preference that the new superintendent be from NYS, to assure that he/she be familiar with State regulations and requirements, most agree that being able to come up to speed quickly is the critical issue. Many people expressed the critical value of hiring someone who would want to stay in the District for a long time and provide consistent leadership to help the Irvington Schools become all that they can be.

The online survey results are closely aligned with the comments heard during the interviews. The top two responses that were identified as important by the majority of respondents to the survey were:

- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (Management) – 53%
- Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (Vision and Values) – 52%

The first item of “recruiting, employing, evaluating and retaining effective personnel” reflects the comments heard about the strengths of many of the current staff members (building administrators and teachers) and concerns over administrative turnover and the need to help underperforming staff members improve. The second item of “having a clear vision and implementing effective changes” was a frequent comment from constituents about what the district needs to do to address issues and improve the system.

The next five items included:

- Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District. (M)
- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. (CC)
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)
- Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations. (IL)
- Promote high expectations for all students and personnel. (VV)

These items all reflected consistent comments from interviews and relate to two major themes heard during our interviews – rebuilding trust in the system and helping all children reach their potential by increasing expectations and improving learning opportunities. Additionally, the fact that the two most frequently identified skill sets – “Vision and Values” and “Management” were also frequently heard themes regarding what needs to be done adds further evidence that these skills are critical in the next superintendent.

HYA cannot promise to find a candidate who possesses all of the characteristics desired by respondents. However, HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to address the concerns expressed by the constituent groups. We will seek a new superintendent who can work with the Irvington Board to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance in spite of major financial challenges, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and communities.

The consultants would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups, meetings or completed the online survey. Also, we would like to thank all of the Irvington staff members who assisted with our meetings, particularly Elaine Cardea and Bob Roelle for their efforts in facilitating our time in the District.

Respectfully submitted,

Florie Wachtenheim and Hank Gmitro

Irvington Union Free School District Online Superintendent Profile Survey Results

The Superintendent Profile Survey was completed by 273 stakeholders. Over three quarters of the respondents were parents (78 percent), about 12 percent were community members, another 7 percent were teachers, and the rest were support staff, board members and administrators. Only one administrator and one board member completed the survey. Frequencies of respondents by stakeholder category are below.

	Frequency	Percent
Administrator	1	.4
Board Member	1	.4
Community Member	33	12.1
Parent	213	78.0
Support Staff	6	2.2
Teacher	19	7.0
Total	273	100.0

The top-rated characteristics that respondents selected are:

- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (M)
- Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (VV)
- Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District. (M)
- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. (CC)
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)
- Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations. (IL)
- Promote high expectations for all students and personnel. (VV)

Percentages of respondents overall who selected each item, as well as percentages by stakeholder group, are given in the tables on the following pages.

In addition, differences were examined for statistical and practical significance to determine whether the mean scores by stakeholder group differed. Results indicate that the various stakeholders were in agreement on almost all of the items. The only exception was that teachers were significantly more likely than parents to pick the Communication and Collaboration item “Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner.”

Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)

Number indicates rank order by overall results		Total (273)	Admin (1)	Board (1)	Com (33)	Parent (213)	SS (6)	Teacher (19)
1	Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (M)	53%	0%	100%	48%	54%	33%	47%
2	Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (VV)	52%	100%	100%	48%	56%	17%	26%
3	Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District. (M)	46%	0%	100%	58%	47%	0%	32%
4	Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. (CC)	45%	0%	100%	45%	41%	67%	74%
5	Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)	44%	0%	0%	45%	42%	100%	42%
6	Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations. (IL)	43%	0%	100%	36%	46%	33%	21%
7	Promote high expectations for all students and personnel. (VV)	41%	0%	0%	33%	45%	33%	16%
8	Provide meaningful guidance for systematic and comprehensive district-wide curriculum, instructional services, assessment programs, and professional development. (IL)	39%	100%	0%	33%	38%	33%	58%
9	Align budgets, long-range plans, and operational procedures with the District's vision, mission, and goals. (M)	38%	0%	100%	42%	40%	0%	26%
10	Identify, confront, and resolve issues and concerns in a timely manner. (CE)	36%	100%	0%	36%	37%	33%	32%
11	Strive for continuous improvement in all areas of the District. (VV)	30%	0%	0%	33%	31%	50%	16%
12	Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner. (CC)	29%	100%	100%	24%	26%	50%	58%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE- Community Engagement	CC- Communication & Collaboration	M- Management
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Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)

Number indicates rank order by overall results		Total (273)	Admin (1)	Board (1)	Com (33)	Parent (213)	SS (6)	Teacher (19)
13	Hold a deep understanding of the teaching/learning process and of the importance of educational technology. (IL)	28%	0%	0%	36%	27%	17%	32%
14	Be an effective manager of the District's day-to-day operations. (M)	26%	0%	0%	27%	24%	50%	32%
15	Seek a high level of engagement with principals and other school-site leaders. (CC)	25%	100%	0%	18%	25%	33%	32%
16	Encourage a sense of shared responsibility among all stakeholders regarding success in student learning. (IL)	25%	0%	0%	27%	23%	50%	37%
17	Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and in a variety of ways. (CC)	23%	100%	100%	30%	22%	0%	26%
18	Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments. (VV)	22%	100%	0%	12%	23%	17%	21%
19	Maintain positive and collaborative working relationships with the school board and its members. (CE)	20%	0%	0%	12%	21%	33%	26%
20	Guide the operation and maintenance of school facilities to ensure secure, safe, and clean school environments that support learning. (M)	17%	0%	0%	24%	16%	0%	16%
21	Utilize student achievement data to drive the District's instructional decision-making. (IL)	17%	0%	0%	15%	17%	0%	21%
22	Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life. (CE)	16%	0%	0%	15%	15%	50%	26%
23	Involve appropriate stakeholders in the decision-making process. (CC)	15%	0%	0%	18%	14%	0%	26%
24	Develop strong relationships with constituents, local government, area businesses, media, and community partners. (CE)	13%	100%	0%	24%	11%	17%	5%
25	Act in accordance with the District's mission, vision, and core beliefs. (VV)	9%	0%	0%	6%	9%	17%	11%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE- Community Engagement	CC- Communication & Collaboration	M- Management
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Consistent Themes from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Strengths

- Administratively lean
- Community has consistently demonstrated support for budget
- Education is highly valued by the community
- Great community, schools have great reputation
- High academic standards
- Highly engaged parents and community
- Lowest percentage tax increases in Westchester County over the past few years
- Multi-generation, w/significant group that works and lives in the community
- Resilient and talented staff
- Responsiveness to student and parental needs
- Strong academic performance on traditional measures
- Strong leadership in place now at each of the four schools
- The majority of the staff is excellent and highly committed to students

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- 2% budget cap imposed by state may mean future cuts in services and/or personnel
- Administratively lean
- District has become reactionary to problems and issues rather than proactive regarding needs and opportunities
- Improvements needed in English and Math instructional practices (curriculum development, in particular)
- Lack of consistency in expectations, approach and procedures from classroom to classroom and level to level
- Lack of respect sometimes communicated by Board for the work done by employees
- Lack of systems and processes for the operational work of the district and schools
- Micromanagement by the Board
- Money often appears to be considered before educational needs
- Need to consider use of shared services with other districts
- Not sure if the District is measuring student performance and success in a way that is highly valued by most stakeholders
- Some community tension over educational philosophy to be followed
- Suffered from many transitions (i.e., curriculum and leadership)
- Tax bills are very high and there is a question by some community members regarding the value of services provided versus the costs paid

Desired Characteristics

- Ability to work with the Board and establish clear expectations for the Board's role and the superintendent's responsibilities
- Able to say no even when that response is unpopular
- Able to set, articulate, and implement a vision and plan to help Irvington Schools continuously improve and prepare children for their future
- Authentic commitment to academic excellence
- Build and sustain an effective leadership team with the Board, administrators, staff leadership and community leadership all working for common purposes
- Consensus-builder, comfortable working through an issue
- Courage of his/her own convictions
- Decisive when needed
- Educational background and particularly knowledgeable regarding good instructional practice for high-performing districts
- Fiscal knowledge to guide the financial direction of the District (tough decisions in next few years)
- Fresh approach, open-minded, creative thinker
- Highly effective written and verbal communication skills
- Knowledgeable about New York regulations and requirements or able to come up to speed quickly as there is little time for a learning curve on day-to-day management issues
- Listener who is able to engage stakeholders and resolve issues in a respectful manner
- Motivator and cheerleader for the District
- Politically astute, but not politically driven
- Self-confident
- Someone who respects and motivates, brings out the best in those around him
- Strong leader who is respected for his/her knowledge and expertise of both instructional leadership and district operations
- Systems thinker
- Thick-skinned
- Visible and engaged in the schools and the community
- Wants to be in Irvington over the long-term

