

LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

PARKWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Chesterfield, MO

October 9, 2024

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the findings of the *Leadership Profile Report* conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates¹ for the Parkway School District² Board of Education³ as one of the initial steps in its search for a new Superintendent. During September of 2024, an online survey was conducted via the District website from September 9 through September 28, to assist the Board in clarifying the criteria it would seek in the new Superintendent of the Parkway School District. The data contained herein were from the survey and from individual interviews with seven Board Members and with individuals/groups identified by the Board between September 5 and September 17.

Through this process, the consultants attempted to identify the personal and professional qualities desired in the Superintendent, as well as the skill sets necessary to build upon what constituent groups valued (strengths), while addressing current and emerging issues (challenges) which the District might be facing. It is anticipated that this data also will be useful to candidates interested in the Parkway School District superintendency, as well as to the new Superintendent once the individual is selected for the position.

Between 1250 and 1393 individuals provided input during the process, as reflected in the following chart. It should be noted that seven current Board Members participated in individual interviews and those same seven completed the survey as Board Members. The number of respondents from the other groups that participated in both phases of the process is not known with certainty.

Group	Interviews/Groups	Survey
Board	7	7
Administrators	29	43
Community	25	26
Operations Staff	17	98
Parents	26	662
Teachers/Certified	37	287
Students	9	127
Total	150	1250

PARTICIPATION

The responses provided through the interviews, focus groups and survey are listed in two places, under *Consistent Themes*, which can be found beginning on page 4 and under *Comments from Interviews, Focus Groups and Open Forums*, which begin on page 11 of the longer version of this document. We have included a draft of a possible leadership profile on page 10.

¹ Referenced in this Report as HYA.

² Referenced in this Report as School District or District.

³ Referenced in this Report as Board.

The data contained in this report were gathered from Board-identified or self-selected stakeholder respondents as outlined on page 1 of this report. Therefore, it should be emphasized that the data are not from a purely scientific sampling. However, in almost all cases the responses were prioritized by the individuals and the groups from which they were gathered. In addition, prior to drawing any conclusions about consistent themes or recurring ideas, the consultants tabulated the occurrence of the Strengths, Challenges and Leadership Qualities within and among the reference groups chosen to participate in this study. So, it can be safely said that there is certainly a rigorous method for bringing these conclusions to your attention and consideration, when selecting the desired characteristics for the next Superintendent of Schools for Parkway School District. Items are included from the interviews, focus groups and/or survey, if in the consultants' judgment, they were repeated with sufficient frequency thus indicating a pattern and/or warranting the Board's attention.

The consultants would like to thank all who participated in the interviews, focus groups and/or who completed the online survey, for their insights and candor. A note of thanks to all staff members who assisted in facilitating our time in the District, with special thanks to Superintendent Marty, Nikki Stover, Elisa Tomich, Annie Dickerson and other associated staff for their extra efforts in making us feel welcome, managing the necessary arrangements for our meetings, assistance at the meetings and follow-up in the District. Their care and thoughtfulness were outstanding.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelvin Adams
Peter Flynn
Chris Nicastro
Associates, HYA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey was completed by 1243 stakeholders. The largest group of respondents was **Parents** representing more than half (53.3%) or 662 all respondents. Following Teachers/Certified Staff with 287 participating or about 23.1% of all that completed the survey. The third largest participant group was 127 **Students** or about 10.2% of respondents. The rest of the respondents were 98 Operations/Support Staff, 43 Administrators and 26 Community Members. The Board Members took the survey manually so that the sixth available category could be used by students.

Stakeholder Group Responses to Online Survey		
	Frequency	Percent
Administrators	43	3.5
Community Members	26	2.0
Operations/Support Staff	98	7.9
Parents	662	53.3
Students	127	10.2
Teachers/Certified Staff	287	23.1
Total	1243	100%

All seven Board Members completed the survey, and their results are also described in the paragraphs below.

SURVEY RESULTS

State of the District

Regarding the State of the District, the respondents were asked to choose from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Disagree or Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree about the State of the District overall and in nineteen specific areas. The nineteen statements were in four categories: Vision and Values-VV, Teaching and Learning-TL; Community Engagement-CE; and Management-M. The following statements were perceived to be district strengths (based upon the percentage of respondents who selected either Agree or Strongly Agree) when responses were combined for all stakeholders responding to the online survey:

- **Technology is integrated into the classroom. (TL)**
- **The district employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools. (M)**
- **The District provides a clear, compelling shared vision for the future. (VV)**
- District Technology infrastructure is sufficient. (M)
- **District schools are safe. (TL)**

The Board (at least 6 of 7) chose 4 of the same top strengths as were chosen by the overall group and they are in bold above. In addition, all 7 of the Board Members chose the following as strengths:

- The district is heading in the right direction
- The district has high standards for student performance.
- The district provides a well-rounded educational experience
- Students are on track to be college and career ready.
- The district engages the community as a partner to improve the school system.
- The district is fiscally responsible
- Employees are held accountable to high standards.

Superintendent Profile

The twelve superintendent competency statements were in the same four categories as used in the State of the District: Vision and Values-VV, Teaching and Learning-TL; Community Engagement-CE; and Management-M.

