



**MOKENA SCHOOL DISTRICT 159**  
**New Superintendent Profile**  
**September 20, 2017**

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**OVERVIEW**

The MOKENA SCHOOL DISTRICT 159 Board of Education wished to have a better understanding of the school community members' perceptions of the District as they began their search for a new Superintendent. The Board requested that *School Exec Connect* consultant Tom Madden gather information from constituents regarding the strengths and challenges of the District as well as the skills and attributes desired in the new superintendent. This report presents a brief summary of the comments of people who attended Focus Group meetings and Open Forums, and responded to the district's online survey.

In addition to interviewing Board members, Focus Group interviews were held with various employee groups, as well as open forums for community and staff. These meetings involved 111 individuals. Plus, an online survey was made available to staff and community members. More than 250 individuals took advantage of this online means of providing input.

The judgments of what should be included in this report are those of the consultant based on the statements heard throughout the data-gathering process, online survey results, and his experience with superintendent searches.

The Executive Summary presents the general findings of the Focus Group conversations as well as the online survey. The report will give direction to the Board of Education as it enters the next phase of the process. A final summary of the characteristics desired in the next superintendent is presented toward the end of this report and will provide the basis and filter that will be used by the consultant to screen candidates into and out of the process and also to recruit candidates.

In addition, the results of the online survey are presented at the end of this report.

## SUMMARY

### FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

STRENGTHS	CHALLENGES	QUALITIES/CHARACTERISTICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great staff-loyal, dedicated, caring</li> <li>• Small town atmosphere</li> <li>• Great community</li> <li>• Community and parent involvement</li> <li>• Low staff turnover</li> <li>• Wonderful kids</li> <li>• Great potential for growth and improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial monitoring</li> <li>• Morale</li> <li>• Referendum</li> <li>• Transparency with the budget and financial needs of the district</li> <li>• State test scores and readiness for high school</li> <li>• Image of the district</li> <li>• Competitiveness of district within the region</li> <li>• Moving forward guided by a focused, yet comprehensive vision</li> <li>• Consistent follow through on decisions, goals and plans</li> <li>• Ensuring proper use of technology in student learning</li> <li>• Coordination of the efforts of staff toward the achievement of intended goals/outcomes</li> <li>• Clear and focused communication within the district</li> <li>• Professional development for staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong, clear, and <u>proactive</u> communicator to all stake holders</li> <li>• Focused on Accomplishment, not just Activity, i.e. not a “box checker”</li> <li>• Strategic thinker and planner</li> <li>• Will follow through on plans, goals, decisions</li> <li>• True collaborator</li> <li>• Excellent people skills</li> <li>• Honesty, integrity, trustworthiness</li> <li>• Well rounded educational background</li> <li>• Visibility, Accessibility, and Approachability</li> <li>• Values and appreciates staff</li> <li>• Student centered</li> <li>• Respects the history and culture of the district and community</li> <li>• Keeps teaching and learning a top priority</li> <li>• Strong curriculum background</li> <li>• Good steward for tax payers</li> <li>• Financially Savvy</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Patient and willing to listen</b></li><li>● <b>Appreciates small town values</b></li><li>● <b>Treats everyone with equal respect</b></li><li>● <b>Compassionate</b></li><li>● <b>Flexibility</b></li><li>● <b>First name basis</b></li><li>● <b>Sees the big picture</b></li><li>● <b>Lead by example</b></li><li>● <b>Open minded</b></li><li>● <b>Know names and families</b></li><li>● <b>Will hold everyone accountable</b></li><li>● <b>Treat staff like professionals</b></li></ul>
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## **SUMMARY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS DESIRED IN THE NEXT SUPERINTENDENT**

The next superintendent should be a person who:

- 1. Easily mingles and interacts with all stakeholders, and knows the names of staff members.**
- 2. Will be visible and approachable in the school buildings as well as the community.**
- 3. Has the people skills, including empathy, needed to stand up to others without being confrontational, genuinely listen to others before making decisions and resolve conflicts in ways that are fair and in the best interests of the school district.**
- 4. Genuinely exhibits honesty, integrity, humility and a genuinely collaborative work ethic.**
- 5. Is passionate about the job, the district and the community.**
- 6. Will create and maintain a positive culture of high expectations for students, staff and board, and will hold people (including him/herself) accountable for expending their best efforts to ensure students are prepared for their high school experience and the district is academically competitive in the region.**
- 7. Is flexible and compassionate, treats everyone with equal respect and makes decisions based on what is best for the children of the district.**
- 8. An excellent and proactive communicator and strategic thinker.**
- 9. Will establish clear processes of communication, decision-making and follow through.**
- 10. Understands the difference between Activity and Accomplishment, and sees the big picture and how all the pieces should fit and work together to accomplish the intended outcomes of the district.**
- 11. Is a strong and established educational leader with a proven track record, and will provide focused guidance and follow through for the board and the staff.**

This report may be used in several ways:

- After reviewing the input from members of the District, the Board may modify and/or approve the attributes that will serve as criteria to be used as candidates are screened and interviewed.
- The Board should review this report to become informed about the collective thinking of different constituent groups regarding the needs of the District.
- The Consultant will use this report as the foundation for screening and interviewing candidates to determine those best suited for the superintendent position.
- The Consultant recommends that this report be available to candidates for a better understanding of the District and its issues.

Thank you to those who took the time to respond to the online survey or to attend one of the Focus Groups/Open Forums. The results of this report will assist the Board as it enters the next phase in its search for a new superintendent of schools.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Madden, Ed. D.  
*School Exec Connect Partner*