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

November 13 – November 15, 2011

Listed in alphabetical order

“/” indicates multiple similar responses from group

ADMINISTRATORS

Strengths

- Administrators work well together
- Budget passes between 55-60%
- Building administrators are a strength that has added stability during tough times
- Community-driven schools
- Considerable access for constituents
- Contract, when settled, will provide stability for next 3-4 years
- Current supt. understands districts needs. Understands administrative needs
- Current supt. working more closely with community, opening lines of communication
- Developing a long-term plan for facilities management
- District fairly response to parental and student needs
- Fairly stable tax base
- Individualizing to meet the needs of individual students
- Level of trust is improving
- Resiliency of administration in spite of much turnover
- School-based functions operate well
- Schools reflect hard work and good supportive community. Community is involved. /
- Strong and loyal staff, very professional
- Traditional measures of student success – community seems to accept direction (success rate) of schools
- Work hard with little leadership and limited systems (so hard to measure success)

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- Board of Education Concerns– Current BOE micromanages, has knee-jerk reactions to issues, doesn't follow processes/protocols, and displays a lack of trust at times. BOE members are directing individual administrators. Superintendent. has an important role in correcting this. Split board. ////
- Bob Roelle will be a lame duck once the new superintendent is named
- Budget – already much fat trimmed
- Critical need for the BOE to be supportive of what Irvington Schools are and can be in the future
- Currently paying for two superintendents (temporary)
- Curriculum process/alignment (particularly for ELA, math)
- Declining enrollment

- Lack of administrative infrastructure
- Lack of data-driven evidence to validate success
- Lack of equity, at times
- Leadership issue – no continuity. Need better articulation. Supt. has to support curriculum person
- Lots of turnover
- Need for systematic curricular and instructional approaches
- Need for systems across the district and consistency across buildings
- Need to feel valued
- Need to grow systems and processes /
- Need to market Irvington successes
- Not correct number of administrators at some buildings
- Not much turnover with teachers (both a challenge and a strength)
- Past Superintendents have not been as successful as desired
- Property tax cap
- Security concerns at High School
- Tax certioraris add pressure to budget

Desired Characteristics

- Ability to change the culture in order to make improvements (should grow a culture, not impose it) /
- Ability to deal with public
- Ability to manage community issues and BOE issues
- Ability to relate on a personal level
- Ability to stick to convictions
- Atmosphere that fosters creativity
- Background in curriculum, finance and human resources
- Be publicly visible
- Build a leadership team
- Build an effective Board/Supt. team
- Clone of Bob Roelle
- Communicator
- Creative thinker
- Curriculum
- Don't want an autocrat
- Don't want joyless, data-driven person
- Experience
- Forge/support leadership team. It is an excellent team right now. Support building administrators and value what they offer //
- Good sense of systems for the district
- Handle criticism
- Help non-instructional staff to feel valued and appreciated
- Intellect
- Intelligent
- Manager of the BOE

- Must be able to work well with both administrative team and BOE
- Need to be working towards a standard expectation
- No egomaniacs
- Open Door Policy
- Personable with community (public relations experience)
- Politically knowledgeable, but not politically driven.
- Proactive, rather than reactive
- Protocols and systems perspective
- Provide direct support to the administration
- Role of supt. should be clear, made apparent to all constituents
- Should become part of the community
- Should love being in Irvington and able to appreciate value of Irvington
- Should offer administrators some room (“don’t want to be held to an accountability level that’s out of reach”)
- Should trust people with whom he/she works
- Someone from NY – understanding NY mandates
- Someone looking for a future/career (minimum 5 years) /
- Strategic thinker – articulate where we are and where we’re going, get people behind to get there
- Strong personality to be able to hold his own with the BOE
- Up-to-date with APPR
- Values Curriculum and instruction
- Very clear and honest about expectations
- Want someone who can be up and running, to be able to lead BOE at onset
- Will need to wear lots of hats, as has lots of constituent groups. Needs to work well with all shareholders. /

BOARD

Strengths

- Board is trying to provide more info to community
- Budget passed with 64% of the vote
- Community is willing to provide financial resources to support high academic standards
- Core group of caring, involved parents /
- Each school is doing well
- Finance/budget o.k.
- Fine arts valued, instrumental music cited
- Good administrators
- Good teachers //
- Good working relationships with staff and administration
- Great participation in sports programs
- Pockets of excellence (Greek and Latin)
- Socio-economic diversity, with schools/community fostering acceptance/inclusiveness

- Strong academic performance by students
- Teachers and education are valued by the community
- Very high percentage, almost 100%, go to college ///

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- 2% tax cap //
- Budget/fiscal challenges – what will suffer? Will class size need to increase? How to maintain high levels of performance w/budget restrictions //
- Community not well-informed, doesn't engage well on substantive topics
- Community wants more information, rather than less
- Concerned about getting the right people into the rights positions (for example, department chairs)
- Curriculum alignment, curriculum development, need for asst. supt. of curriculum
- Distrust in community
- Driving value in education is not developed – achievement or educating students to be productive members of society?
- Education is different than business
- Faction of the community that believes sports, music, extracurricular programs each get too much focus and attention
- Function of BOE (for example, micro-managing) /
- Grade deflation
- How to get students to challenge themselves
- Improving academic performance
- Inconsistency of teaching standards classroom-to-classroom (need to have the best of the best) /
- Ineffective performance review process
- Irvington should stand out in Westchester. Right now it's middle of the pack. Need to raise profile //
- Lots of tension
- Need more rigorous academics
- Need to deal with (financial) cuts
- Need to look for fresh perspectives
- New regulations for NYS (APPR,
- Not enough rules at the high school/lack of accountability on the part of the students
- Plant/facilities
- Principals not preparing students to function well in college /
- Real metrics needed
- Special education concerns
- Staff is run amuck with people marching to their own drum. Lack of leadership w/teaching staff
- Starting new programs and demonstrating that they create a benefit (initiatives, programs and improvements developed in the 80s and 90s have diminishing benefits now)
- Strong ideological differences within BOE

- Teachers are a strong group, and 30% are eligible for retirement
- Teachers tutor in town (conflict w/helping students in school)
- Turnover of administrators (over past few years, and several exits all at once)
- Very unique community (needs to be understood)
- Want to achieve private school for public school prices

Desired Characteristics

- “All boils down to salary”
- Bob Roelle has helped to show what a good supt. does /
- Charter School background
- Consensus builder
- Considers new ways to solve problems (thinks outside the box [sometimes]) /
- Construction background
- Deep resume
- Desire to be here for a long time
- Education leader
- Educator
- Energizer
- Evidence-based decision-making
- Experienced
- Expertise in curriculum /
- Good manager of teaching staff
- Good negotiator
- Good people skills
- Good public communicator – good speaker, able to be clearly understood, able to deal publicly w/controversy //
- Hard worker
- Honest w/community
- Intellectual with Ivy League degree
- Know how to align groups, find compromise, knows when to take a stand
- Know how to deal with long-term, beloved Principals
- Knows how to bring BOE together when there are strong differences of opinion
- Listen to parents who have concerns and help them solve problems
- Listens to stakeholders
- Lobbying skills
- Management ability so that we can work (respect and motivate) all groups
- Marketing plan
- Motivator/cheerleader
- Need department chairs at other levels of K-12 than just at the High School, some thought that dept. chairs should serve more than just 9-12 for their subject areas
- Open Door policy w/superintendent.
- Outreach to everyone to make sure they’ve been heard
- Political acumen
- Prioritizes academic excellence and knows what it looks like
- Shake up teaching staff and help them to do their best (and then communicate it)

- Shake up things in a positive way
- Someone out of the mold
- Strategic thinker
- Strong leader - to get people back on track, to help various groups arrive at right decisions
- Strong leader who is respected for his/her knowledge and expertise /
- Thick-skinned
- Use of political capital – how often can withstand an unpopular stand?
- Values public education
- Vision (5 years out), with practical implementation plans, with measurable goals and objectives. Both long and short-term vision important.
- Will adopt an approach that is back to basics (multiplication and phonics), no fads

COMMUNITY/PARENTS

Strengths

- After school activities
- Asst. supt. of business
- Child-centered community
- Cohesive educational community – small, manageable, personable
- Each of four schools is in great shape now
- English Dept. has improved instructional services, particularly at Middle School
- Everyone has a collective vested interest in the children
- Excellent educational system
- Facilities
- Family-oriented community
- Good athletic program
- Good system in general, needs some tuning
- Have managed to control costs, with very small annual increases
- High School is terrific and children are well-prepared for college
- IEF has good working relationship with administration
- Irvington is attractive to live/work in because it's: charming, unique, artsy, friendly, warm, sophisticated, small-town feel, jewel of the River Towns, near NYC, close-knit, family-like
- Kids get personal attention. Teachers know students well so students don't fall through the cracks. //
- Kids love it here – warm feeling at the schools//
- Kids walk to school, but students are bussed when needed
- Outstanding Principals, well-run buildings (note: current snapshot is good, had trouble in recent past). Collaborative relationship //
- Parents are passionate
- Parents engaged
- Particular teachers attract students to subject matter.
- People are very interested in the schools
- Pockets of very good teaching

- Police/schools have great partnership, with good programs in place for kids of the community. Other community organizations also work well with the schools. Community Advisory Board, for example, great example of cross-constituency discussion opportunities, including students. Living example of “It takes a village to raise a child”
- PPS – K-5 model class, good use of resources, positive changes made, early intervention, forward-thinking, budgeted efficiently, students monitored K-12
- Retain faculty because it’s a nice community/environment.
- Schools have great reputation – people come for the schools /
- Small community. Feels like people care about you.
- Strong sense of community
- Talented teachers. Many are fantastic and deeply-engaged ///
- Wonderful community /

