



LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

February 29, 2024

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) beginning in early February for the new superintendent of the Coupeville School District. The data contained herein was obtained from input the HYA consultants received from internal and external stakeholders of the Coupeville Community via an online survey, individual interviews, focus groups, and staff/community forums.

The survey, interviews, focus groups and forums were structured to gather information to assist the Coupeville Board of Directors in determining the primary characteristics desired and needed in the new superintendent. Additionally, HYA consultants collected feedback regarding the strengths of the District as well as current and future challenges.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in all methods of data gathering are listed in the following chart:

| Group | Personal interviews, focus groups, forums | Survey |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Students | 13 | 58 |
| Family Members | 4 | 158 |
| Community | 49 | 38 |
| Certificated Staff | 68 | 52 |
| Classified Staff | 41 | 29 |
| Administrators/ Supervisors | 3 | 3 |
| Total | 178 | 338 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 516 |

Summary of Stakeholder Input

All discussions were thoughtful, insightful, and very helpful. HYA associates conducting the focus groups, forums and interviews would like to thank the participants for giving so freely of their time and for the depth of the discussions regarding Coupeville School District during the sessions.

It should be emphasized that the data from focus groups and forums are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups. Items were included if they emerged as a significant theme or, in the consultant's professional judgment, they warranted the board's attention.

The survey results are based on research related to superintendent leadership standards. The survey addressed both district performance and desired characteristics of the superintendent in relation to the following areas: Vision and Values; Teaching and Learning; Community Engagement; and Management.

Strengths of the District

Data collected through personal contacts and survey responses provided overall an encouraging and optimistic view of the district. The following themes surfaced often and across these multiple data sources:

Students First
Supportive, Engaged Community
Rich History
Caring, Committed Staff
Youth Sports & Activities
Hope for the Future

There was a consistent message across multiple stakeholder groups that the District puts students first. Staff know every child and their family. They work hard to meet the needs of each and every student.

The community was also cited as a great strength and source of pride. The rich history, long-standing traditions, and scenic beauty make Coupeville stand out as a desirable place to live, work, and raise a family. The community was also described as welcoming, tight knit, and caring. Community support for schools and students has historically been strong with athletics and student activities mentioned as examples. Support for school funding ballot measures has also been historically strong but was also mentioned as a challenge. Significant work is

underway to ensure the community is well informed and understands the School District's current use of local tax dollars as well as needs to be addressed in the future.

One of the first responses consistently shared when asked about the strengths of the District was the caring and committed staff. A pride exists about the quality and commitment of the staff. Many staff spend their entire career in Coupeville and many were graduates of the District who returned to serve.

A large percentage of students participate in sports, clubs and other co-curricular activities. This not only promotes an important sense of belonging, but it is clear that there is great pride in representing this district and community. As an example, while we were in the district, a playoff basketball game filled the gym to capacity. We also witnessed a school-wide sendoff at the high school for two athletes going to State. These examples do not exist in most districts and is just another way that Coupeville is a special place to be!

Although there are many challenges facing the district, there was a consistent message of hope for the future.

The following five themes emerged from the survey as strengths of the district: Technology is integrated into the classrooms; district technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom; the district employes effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools; district schools are safe; and, facilities are well maintained.

Challenges and Issues Facing the District

No district, of course, is without challenges. The following emerged as common themes:

Anticipated Financial Shortfall
Engaging All Stakeholders in Budget Priorities
Trust & Staff Morale/Adversarial Bargaining
Aging Elementary School Facility
A Cohesive Leadership Team
Opportunities for Student Voice

A focus of concern reflected in every listening session is the district's current financial challenge. Perceptions heard from respondents ranged from a zero-fund balance to a \$1.3 million shortfall for the current fiscal period. Representatives of the Board are currently meeting with the Superintendent and Budget Manager to review the district's current status and budget forecasting utilizing current revenue and expenditure data.

The impact of financial insecurity is felt throughout the district. Concerns are expressed about how inevitable expenditure reductions may affect programs, employees, services, and most significantly students. Questions regarding the district's current financial status are impacting staff morale. Staff report that "Reductions of Staff" communications have become common in recent years. Job insecurity manifests itself in questions of how budget priorities are decided, skepticism of financial management, and a variety of targets for blame. Employee groups are critical of central office budget oversight, other employee group compensation, and program expenditure priorities. Collective bargaining has become adversarial in recent years.

Coupeville puts the needs of students first. There are many innovative programs across the district to meet the needs of diverse learners. In addition to the comprehensive K-12 on-campus program, the Open Den and Juvenile Detention Center Education Program serve critical needs in the community. Concern is often expressed that, to the degree possible, students should not bear the brunt of potential budget cuts.

A program that has become a subject for debate is the Farm2School food program. While the goals and benefits of the program are embraced by many there are lingering concerns about the cost of the program in a time of fiscal uncertainty. Both sides of the debate indicate that the true cost of the program is not well understood or acknowledged by the other. As budget reductions and priorities are discussed, it will be vital to "open the books" on actual costs, not only of this program, but all other programs across the district.

The district could be well served by engaging all stakeholders in the budget prioritization process. Currently there are questions about how fiscal decisions are made. Engagement provides an opportunity for greater understanding, increased trust, reduction of misconceptions, and a sense of community ownership in addressing the fiscal challenge. A model of stakeholder engagement was the recent work on the Strategic Plan. That work can be validated if used as a "touch stone" in budget prioritization.

A recent Study and Survey of school facilities has targeted the Coupeville Elementary School as a facility in need of replacement. While the current focus is on the operating budget, planning for a new elementary school needs to continue. The expiration of the previous bond on the middle & high school will lessen the impact of a bond on local taxpayers.

The selection of the next superintendent presents both a challenge and an opportunity to build an effective and cohesive governing body for the district. While relatively new in their roles, the current board is made up of hard-working, dedicated directors who have availed themselves of leadership training offered through their statewide affiliations. Thoughtful transition planning with the new superintendent can be beneficial to the leadership of the district.

Among the many "bright spots" of the district are the students themselves. They are described as the center of the community. Many respond that Coupeville students are courteous, compassionate, talented, and successful in their academics and activity programs. Student respondents in our listening session shared numerous accolades, as well as, issues affecting

their life in the Coupeville schools. Opportunities for greater student voice should be explored and may be an underutilized resource as the district implements their Strategic Plan.

These challenges are in no way insurmountable. With a strong Board setting the direction; strong leadership throughout the organization; clarity, coherence, and accountability across the system; and continued care and focus on what matters most – the students, the Coupeville School District will be well positioned to thrive.

Desired Characteristics

Participating stakeholders were asked to name the desired characteristics for the next superintendent of the Coupeville School District. The following summary of personal characteristics, attributes, skills, and experiences reflects input gathered:

DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS

Superintendent

Coupeville School District

Love of Children

Honest/Transparent

Builds Trust & Morale

Visionary

Genuine/Authentic

Knowledge/Experience - Teaching & Learning

High Expectations with High Support

Good Listener/Communicator

Collaborative and Inclusive Team Builder

Skilled Problem-Solver

Strategic Thinker and Leader – Data Driven

Engaged in the Community - Visible & Approachable

Ethical/Professional

Financial Knowledge & Experience

Courageous - Ability to make tough decisions

Committed to Coupeville

Inspires

We would like to thank all the participants who attended focus group meetings, individual interviews, or participated in the survey.

We found this to be an amazing school district and community with a bright future ahead. Thank you for the opportunity to serve!

Respectfully submitted,

Kris

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Attachment: [Coupeville School District Survey for Superintendent Search](#)