



Florida School Boards Association SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

COMMUNITY FORUMS and FOCUS GROUPS

Date: February 5, 2025

Location: Ponte Vedra High School

Facilitators: FSBA Superintendent Search Team: Messina, Rice, Gaudreau, Pace

Participants: 25 students, Members of the Super SAC

1. List the strengths and those areas of the school district that the next superintendent will need to understand and continue to support.
 - Integration of student leadership programs
 - Supporting Ace and IB programs, CTE academies, advanced courses and variety of course offerings
 - Transparency of the superintendent
 - Maintain school spirit
 - Phone policy for students
 - Safety and security initiatives
 - School traffic patterns
 - Super SAC and receptiveness to student feedback
 - Optimism, persistence, and willingness to help students
 - Retake policy for summative exams for scores below 85%
 - Responsiveness of district staff to student inquiries
 - Proactive communication
 - Strong instructional staff, high quality teachers
 - Graduation rates
 - Pride in the work of students and adults/strong sense of ownership encouraged
 - Guidance program
 - Character counts
 - Ability to create new clubs and activities
 - Open to feedback and constructive criticism
 - Strong reputation of the school district in the community and across the state
 - Connections between adults and kids
2. What are the most critical needs and challenges of the school district that the next superintendent will need to understand and address?
 - Teacher pay
 - Improper placement of students academically and pushing advanced classes when students aren't prepared
 - Execution of character chats is ineffective (videos)



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- Maintaining and improving facilities like bathrooms and stairwells
 - Quality and cost of school lunches
 - College and career counseling needs to be stronger and more accessible to all students
 - Perpetuation of separation of student groups by the school
 - Disparities among school campuses with policies, facilities, programs, reputation, tardy policies, and bathroom policies
 - Funding for fine and performing arts program inconsistent from school to school
 - Inconsistent teacher quality
 - Targeting of students in discipline procedures
 - Limited student parking
 - Unkept outdoor areas and lawn maintenance
 - Promotion of advanced credit options like dual enrollment, career academy, etc.
 - Prioritization of academies over sports
 - Student dress code
 - Financial literacy
 - Multiple communication platforms are confusing and inconsistently used by teachers
 - Teacher and counselor shortage
 - Counselor's time is spent on academic needs rather than social emotional needs
 - Lack of advertising of SEL resources
 - Need for adult and life skills classes
 - More adult and student engagement is needed
 - Need more opportunities for student networking across the district
 - More district presence on campus is needed, including the superintendent
 - Inconsistent student ID policy
 - More funding for athletics and more evenly distributed
 - More time for clubs and activities during the school day
 - Negative impact of non-weighted elective courses on GPA, such as courses in the arts, ROTC, etc.
 - More awareness of opportunities to provide student feedback and student voice
 - Discouragement of working students; they need more support
 - Lack of JROTC programs
 - Need more support staff (custodians, etc.)
 - More internship opportunities for clubs and CTE
3. What personal qualities, professional experience, and other skills should the Board look for in the next superintendent?
- Educational background/experience— 16
 - Direct involvement and engagement with schools - 12
 - Presence and connection. among students - 11



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- Cultural awareness of diverse students - 7
- St. John's County experience, at different level levels of responsibility in the organization (teacher, principal, etc.)- 6
- Financial awareness/understanding - 6
- Transparent - 5
- Relationships with local legislative officials - 4
- District focused over individual school focused - 4
- Connections with the community - 4
- Responsive - 4
- Problem solver - 3
- Kind, caring and understanding - 3
- Nurturing, genuine mentor - 3
- Enjoyed by students and teachers - 2
- Approachable - 2
- Strong public speaking and communication skills - 2
- Integrity - 2
- Prioritizing student needs over school accountability - 2
- Respectful - 1
- Charisma - 1
- Accepts constructive criticism - 1
- Strong leader - 1
- Aware of student issues and concerns- 1
- Confidence - 1
- Consistency
- Innovative
- Open minded
- Optimistic/positive mindset
- Social media awareness

Additional notes received:

Separation between church and state (diverse population requires respect to all cultures, religions, etc.)

Education on the real effects and uses of drug and firearms. Many students are unknowledgeable about the actual effects and long-term risks for drugs. Many students also do not know how to safely operate some weapons, which can help understand their impact and keep them safe while using them.