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- Athletic fields need to be improved
- Bias to education over sports
- BOE’s open discussions last for hours
- Budget – resources limiting what can be accomplished //
- Community can be a challenged – blogs and focus on individual opinions rather than the collective best interests of all
- Concerns over past Supt.’s salary and buy out
- Create more opportunities for students to give back
- Demographic challenge – new and old groups within Irvington
- Dissension on BOE
- District website – needs update/renovation
- Distrust of the BOE
- Divided Board
- Don’t waste money by hiring consultants
- Double-edged sword – high level of sophistication, expectations and involvement of parents presents challenge
- Economy – will be many tough decisions in future years, as a result
- English Dept. need to continue to improve, especially at the Middle School
- Financial limitations to be able to have asst. principal at Dows Lane and for an assistant superintendent for instruction
- Good neighborliness
- Have educational vision, needs and goals that drive the district’s work and budget
- High School should be like a prep school
- Holding the line on taxes and keeping increases below 2%
- How can Irvington differentiate itself?
- How much money to spend/student?
- Huge tax bills/
- Inadequate financial controls
- Inconsistency in teaching standards ///
- Inconsistent practices/standards in communicating with parents

- Irvington is too average
- Keeping senior citizen activities in the schools
- Lack of direction as a result of many transitions
- Limited public relations efforts – limited funds/personnel
- Lots of “stuff” to manage (Common Core, APPR)
- Lots of building to do, under restraints of economic pressure
- Math curriculum needs to be improved and have a consistent approach (Curriculum improvement!)
- More reading and writing instruction and activities needed
- Much discussions for second-guessing district decisions
- Need better vertical integration of curriculum
- Need regular communications to entire community
- Need to address issue of underperforming teachers /
- Need to raise the academic bar
- Not enough curriculum leadership. Need a director. //
- Questions of value
- Rebalancing authority between BOE and supt.
- Role of supt. needs to be better understood. Expectations about role/duties/priorities needs to be balanced, happy medium
- School facilities present safety concerns – e.g., the MS playground lacks open space
- Sharp divisions in community/
- So many administrative gaps – what are the implications?
- Some students (lower grades) not served well – not enough enrichment or differentiation of instructional. Need more flexibility to allow for this.
- Special Education
- Strengthening the AP program
- Students are not prepared for first year of college /
- Students should be taught more responsibility
- Tax cap
- Tension between pride in system and current economic challenges
- Turnover of administrators //
- Universal support eroding – more factions/arguments
- Worried about HS Principal retiring, same with Main Street Principal

Desired Characteristics

- A change agent (doer), able to make things happen
- A professional, with career-involvement
- Ability to guide the BOE
- Ability to say “no” and explain reasons
- Ability to work with IFA
- Able to help BOE operate in a consensual manner. Needs to command BOE’s respect
- Able to lead the district so that it lives within its means
- An educational leader

- An educator first, to help the system improve
- Appreciation of demographic diversity
- Attendance at community meetings
- Authentic commitment to academic excellence
- Be in charge – strong leadership skills///
- Believes in challenging all students to do their best and reach their potential
- Believes in professional development
- Believes that the Board supervises the Superintendent not the reverse
- Can consider internal candidates
- Can work well as part of a team
- Can't acquiesce to parents
- Capable of developing trust
- Celebrates successes
- Challenge students
- Cheerleader/spokesperson
- Closer to home (NYS) and experience in a district with profile similar to Irvington's.
- Commands respect
- Community consensus-building skills
- Consider a first time superintendent who is eager for the position and wants to stay for a long time
- Creative thinker
- Curriculum expertise and willingness to do that work
- Decisive when necessary, but respectful
- Develops rapport with all members of the community – seniors, parents, taxpayers, students, staff
- Don't exclude someone without experience
- Energized
- Enjoys parents and optimizes them as a resource
- Explains reasons for decisions
- Familiar with current trends but grounded in what has worked well in the past
- Familiar w/special education
- Financial expertise/
- Global vision
- Good listener
- Good people manager
- Good salesperson – has the ability to market the district
- Holds self and all staff accountable for performance and consistency
- Identify what needs to happen, and then make sure it's implemented. Direction is set from administration articulating standards /
- Intelligent /
- Knowledge of Common Core and APPR
- Knows how to deal/improve/mentor weaker teachers. Knows how to achieve capacity
- Long-term planner. Someone who can articulate where to take the district and to know if we're getting there //

- Needs to build confidence and trust
- Needs to have professional understanding of the community.
- Needs to hit ground running
- Needs to respect teachers. Should be supportive of staff so that they can do their best. /
- Needs to understand challenges of current gaps and remediate situation
- Needs to understand community and how to administer a highly resourced, high-achieving district. Needs to appreciate the quality of life in Irvington and the business perspective /
- Not a traditional administrator, but rather, someone with intellectual passion /
- Not afraid to address challenging issues/persons, non-defensively
- Open Door Policy style of management
- Open, with good communication skills. Clear, direct, simple (to be understood) ///
- Open-minded
- Partner with groups in community
- Politically astute
- Possess financial knowledge to lead. Able to use money wisely. Values less overhead /
- Provides guidance and support to Principals
- Rational thinker, not side-lined by pressure from BOE
- Real leader /
- Resilient
- Self-confident
- Shared services?
- Sharing of services? Someone who could lead more than one district /
- Should be able to diffuse tension/acrimony
- Shouldn't take things personally
- Small district – one person should be able to do it all. Don't want separate curriculum person. Would prefer money go into funding new curriculum, such as foreign language
- Someone evaluative – are kids learning, are things working?
- Someone good at financial efficiency, to be able to balance resource limitations with what should be offered to students
- Someone to check that processes are efficient, non-redundant
- Someone who can pull the town together
- Someone who could lead a discussion about continuous progress, with an agreed upon set of measures
- Someone who will inspire administrators to stay
- Sound handle on what education should look like and how to implement it
- Straightforward
- Strong academic background ///
- Strong champion of children
- Strong instructional background – good knowledge and visionary approach
- Strong leader, able to bring groups together - can work together with different views and bring people together ////
- Strong leadership for BOE and community

- Strong manager of daily operations
- Strong passion for the job and strong desire to do it
- Strong, open communicator. Genuine transparency. Honestly engages the public, when appropriate ///
- Supple thinker, willing to socialize new ideas //
- Supportive of connection to Irvington business community
- The right person
- Understands board/superintendent relationship
- Visible in the community//
- Visionary, and able to bring people together around that vision - Vision to move forward ///////
- Wants to be here for the long-term (10 years)
- Well-spoken, persuasive person
- Will be challenging for person outside of NY. Understands NYS regulations
- Willing to deal with public, to be able to get to know the community
- Willing to have public face, priorities w/community, to be seen in schools

FACULTY

Strengths

- Nice families that support the school district
- Nice kids
- Principals help students reach his/her potential
- Small
- Teachers - dedicated, work hard
- Teachers are the consistent group, even w/all the change around
- This is home – love the community
- Very positive, diverse community

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- Growing pains – Irvington started to grow (now declining) – small-sized district felt creative, but model of larger district is more compliant.
- Keep adding more to teach. No room for choices
- Lack of equity K-12 (e.g., teaching leadership positions)
- Lack of overall coherency
- Lack of trust
- Need curriculum director to align curriculum, especially w/Core Curriculum
- Negativity towards educators (? – not sure if this had to do with money/negotiations)
- No clear vision instructionally
- No consistent focus w/curriculum
- No historic thread due to turnover of professionals. Ad hoc curriculum decisions
- Not enough support for professional development. Not even sure who's managing professional dev. For State-mandated changes (e.g., HS math)

- Protocols not being observed (e.g., parents going straight to Supt.)
- Start programs, don't finish
- Staying creative in the age of accountability
- Teachers not authentically included in curriculum decisions, especially at the elementary level /

Desired Characteristics

- Able to articulate basis of decisions
- Able to bring groups together
- Able to work w/people and manage expectations
- Able to work with strong, opinionated faculty
- Advocate for teachers (Supt./teachers should be partners)
- Appropriate social boundaries (bad history)
- Capable of reassuring community they are getting something good
- Courage to support/advocate on behalf of teachers
- Decision-maker, capable of saying no
- Education vision, work at it collaboratively and stand behind position
- Experienced
- Fair management of multi-school/multi-campus district
- Get out with children of all ages
- Good facilitator at meetings
- Healer
- Interested in children of the district
- Knowledgeable
- Lots of experience
- National caliber, with reason to stay when things get tough
- Needs to stick by decisions and follow through w/initiatives.
- Needs to understand complexion of small district
- No favoritism
- Not political, a humanist
- Open-minded
- Outstanding leader, w/lots of developed qualities working with and supporting people
- Professional development – able to encourage outreach/partnerships with other communities re. learning consortiums
- Public relations – someone to set the truth straight
- Respect for an excellent staff, its connection to the community and ability to work collaboratively
- Role model
- Shared services
- Should be out in public (to be able to stay connected to community and learn about issues/people)
- Someone who can publicly champion the schools, positive spokesperson to community

- Staff development (ball gets dropped). Include teachers in decision-making processes regarding curriculum development
- Streamline and keep coherent money from outside groups (PTSA and IEF)
- Take the district places!
- Visibility/public face
- Vision

STUDENTS

Strengths

- Collaborative environment
- Kids have freedom and feel comfortable with teachers
- Learning a lot in class
- Lots of opportunity
- More than half the students participate in clubs
- Most teachers are very interested in helping students
- Peer Leadership program
- Size of school is generally a benefit
- Strong integration of students
- Strong sense of community at HS
- Students are very actively involved
- SUPA program

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- 25% of students aren't strong students and do the bare minimum
- Concerns overt the guidance program meeting the needs of seniors
- English and Math are weakest departments at the HS
- Some teachers don't follow the guidelines for testing days (conflicts for students)
- Somewhat stressful (competitive college entry)
- Students sometimes take advantage of the relationship
- Teachers say grades don't matter, but they do matter
- Two-track school, AP track and regular track

Desired Characteristics

- Approachable to students, community works and teachers
- Likeable
- Look for the positive in all areas
- Personable
- Respected by all
- Strong school spirit
- Students should know the Supt.
- Students should know what Supt.'s job is
- Understand that students are individuals

- Vibrant personality
- Willing to listen to the interests of others
- Willing to take criticism and speak for what he/she believes in

SUPPORT STAFF

Strengths

- Academic standards
- Dedicated staff
- Friendly
- Generations have gone to the schools
- Love of community
- Many work and live here
- Schools are vital – people move here for the schools
- Sense of community
- Strong academics, athletics, performances
- Very supportive community

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

- 2% budget cap
- BOE
- BOE – “gotcha” behavior
- BOE and supt. should not only be listening to the few vocal individuals
- BOE should be focusing on policy
- Budget
- Contracts need to be settled
- Curriculum
- District has been too reactionary, rather than reflective
- Lack of infrastructure
- Lack of trust
- Limited State aid
- National perspective on unions is a concern and impacts morale
- Nature of community is changing – more people, larger homes
- Need to consolidate district
- Too much energy and time and is focused on the narrow negative issues

Desired Characteristics

- Able to wear many hats
- Approachable
- Balanced approach to job – between community engagement and district day-to-day management
- Bring things back together
- Budget-savvy

- Clear and consistent messages
- Curriculum knowledge
- Experienced
- High academic stands
- Knowledgeable
- Makes you feel that everyone is on equal terms
- Personable, pleasant personality /
- Respect everyone for what they contribute
- Should support staff and the administration
- Someone easy to talk to
- Someone from NYS (laws, human resource training) //
- Stick around for long-term
- Strong – to deal with community and BOE /
- Strong leader (so that BOE and parents don't devour him).
- Strong leadership role
- Teacher aides should be included in more venues (Supt's Day, workshops)
- Trust
- Understanding the community
- Willing to listen and not make judgments until all the information is gathered
- Willing to reach out
- Willing to stand by convictions after assessing all the facts
- Willing to take on issues with all the stakeholders
- Young enough to have a career here. Motivated. Maybe a younger person will be less expensive. Don't want a retired person who is only ready to spend a few years here.

Comments from Online Survey

Stakeholder	<i>Please add any additional comments you wish to make regarding what you believe are necessary characteristics for a superintendent.</i>
Administrator	The new superintendent should create a safe and supportive atmosphere for creativity to thrive since we will need a great deal of creativity to overcome the many challenges that lie ahead.
Community	A few of the things that come to mind in the limited time I have for this: The school district needs to be more progressive environmentally (ex: retain storm water on site, all schools have vegetable gardens, stop disposable lunch service ware), smarter in the care and use of the resources they have (i.e. playing fields not properly cared for allowing for failure of the fields, design the theatre right the first time to provide for adequate restrooms and dressing rooms, provide for adequate care of existing trees and planning for new trees on the school grounds), make the right agreements with the surrounding properties and stick to them (ex: the escalation of the Deerman Park access dispute), stop the madness that everything can be solved by throwing more money at it and those who oppose school budget increases are fringe malcontents. We, as a community, invest the schools with our treasure – our children and our financial resources. It is imperative the school system respects both of those trusts.
Community	A leader who regards the teaching staff as professionals, not employees to be lorded over and managed as in an industrial, business setting. He should be a compassionate individual involving the teachers in the decision making process utilizing their expertise and experience.
Community	An authoritative (not authoritarian) leader. Someone who believes change is possible and always seeks to do better. Never satisfied with the status quo, even if there has been improvement. Ivy League education and believes in a college preparatory curriculum.
Community	An experienced and sophisticated school leader who will cultivate an environment of high achievement and quality teaching and learning for all students. Someone who will identify best practices and finally bring them to Irvington. A successful leader will need to be well skilled in Board and community relations to achieve the goals and needs of the Irvington school community. The district has lagged behind others due to lack of support for those structures necessary to optimally prepare students and teachers for 21st century learning.
Community	clear, articulate communicator a person who is self-assured in their knowledge-base and strength/skills, but not arrogant someone who doesn't give in to the minority squeaky-wheels in the community is comfortable with themselves and therefore not easily intimidated nor live with knee jerk reactions Utmost respect for the educational profession and the institution It goes without saying that the next superintendent will need to be knowledgeable in curriculum, human resources as there are no second-chairs to rely on in those areas.
Community	Effective use of time and willingness to actually get the work done (rather than delegate or hire extra, unneeded administrators to do it for you) are required in this job.
Community	Hopefully, the new superintendent will seek out and employ the most qualified faculty and administrators and employ methods to KEEP them as part of a well recognized and high performing school district.
Community	I believe long-term planning is an important aspect of the Superintendent of Schools of the Irvington School District. Constant, consistent communication with parents and staff as well as local authorities is pertinent in the world we are living in. The safety of students and staff alike is of utmost importance.
Community	I believe the district needs a strong leader to heal past combative discussions among community members and the board and to provide a trusting and respectful relationship with the staff.
Community	I think an effective superintendent inspires others, is passionate about education, and supports opportunities for enrichment. I think a good candidate will have vision, will encourage collaboration and new ideas, and will also be grounded enough to handle difficult personalities and the challenges of managing complex budgets. I would look for a thoughtful listener who speaks eloquently and is comfortable with numbers as well.
Community	I think we ought to be able to do this without paying at a level that is the highest on the Eastern Seaboard, which (I understand from a good source) is what we have done in the last.

Community	Maintaining the school budget and trying to align it with the quality of teaching should be one of the most important things. Right now, I do not think we are getting what we pay for. If anything the goal should be to reduce the budget. There is no reason why the budget should increase every year when the student body decreases and so does the quality of teachers and guidance counselors.
Community	Manage the finances of the district effectively and keep costs down.
Community	Must be an effective manager of costs and benefits. Needs to stop the never ending spiral of looking for more money to solve problems that really aren't solvable by more money. Manage within means. Run district like a business.
Community	No more egomaniacs who are evil and manipulative.
Community	The superintendent must align with the best methods for instructing the students, have an ability to remove institutionalized principals and to innovate solid solutions. As a six year resident of Irvington, there are certain compensations for the younger students such as a bus system that infantilizes the students and a math program that doesn't instill mastery. The former superintendent was compensated to an absurd level given the output of her position. The need to anticipate, strategize the many needs of the faculty and students need to be fostered in lieu of favoritism.
Community	The superintendent should be fiscally responsible as well as have a clear vision for the path that the school district should follow and be capable of communicating that vision to the entire community. This includes the school staff, the students, the parents, the school board and the rest of the community that is not directly involved in the schools. The superintendent should work with other community officials to see how to integrate the schools in the wider community. And this person should be able to work on the curriculum as well as other aspects of the job. The state sets guidelines for the curriculum and individual teachers have access to those guidelines as well as the administration. A good superintendent can set the general outline of goals for the teachers based upon the state mandates. Other administrators can work with the teachers in defining the specifics that apply to each grade level and then to each teacher. It was mind boggling to find Irvington had a position that only dealt with curriculum and the prior superintendent did not want to take over that work. It never should have been farmed out in the first place. That was wasted taxpayer money.
Community	Utilize community members who have had prior successful educational roles in other school communities. There is a great deal of talent willing to volunteer. Explore sharing administrative services within village/town districts. As many districts are top heavy with administrators, it would make sense to share services of such individuals as Curriculum Directors, Principals, Assistant Principals, etc. These positions should be flexible enough to meet the needs of other districts.
Community	We need a superintendent who is highly motivated and energized. We don't want someone who is complacent and "gaming the system". I'd like someone who wants to put Irvington "on the map" and be on par with the top 5 best schools in the county. This person should adhere to basic teaching methods and not experiment with convoluted teaching techniques that are ineffective such as Trail Blazer Math. He or she should be determined to continually strive to improve our school system and not settle for the same old status quo year in, year out.
Parent	- brilliant educator - effective long-range vision - astute financial planner - open communicator
Parent	Set a high bar for academic achievement - given the funding and population, the achievement levels of students in the district is below where it should be. This should be in evaluation of programs, teachers' performance (Evaluate tenure process - the bar is set too low in Irvington), be INDEPENDENT in judgement - not beholden to community groups but seem to maintain the high ground - set an example of dedication and persistence for faculty and students.
Parent	1. I have no idea why Irvington's tiny school system with 4 (soon 3) schools needs a high priced Superintendent and Sub-Superintendents (curriculum, business, etc.). We have principals and assistant principals in our one high school, one middle school, etc. Use the superintendent money for paying teachers and for student programs. What the heck to these superintendents do all day? How can the Superintendent, Superintendent for curriculum and Superintendent for business be full time jobs? It really annoyed me to see the last worthless superintendent at school functions, being introduced like a celebrity. Please, stop it already!

	Don't get me wrong; I think Irvington's schools are great. We have great teachers and great principals, especially at the high school level. I vote in favor of the school budget every time. I'm not one of that group of school budget cutting zealots out there. 2. I can't believe that Irvington UFSD is paying for a consulting firm to help fill this position. I'm sure you consultants are lovely people, and I know you have to support your families too, but is this really necessary? To answer my own question; no.
Parent	1. I think it's vitally important that we look outside the public sector as well as inside: we should seek potential candidates in private schools, parochial schools, and charter schools. Scarsdale has hired administrators from private schools; we can, too. 2. I am keen to hire a superintendent who understands and supports parents' desire for their children to gain admission to selective colleges -- and to succeed at those colleges if they are accepted. College readiness should be the core goal for our district and should begin in Kindergarten. 3. I am keen to hire a superintendent who understands what a classical, knowledge-based, college preparatory education is, and who will commit to providing one for Irvington kids. 4. I'm also keen to hire a superintendent who will embrace Richard DuFour's continuous improvement model: a superintendent who takes responsibility for raising the achievement of all students at all levels **without** forcing parents to hire tutors. 5. I hope the next superintendent will end the practice of Irvington teachers moonlighting as tutors for Irvington students. 6. I would also like to see the district search for a leader who will institute a means of gaining feedback on the amount of tutoring and "help with homework" students are receiving -- with the goal of systematically reducing the <i>*need*</i> for tutors and "Extra Help." In other words, I'd like to see us search for a superintendent who believes in accountability, has a track record that demonstrates accountability, and will hold himself/herself and the staff accountable for results. 7. I'm strongly opposed to hiring anyone whose focus is the so-called "21st century skills." 8. I would like the superintendent to express and demonstrate a reverence for books and knowledge and to foster these values in children. 9. I would like the district to hire a superintendent who cares about home values. The superintendent should understand that SAT scores are intimately linked to home values and should do everything within his or her power to support and increase SAT/ACT scores. 10. Very important: the next superintendent should respect the values of the community. If the community wants the school to teach grammar, the school should teach grammar regardless of what the NCTE has to say on the subject. If the community wants the school to teach algebra in the 8th grade, the school should teach algebra in the 8th grade without asking permission from the NCTM. If the community wants the school to assign literature written prior to the 20th century, the school should assign literature written prior to the 20th century. In the best of all possible worlds, the next superintendent will not only respect our values, he or she will share them. Thank you for listening – and good luck!
Parent	a positive role model to all a cheerleader to our teachers a leader who is fair instead of a "quick fix" to a problem, guide the district with a long range view.
Parent	A superintendent should have the strength of vision about educational achievement that will enable him/her to make effective use of the position's bully-pulpit to rally the disparate elements of our community towards a common ideal.
Parent	A warm empathic person that mediates well with students as well as with the administration. Some one who is approachable by all because they represent the interest of the community and it's economic diversity; not only symbolically but conveys that education is at the core of decisions. A leader with a business savvy but philosophically holds students and teachers at the top of the pyramid instead of the administrative side.
Parent	All of the characteristics in the checklist were important and it was very difficult to pick only 8. A person who makes sure that safety in the schools and promotes the no bullying policy that Irvington tries to maintain is also very important.
Parent	An educator who is more committed to the academic success of our children; less about testing standards.
Parent	Be accessible to the educators and principals. Service the vision of the educators while keeping the parents happy.
Parent	Best practice knowledge and execution capability. Considering we are a very small, contained district it is surprising the lack of continuity and sharing of best practices between schools and

	even within schools. This is especially harmful to at-risk students and special needs students. Also, the district has a reputation for being very sloppy and casual in its Special Education operating practices -- the new super. really needs to ensure we follow legal obligations and best practices. We are at constant risk of lawsuits here but more critical than the legal risk is how it limits the potential of students with learning differences. We focus on cultural diversity but not enough on acceptance and best practice for learning differences.
Parent	Bottom line: we need a superintendent whose mission is to provide the best education for our students, including superb science, math, english and foreign languages, who has a strong vision of how to achieve this and the people skills to get whatever support is needed.
Parent	Candidate should be open-minded, accessible, strive for the greater good with no personal or career agenda, and encourage an atmosphere of responsiveness, responsibility and accountability throughout the district.
Parent	Certainly, there is a lot of politics that goes with the superintendent's job, but I would like the new superintendent to be honest with all parties--not just a slick politician.
Parent	Contemporary ideas regarding curriculum, technology and critical learning. An understanding of the need to reduce expenditures, lower school taxes, while continuing with excellent instructors of all courses. I would like to see a more serious approach to the instruction of music, art, & foreign languages. That is to say, not to consider these as 'electives' when they are actually, for some children, a true indicator of intelligence.
Parent	Don't get bogged down in petty, day-to-day issues that will be brought to your attention. PLEASE keep your energy focused on the students.
Parent	Excellent interpersonal skills and someone who can represent the district effectively though this complex and difficult time
Parent	First what I don't want in our next Superintendent. Let's not allow a politics as usual, egocentric Bully with a canned line for any occasion kind of person be our next Superintendent. We need a progressive, roll up your sleeves leader who knows how to create attainable goals and sees them through consensus building and transparency with the community. Someone who will make us proud our district. An effective communicator who our children can look up to because he/she is accessible and interested in our young people, their dreams and their challenges. This individual should first and foremost be a good person, someone we would want our kids to meet. Someone who asks all of us to dig deeper to demand better of ourselves, our schools and our kids. Someone who is strong yet sensitive, decisive, experienced as an educator, administrator not a political fixture. Someone who wants this position for the right reasons, a passion for greatness, humility to admit failure, poise and intelligence to make the decisions that will positively impact our District for decades to come.
Parent	First, I wouldn't put too much emphasis on the results of previous question. The categories are artificial and overlapping. I believe the superintendent's most important mission is to provide clear leadership focused on providing academic excellence for all students, including those at the top of the learning curve. S/he should not be threatened by parents who insist on the highest standards, and should be intelligent and confident enough to engage in meaningful discussion of the issues regarding education and finances. (I am not interested in someone spouting educational dogma.) The superintendent should be able to think critically and independently and be a true leader for the district. S/he should also be sophisticated about the use of data. I have heard a lot of well-intended calls for data-driven decisions with scant appreciation for the limits of data and the vast number of variables that make interpreting educational data difficult and sometimes very subjective. Finally, the superintendent should think about the long-term well-being of the district, financially and educationally, not just the short-term bottom line.
Parent	Fiscal responsibility is incredibly important. I am also concerned that the district not get so focused on test scores that all but the most high achieving students fall through the cracks.
Parent	Focus on academic excellence is what we need. Not someone mired in procedure or making sure everyone gets heard.
Parent	Foster attention to the student as whole person, not be too caught up in standards and teaching to the test...
Parent	He or she should be sufficiently knowledgeable about educational technology to know what technology can improve learning and what is simply a waste of money.

Parent	help us to create and strive for important long term goals for our schools and our children
Parent	Hire GOOD teachers and do not approve tenure for mediocre ones (there are some very good teachers in the district but also too many mediocre ones, an undesirable situation especially for a high-paying district as Irvington). Foster diversity!
Parent	Honest, hard working, person that can run the district again, recruit and retain the best to Irvington, pass budgets, negotiate contracts and re-establish a pro education board again.
Parent	honesty and integrity
Parent	I believe in this difficult financial time, the superintendent needs to be ready and willing to jump in and take on roles they may "wish" they could hire others to do. The education of our children needs to take precedence over everything else. I'd like to see an increase in scores and have our district put priorities on helping our children get into top colleges. This may mean hiring guidance counselors who have relationships with such colleges.
Parent	I believe priority should be given to any candidate who seems less concerned than others as to the size of the salary. I have noticed a pattern that the highest-paid superintendents often seem wind up being the most problematical.
Parent	I believe that for most of the characteristics that are needed - I was able to include them in the previous question. However, most superintendents can probably be described that way. In comparing similarly qualified candidates the final decision comes down to confidence and personality. I mean personality in terms of being able to communicate effectively and foster a positive work environment. We need a strong leader with visionary skills and the ability to implement them for our district. We need someone who leads and persuades in a positive way. Someone who understands that they have the educational experience that our school board does not. Someone who understands that while we are a great district there is room for improvement especially in ELA. Someone who is vested in listening to the parents and learning from them the weaknesses there may be and working to improve them, and who fosters an environment where parents are willing to come forward with issues. I hope that when it comes down to the final candidates that an experienced parent committee will be included in the interviewing.
Parent	I believe that most of the qualities listed on the previous page are valuable and necessary characteristics for a superintendent to possess. It is difficult to choose only 8.
Parent	I believe that our school district needs a leader who can demonstrate understanding and skill at managing our financial budget situation but at the same time who can understand what it takes to maintain the excellence of our school district.
Parent	I believe that we need a superintendent who can lead the district by being a liaison between the school community, Irvington community, and the school board. The superintendent has to be able to listen but also be able to argue his/her point of view without offending anyone.
Parent	I believe the number one priority for the new superintendent is to support whatever spending is necessary to provide the highest quality education possible for our children. The superintendent needs to stick up for our kids, and not cave into those in our community who just want to cut spending no matter what. His or her going in assumption should be that we need to keep raising the bar, not cutting back, so our kids get into the top colleges.....He or she should be the community's number one advocate for the children.
Parent	I believe the superintendent of a school district should be most involved with learning, and not the day to day functioning of the schools (that is what the other administrators are for). The superintendent should be concerned with the success of the students in this district - not just while they are in k-12, but also their success/preparation for/graduation rates from college. It seems education has forgotten to teach to mastery the basics, and many students are having to be remediated outside of school - this needs to be fixed in this district. Also, there needs to be better oversight of standardizing learning experiences across a grade, and if a teacher falls below a set standard, there must be help available to remediate that teacher, as it is the students who suffer. The superintendent must be responsible for ensuring equal and excellent learning by all students in the district.
Parent	I don't have any comments to add beyond the boxes I've checked above. I do want to add, however, that I sincerely hope that we will be casting the net wide and considering freshly graduated, qualified individuals anxious to make their mark in the world as well as current school directors and principals in charter, private and parochial schools... also, there is NO

	<p>WAY in a district of this size that this job should pay more than \$200k. If we can't, in this economic climate, find a competent individual to take this job for \$200k or less, we are definitely not trying hard enough.</p>
Parent	<p>I thank the Board for inviting suggestions. I believe that excellence in education has minimal correlation to expenditure. With declining school enrollment, why is there a steady increase in per pupil expenditure? A key characteristic should be "one who recruits and nurtures staff whose passion is for education rather than treating teaching as a source of personal wealth generation." The new superintendent should aim to reduce the administration staff by 25% , as I believe that there is a lot of unproductive fat in the current system.</p>
Parent	<p>I think a superintendent needs to do a few things competently, and does not need to be an educational expert or a visionary. I think the district should spend no more than \$150,000. I don't think we should spend a quarter million dollars again. A promising person who wants a chance would be fine, perhaps after a year as deputy to our interim. I also think this survey is pretty useless. I hope we aren't paying for it.</p>
Parent	<p>I think it would be wise to hire a former teacher for this position; someone who has walked in the footsteps of active educators. I sincerely believe Irvington needs an emotionally connected and trustworthy person for this position. Someone like Dr. Mo, who inspires everyone--from the teaching staff to students to parents and villagers. I have so much respect for him. Pls clone this fine man! That would make the search short and sweet. That said, our former Super (in my experience and that of so many parents) was well credentialed and yet lacked those crucial skills I speak of above. Bottomline, our schools don't need a corporate CEO persona. We need someone like Dr. Mo who has garnered quite rightly the respect and love of everyone. To be quite honest, short of getting Dr. Mo, I wouldn't mind sharing a Super with a nearby school district and putting part of that six figure salary back into our schools. Thank you for allowing our family to share our views on this important matter.</p>
Parent	<p>I think it's vitally important that we look outside the public sector as well as inside: we should seek potential candidates in private schools, parochial schools, and charter schools. Scarsdale has hired administrators from private schools; we can, too1. 2. I am keen to hire a superintendent who understands and supports parents' desire for their children to gain admission to selective colleges -- and to succeed at those colleges if they are accepted. College readiness should be the core goal for our district and should begin in Kindergarten. 3. I am keen to hire a superintendent who understands what a classical, knowledge-based, college preparatory education is, and who will commit to providing one for Irvington kids. 4. I'm also keen to hire a superintendent who will embrace Richard DuFour's continuous improvement model: a superintendent who takes responsibility for raising the achievement of all students at all levels **without** forcing parents to hire tutors. 5. I hope the next superintendent will end the practice of Irvington teachers moonlighting as tutors for Irvington students. 6. I would also like to see the district search for a leader who will institute a means of gaining feedback on the amount of tutoring and "help with homework" students are receiving -- with the goal of systematically reducing the *need* for tutors and "Extra Help." In other words, I'd like to see us search for a superintendent who believes in accountability, has a track record that demonstrates accountability, and will hold himself/herself and the staff accountable for results. 7. I'm strongly opposed to hiring anyone whose focus is the so-called "21st century skills." 8. I would like the superintendent to express and demonstrate a reverence for books and knowledge and to foster these values in children. 9. I would like the district to hire a superintendent who cares about home values. The superintendent should understand that SAT scores are intimately linked to home values and should do everything within his or her power to support and increase SAT/ACT scores. 10. Very important: the next superintendent should respect the values of the community. If the community wants the school to teach grammar, the school should teach grammar regardless of what the NCTE has to say on the subject. If the community wants the school to teach algebra in the 8th grade, the school should teach algebra in the 8th grade without asking permission from the NCTM. If the community wants the school to assign literature written prior to the 20th century, the school should assign literature written prior to the 20th century. In the best of all possible worlds, the next superintendent will not only respect our values, he or she will share them. Thank you</p>

Parent	I think the biggest thing is for the person to be a solid educator that's first priority should be the education of the children in the district. There are several people with strong opinions the new Superintendent needs to be able to put the children's best interest first and not to worry about making everyone happy.
Parent	I want a Super who is interested in looking beyond the current financial year for answers. I feel that ultimately we will need to merge districts or share costs with the other very small districts in our area. I want someone who will engage in issues in Albany (like unfunded mandates) to make our educational dollars go further.
Parent	I would favor someone who is not a data driven person. I have witnessed a moving away from engaging educational content to teaching to the tests during hte reign of the last super intendent. I would very much be in favor of reversing that trend and put fun and meaningful engagement of students back into the curriculum.
Parent	I would like a superintendent that is fair, open minded and creates a favorable environment for Irvington's teachers and administrators.
Parent	I would like a superintendent who just wants to make sure that our kids are getting the best teachers and best education possible and is willing to make sure that we retain the best teachers, regardless of seniority.
Parent	I would like our new superintendent to have great people skills in addition to excellent managerial skills. We need someone who will work well with all the groups who care about what happens in the school district. With the fiscal issues our district will face next year and, most likely, for years to come, we need a person who will put what's best for the children in the district first and fight (reasonably) for our schools.
Parent	I would like to see a kind, effective and knowledgeable peron take the position. They need to be great a communicator and leader.
Parent	I would like to see more respect for parents' opinions. In particular, I would like to give parents the option of removing their children from the portions of health classes that include sex education. Why do the schools seek to teach the virtues of tolerance and acceptance and not the virtues of chastity and self-discipline?
Parent	I would like to see someone who really digs into the budget to eliminate waste without cutting back on important programs for the children. Also - at the end of the day the Superintendent has to be the final word and be able to confidently exercise that power. As a district and a board there will almost never be complete agreement on everything. This person should be open to listening to all points of view but must be clear and decisive when the decisions are made
Parent	In addition to having all the qualities mentioned in the list, the ideal superintendent would be exceptionally articulate (not to be confused with glib), both in speech and in writing, and would express his/her thoughts in a cogent and yet inspiring manner often, to the students, faculty, administration, parents, and community. The superintendent should be a role model for the students and a trusted colleague for the faculty: someone whose decisions will be respected, even when they are hard to swallow.
Parent	In looking at the survey questions it was amazing to me to realize that the superintendent's presence and noticeability in the community is an important factor. When I would see Superintendent Matusiak in the neighborhood, and she would stop and talk to me and ask after my kids it was very important to me. Particularly as we had been on different sides of a contentious and public debate regarding renovation of the fields.
Parent	In the next superintendent the last thing I want to hear is "I am new and I don't want to rock the boat". I am not saying that the individual has to be like Joe Clark in the movie "Lean On Me" but I would prefer that to a "soft" person that wants to be liked. In other words, I want someone with balls. I once witnessed a student call Dr. Mosenthal "Scottie Mo" in front of Dr. Matusiak and she did not respond. This student was so disrespectful that Dr. Matusiak should have "flipped out" but when she did nothing, the message was clear to students and teachers that we have low standards.
Parent	inclusion
Parent	Irvington is an involved community. The superintendent can nurture that involvement for the betterment of the school and students. The superintendent will also be challenged by the

	economics of the day; union contracts will be a priority.
Parent	It is important that the superintendent promote a positive attitude of collaboration within the schools and community. In my years in Irvington (8 years, I now have 2 fourth graders), Irvington has been seen as the River Town that is angry and divided within the schools, as though teachers, parents, administrators and the board are all antagonistic toward one another and not working as a supportive whole who care about the same goals. Having a unified district led by a team building, respectful collaborator would be ideal.
Parent	It would be good to have someone who realizes that honesty is good, subterfuge is bad, accountability is key, and that dissension is not only not a bad word, but it is often necessary to exploring all sides of whatever the issues are.
Parent	It would be nice if we did not have to spend 250,000 dollars for a superintendent along with a fabulous retirement plan that none of us could even dream of. Is it possible for us to find a wonderful person who fits our needs without this?
Parent	It's important to me that the superintendent value the role of the arts in education and that he/she will ensure a strong program in music, theater and the visual arts.
Parent	Leader, astute, affable, knowledgeable
Parent	Long range planning is critical. This district seems to work almost on a brinkmanship level every year. We need someone with a vision for what the district can and should be accomplishing and this person also needs to know how to get the population aligned on what needs to be done to get there.
Parent	Must have classroom experience with a variety of different grade levels. Must be passionate about children and their educational needs.
Parent	Must listen to everybody involved in the decision making process - parents, faculty, staff, PTSA, IEF, etc...
Parent	My belief is that I have had enough of this in-fighting with the board members and the community. I want to live in a village where ALL work together. Not where there are board members that believe themselves to be "all important" with tunnel vision. I want a school community where it is obvious for all to see that there are board members that have the students and teachers and parents at the top of their lists - not their own tax bills.
Parent	NEEDS TO FOSTER TRANSPARENCY IN THE DISTRICT AND BE VISIBLE AND REACHABLE. should NOT FOCUS ONLY ON THE AP CLASSES BUT SHOULD KNOW HOW TO CREATE AND FOSTER PROGRAMS THAT SERVE ALL STUDENTS NOT JUST THE TOP 30%
Parent	Needs to have a clear educational philosophy as well as a well-thought through plan for implementing systems and operations that will hold all school employees accountable for their performance, particularly principals and teachers. Also, the school district needs far better day-to-day management. It is disorganized. Communication systems are poor between school system and parents. The website is difficult to navigate and uninformative.
Parent	neutral, level headed, personable, responsible, not only out there to make the money, eager to continue with the programs and courses at hand and eager to enhance them to the next level.
Parent	New Leader must look at the increasing difficulty that future financial obligations will place on taxpayers and consider creative and collaborative ideas to combine resources with neighboring communities, retain excellent staff with awareness of fiscal realities and seek to use facilities for multi-purposes, including educational institutes, etc., to use buildings as sources of resources. Also, think foreign language, chinese, etc. worth considering. Other initiatives for review include the disconnect between grades and school profile, . Need to seek greatness and be willing to battle union where teachers are incompetent (a few) who can't spell, and seem disengaged, Carefully and cleverly get rid of those that are not great, with great understanding of the need for respect for the labor movement, one that has created freedom of expression in academic circles. Perhaps change relationships so that we have them with institutions of greatness like Teachers' College, etc, rather than just Mercy. Expand the reach of our schools to NYC.
Parent	Our new superintendent needs to be able to establish his/her leadership role quickly and effectively, not only within the school community but in relation to the Bd. of Ed, especially with a divided Bd whose members do not necessarily share vision and goals.
Parent	Please address parent's rights in terms of sex education. Parents at this point have no say in

	what their children learn in school in an area where parents should have the largest involvement. I have experienced this personally with my children. Students and schools with the greatest amount of parental involvement are the more successful, I think you would agree. Why are parents disrespected in this most important area? I understand the NY law regarding this but shouldn't the schools as well as law makers be willing to involve the parents? Please let us look objectively at the research and start a discussion to solve this problem.
Parent	Reduce the reliance on testing, even if it means bucking the trend. It's such a waste of time and energy, and promotes skewed and counterproductive work habits and goals in the kids.
Parent	Required characteristics: 1) Strategic thinker who can evaluate the current state of our district's education system, present a simple vision that addresses primary deficiencies, enhances core strengths and delivers excellence measured in tangible results, and create a plan to deliver on that vision over a 3 year timeline. 2) Strong leader who holds themselves and others to an unwavering standard of excellence; demonstrates the following personality traits: engaged, committed, passionate, energized, infectious enthusiasm, authenticity. 3) Capable, hands-on manager who understands how to motivate, inspire and drive change at all levels of an organization; a cultivator of talent who thinks of people first, sets high expectations, measures performance and helps people grow to their full potential. 4) Detail-oriented person with meticulous attention to communication and follow through; this person should recognize that his/her primary customers are the students and their parents, and should strive for the highest level of customer service possible through multiple media channels.
Parent	See that respect for other people, including elders, class and lunch aides, and parents is incorporated in all learning. Less books to carry home. More recess time, even if means longer school day. We are after all talking about kids you know. Some how more emphasis or education about being resourceful, creative, and comfort with collaborating with others. This is how most companies or job creators begin. Thinks diplomacy is critical tool for future world peace.
Parent	She needs to be open to all kinds of good ideas. Needs to be a team player, be fair, needs to give credence to well-founded research even if at first glance it seems in conflict with what she "knows." She needs to expand the main street foreign language program, not see it collapse even further
Parent	Should be someone familiar with Westchester; should not be too far removed from actual teaching; should have high expectations of the children and teachers and principals; should be open to new ideas; should not be too much of a bureaucrat, but then again we don't want a Cathie Black !
Parent	Someone committed to the job for many years. My oldest child is in 3rd grade. She is on her third principal at Dows. Randy seems like he will stick around. Let's give him a boss who will stick around, too!
Parent	Someone who communicates clearly, openly, and often to keep constituents well informed - well developed communication skills without educationese is important a willingness to listen, understand, and process information prior to reaching situations
Parent	Someone who is not afraid to stand up for what they believe is right. Someone who has an understanding of or a sensitivity to the families of children with special needs. Someone who can take a fractured district and attempt to mend the breaks, without pandering to one side or another. Someone who understands the financial situation of the district, but also knows that sometimes money is well spent. Someone approachable and personable, who people would feel comfortable talking to. Someone with a great deal of experience and knowledge in not just administration, but in education, curriculum, and in actual time in a classroom.
Parent	Someone with a sophisticated background who appreciates the educational benefits of music and language skills. Someone who would have the courage to cut administrative costs before cutting any more programs from the kids!
Parent	strong curriculum with measurable value add
Parent	Superintendent has to be someone who is a top educator, administrator, financial expert, team leader and rock star in negotiating win-win situations with all stakeholders -- teachers, parents, children, community, local school board members and anyone else that is important in the world of education for Irvington children grades K-12.
Parent	Tenure is an issue that seems to be ignored, in terms of assessing current teachers. It often

	allows a complacency in existing teachers. I hear it from the students, as well as have observed it as a teacher. A teacher that cannot inspire is instantly recognized by the student, and affects performance/engagement of the student. Closer evaluation of college preparedness is needed in our schools. Our students are going to colleges feeling grossly unprepared.
Parent	The candidate should truly respect and value children, education, learning, and creativity. Understanding the many varied ways that children learn is vital. The candidate should possess a comprehensive background in education, and be open and progressive-minded. While the input of the school board, PTSA, Education Foundation, parents, and students is important, I believe that the educators and the superintendent have the knowledge and day-to-day experience most needed for the school district to thrive-- and should, therefore, lead with their knowledge and experience-- and not allow parents, school board members or any special interests to impede on decisions that ultimately require an educational background. With this in mind, the candidate for superintendent should have the intellectual ability and educational experience needed to effectively make these decisions.
Parent	The new superintendent should be able to identify and implement strong goals for academic achievement, while remaining critical of both the existing educational orthodoxy and the latest "new thing." He or she should have a track record of promoting excellence at all levels. He or she should be able to work in a small community with a highly educated parent population. He or she should also be able to implement procedures to remediate or remove underperforming teachers and staff members, and he or she should be able hire the best possible candidates for new positions. All of these qualities should be demonstrated through a strong track record in previous positions. The superintendent should be hired with a short-term contract, not the five-year contract of the previous superintendent. One other comment: I do not think surveys like this are an effective method to make personnel decisions.
Parent	The new superintendent should bring to Irvington a strong liberal arts curriculum that prepares students for serious college work. S/he should be an individual with strong academic credentials, a leader who has inspired teachers and administrators to do their best work.
Parent	The next IUSFD Superintendent should have the strength of character to be able to say "no" to community members, teachers, administrators, etc. when necessary and not buckle to pressure from competing constituencies. The primary goal should be the best possible education for our children while best using our limited resources.
Parent	The person we select should be a good fit for our community - our Irvington culture. We are a small school district with a lot of passionate people. We need someone who is confident but not imperious, knowledgeable about education yet flexible enough to throw out dogma, intellectually curious in addition to administratively savvy. This individual also needs to know how to work with a real variety of stakeholders - each of whom have their own definite ideas of what education means, and how much they want to pay for it. For this reason, we need a consensus builder and someone who perhaps isn't totally steeped in educational administrative culture. We also need someone who can earn the true respect of administrators and parents, and who has a vision (and can articulate it) of what education means beyond "No Child Left Behind" and standardized testing. We also need someone who has a fiscal vision, as our district, like many others, cannot sustain its spending into the unforeseen future without some drastic changes. Because of this, our next superintendent needs to be a good negotiator, able to get different constituencies to see beyond their own noses, to appreciate the bigger picture. We have not had someone like this in a very long time. Some members of our community just want to cut, cut, cut without understanding the effects of these actions - the next superintendent needs to be able to make a good, well informed case for keeping intact what we do well, improving upon that, and eliminating what is truly extraneous. And, though this is a minor point, at a time when our high school graduates are becoming more competitive in the college marketplace, we also need someone who understands that high school curriculum and students need to be supported as much as our elementary school students, whose parents often have the ear of administrators. Doing this effectively requires someone who can see beyond their own good press, and who has solid ideas of what an Irvington High School student should know and experience by the time they graduate.
Parent	The right candidate should be a forward thinker and a positive communicator. In my brief

	experience as an Irvington school parent, I have been extremely impressed by the culture at Dows Lane. I hope that spirit of care, nurturing and challenge can be sustained at all Irvington's schools.
Parent	The superintendent needs to be a good communicator and be responsive to not only the administrators, teachers, school district staff and Board of Education but to parents as well.
Parent	The superintendent should be able, willing and eager to work with the principals, who then work with their staffs, to plan and implement curriculum development and planning. There is no need in a district this small to have a special person just for this task.
Parent	The superintendent should operate separately from the Board of Ed. The superintendent should not feel it necessary to get approval for his/her ideas or proposed budgets from the BOE before speaking about them publicly. While working as a team is important, the roles of the superintendent and the BOE are not the same and the superintendent, as the head of our schools, should feel free to air ideas, proposals and suggestions without getting the okay from the BOE first.
Parent	The Superintendent, in addition to finding and retaining good staff, needs to address that there is non-productive non-performing staff/teachers that are poorly impacting our student's education and needs to address this as well.
Parent	The survey on the previous screen is a joke. It is full of management speak, and the choices are ridiculously overlapping. Everyone knows what is needed: Leadership in curriculum development. Improved relations with the Board (a difficult task). Maintaining an environment that teachers and other staff embrace, making Irvington a special place to teach. And of course, ability to manage scarce resources, and that of course is a current failure as evidenced by this very survey and the ridiculous waste of funds spent on hiring a consultant for one of the most desirable superintendent jobs there could be. Money wasted.
Parent	There are two particularly important issues that come to mind for our district that I believe can be directly and positively affected by our next superintendent. First, our current Board of Education is made up of all 1st-term members, so although in some ways qualified, they are quite inexperienced as a group. The next superintendent should be seasoned and experienced enough to mitigate that circumstance, as is our current Interim Superintendent. Second, given the diverse cultural, economic, and religious makeup of our community, the next superintendent should be able to engage, in as many ways as possible, a wide-ranging cross-section of Irvington school district residents and be highly skilled at providing realistic, straightforward and direct information in a proactive manner that reaches everyone in the community, a circumstance that is currently sorely lacking.
Parent	This District needs a financially astute individual who has proven abilities to work with a variety of stakeholders and build consensus to effect changes. The candidate has to have proven abilities to creatively manage limited resources while inspiring and achieving excellence. It can certainly be done but you have to look outside the box!
Parent	to not run the schools like a business and actually run school for the needs of the students and teachers. Have a good teacher moral in the district and actually be visible and known to parents and students.
Parent	Understanding that this is a business and job for an executive level individual, I would still expect the super to be able to effectively relate to children from elementary to high school. Our last Super was so uncomfortable around the students that one truly had to wonder if she had their interests in mind when making decisions or just looked at numbers and not people. I think that this was clear by the fact that her hires for the Principal Jobs at the Middle School and Elementary were so bad that one wondered if she had even bothered to check credentials. We need a super who is connected to the educational system through the students and teachers and who can set a tone that will be positive and provide inspirational leadership that will galvanize the principals, administration, teachers and student.
Parent	Utilize only proven methods of educating, eschewing fads until they have been validated empirically elsewhere, with an emphasis on college-prep type of curricula.
Parent	Vision - the super must have a clear vision about where she/he is going to do, wants to do. Their personal vision must be aligned with the current district vision and mission by moving one to the other or vice versa. To move forward without alignment will result in conflict. The newly aligned vision can then allow the entire district to move forward in concert and

	understand why/how decisions are made. They should be made as a reflection of that mutual vision. Fiscal Balance - a strong vision will allow the district and its leaders to make tough decisions with limited resources. We must invest dollars wisely. Do we really need the best football field in our league? That should be readily answered by careful reflection against our unified vision.
Parent	Visionary - Strategist - Sound Operator - Level headed with a proven track record Excellent Personal skills - Engaging - Motivating - Focused An Advocate for the district - and in touch on state/national level (with a firm eye on what's mission critical for the district) Encourage regular "Best Practice Sharing" across the district (outside the school year)
Parent	We are grateful to everyone on the committee for your care and your concern as we make this decision.
Parent	we need a strong leader who can improve the quality of the teachers and the curriculum.
Parent	We need intelligent leadership in our community and at our schools. The new person must have concern for the budget while continuing to demand the best for our children and striving for academic excellence. We must keep pace with 21st century demands on our children but be able to afford to live here. We need a fresh start and new perspective on how to effectively manage and pay our teachers and administrators. Teachers must be supported by the administration and the community but they have to teach at their best. We pay a lot of taxes to live here and we expect a superior education for our children in return.
Parent	We need someone that will bring the district together, the board, the faculty and the community. We need more transparency. I do not feel welcome in my children's schools. I don't feel that the community and it's talent is used to it's fullest potential in the school. The same people are used over and over again (grade parents, site committee members, pac committee members). I look at the school district as a service to the community. Most service companies get rewarded by customer satisfaction surveys. It would be great if a survey was sent out to the community each year to rate the administration, teachers, principal, committees, etc... Decisions would then be made based on the findings of these surveys. Some people do not feel comfortable getting up in front of everyone at a board meeting, also, as parents of small children we can not always stay out until 11 or 12pm to attend every board meeting...
Parent	We need someone who is able to make hard decisions and not take a poll every time something needs to be done.
Parent	While I believe it's important to hear everyone's opinion, sometimes decisions need to be made and this person needs to stand by their decision. The school district has lacked a leader; one that the community believes has the kid's best interest during these economic times, one that supports the staff, and one that the School Board trusts to do the job. Parents in this community "believe" they know what is best for kids but the reality is they have no idea EXACTLY what it takes to run a school district. Though there are a few who think they do. This person needs to be a LEADER. We have lacked this characteristic in this district. This person also needs to be a better communicator. We live in a technology world and the way the District communicates with the community is poor.
Parent	Why are we consulting and most likely paying an outside firm to find a superintendent? Part of America's problem is outsourcing to others what can and should be done locally.
Parent	Willingness to do the right thing rather than the "popular"thing. Ability to take a stand and not attempt to please evreryone all the time. Clearly communicate position and reasoning and stick to it.
Parent	Would like someone who's looking to stay at least 5 years. Person would have to be patient with some challenging parents and community members. Candidate would have to have tough skin, as the position appears to be sometimes a thankless job, with some parents who either feel entitled, or frequently express negative opinions in every situation.
Parent	You must NOT select someone from with the IUFSD We need someone with vision. Young, dynamic, diplomatic
Teacher	A background in education preferable, teaching experience included.
Teacher	courageous enough to stand behind and support teachers, caring and interested in individuals
Teacher	Honesty, integrity, flexibility, intelligent, teaching background, knows currciculum & state standards, be able to deal with a lot of personalities within the community, friendly, a people

	person Not someone who is good on the surface - we need someone who is very intelligent, taught in the classroom and gets along with all.
Teacher	I believe it is important to have a superintendent that had teaching experiences in various grade levels and has served as a building principal or district leader.
Teacher	Must have experience in multiple areas of education including instruction, administration and special needs.
Teacher	Someone who has taught in the classroom and has a wide knowledge of the needs of many different subject areas and students. Be sensitive to the demands placed on teachers by parents in our district and develop guidelines for responding appropriately, that both quickly address the issue and support the staff.
Teacher	We need a superintendent who will help us to have a clearer vision. This is a wonderful school district which needs leadership.

IRVINGTON UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent of Schools

Desired Characteristics

After considering input from parents, staff, students, and community via focus groups, individual interviews, community forums, and an online survey; the Board of Education of Irvington seeks a strong educational leader who possesses the following characteristics:

A strong decisive educational leader who exhibits the following strengths and capabilities:

- Vision and instructional leadership to help a high-performing district continue to improve
- Board leadership skills and training skills to help the Board become a high-functioning governance body
- Ability to build trust through open, straightforward, and frequent communication
- Commitment to academic excellence through aggressive, articulated planning, implementation, and evaluation
- Collaborative leadership style, to be able to develop and sustain an effective team with Board, administrators, staff, and community leadership working towards a common purpose
- Ability to work with both internal and external stakeholder groups to make decisions and resolve issues in a consensual manner

An experienced and capable manager who possesses the following professional skills:

- A systems approach to organizational and educational improvement
- A good communicator, possessing excellent speaking and writing skills
- A creative thinker with an open mind to new approaches
- Fiscal knowledge and experience, to be able to meet the challenge of balancing strong programming and budgetary limitations
- Ability to quickly come up-to-speed on New York State regulations and requirements

With regard to leadership experiences and accomplishments, the successful candidate will likely:

- Be eligible to be certified in the State of New York as a school superintendent
- Possess a strong academic background from a respected institution of higher education
- An individual with traditional teaching and leadership experience or alternative experiences that would prepare him/her to be an educational leader
- The Board is open to considering non-traditional candidates