Using the online survey, the top-rated competencies respondents selected overall for a Superintendent were:

- **Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, administrators and school districts. (CE)**
- Recruit, employ and retain effective personnel throughout the District. (M)
- **Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel. (VV)**
- Provide transparent communication.(CE)
- **Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population (TL)**

Three of the top-rated competencies by **Board Members** selected for a Superintendent **were the same as three of the five** overall choices above and they are indicated in bold.

In addition, one other competency was selected overall by the Board and is shown below:

- **Be visible throughout the district and actively engaged in community life.**

Percentages of respondents overall who selected each item, as well as percentages by stakeholder group, are presented in a separate document.

CONSISTENT THEMES FROM LISTENING SESSIONS

DISCLAIMER: The consultants were not in a position to verify the accuracy of those things that were said by individuals or attested to by groups who participated in the community engagement sessions. In those instances where individuals were identified by name or position, the consultants made note of the comment, although it was not repeated in this report, if it reflected negatively upon the individual.

Strengths

On the following pages you will see innumerable strengths mentioned about the District, its community and its people. Noteworthy among these items is a cluster that could be labeled **Diversity**. The district has a growing diversity of students, ethnically and economically in a rather densely populated area. The district was noted as having the ability to create space, honor and celebrate its multi-cultural and diverse student population, including welcoming students with special needs with empathy and integration. The differences represent different languages, religions and races and this strength was mentioned across all seven groups.

Secondly in frequency among those aspects of the District that we heard about from participants was the **Community**, and particularly we were told of the connections and relationships between the schools, the district and the community in the form of support and partnerships, especially at critical times like bond issues. The community is a desirable, safe place to live that is child and family focused and is sometimes referred to as a 'destination district.' Specifically, we were apprised of parental involvement making enhancement of programs possible and of alumni becoming staff. Community attention and support in the area of mental health was also noted. This strength rose to the top in six of the seven groups.

Next in frequency, we heard about the **Staff** of the district. People described generally and with examples the excellence of administrators as well as highly qualified staff support levels that are helpful, dedicated, talented and skilled. Teacher retention, a strong Central Office and the effective relationships between staff, the superintendent and the Board were shared with us as examples of staff strength.

We were informed about the outstanding **Academic and Student Success** that is reflected in graduation percentages, low dropout rates, and high ACT and test scores. Multiple opportunities for students to individually excel, high expectations and resources were mentioned as significant strengths. Extra and co-curricular options and good student performance have led to Gold Star Awards from the state of Missouri and national Blue Ribbon awards.

We frequently heard about the good stewardship of school district funds, allowing for people to characterize the district as **Financially Sound**. The results came in the form of a relatively low tax rate, a positive fund balance and a balanced budget.

Finally we heard of the stability of the **Board** that is noted as cohesive, setting excellent policies and a tone of cooperation without controversy, while working in a collaborative relationship with the superintendent.

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

The good news about the list of challenges is that it is shorter than the strengths and from what we heard there is more good news in the belief voiced by many of the participants that the District has recognized issues and in some areas is developing the capability to address them.

So, let us begin by writing about something that was described to us as a reality of the age of the district and that is the need to continue to address the district's **Facilities**. Many are in need of continual repair, upgrades and in some cases, people believed that new buildings will be needed in the near future through a long range planning approach. (This large undertaking may be coupled with the need to assess whether the school age population is shifting into different parts of the district.)

Second, related to the top strength of the district, **Diversity**, we were told about the urgency of meeting the needs of all students as the district embraces its diversity. Eminent in these conversations was the need that was expressed in our sessions about developing a staff that begins to look more like the students in its diversity. We were also told of the emerging need to address what appear to be inequities between schools and classrooms.

Third, we heard about a challenge related to a strength area and that was of **Staff Shortages**. People spoke of the need to stay competitive, retain people in operations with competitive pay, and by expressing value in positions through listening and collaborating with employees. Staff shared with us the need to increase and improve vertical communication both ways.

Finally, we were told of what was perceived as some lack of **Educational Consistency and Curriculum Outcomes** between schools, books, platform and curriculum. Included in these conversations was the changing role of education including mental health services and the autonomy of schools to determine what gets taught when and where.

We realize that these challenges raise questions and should not be acted upon without further exploration and examination.

Desired Characteristics of the Next Superintendent

Later in the longer form of this document you will see listings of the strengths, challenges and leadership characteristics mentioned by the various groups from which we heard. On the following pages, we have listed the desired qualities for the next Superintendent in order of priority under the seven types of groups. A table format is used at first so that you can look at all seven groups and their priorities at once, side by side.

The next table shows a listing of the Characteristics of the next Superintendent in the areas of **attributes, expertise and style** items that were mentioned most frequently by all the groups combined.

Finally, we have included the draft profile which uses the highlighted items--those most desirable characteristics mentioned by the seven categories of people based on the individual and group discussions. The draft profile also incorporates all of the most frequently mentioned items from the online survey, which in most cases were the

same as those most frequently selected items by Board Members.

HYA will use all of its resources to assist the Board in finding candidates who will possess most of the characteristics desired by the respondents and included in the Leader Profile of Desired Characteristics adopted by the Board. This will allow the next superintendent to build upon the District’s reputation and collaboratively work with the Board in guiding the district to its next level of excellence.

Desired Characteristics Listed by Categories of Respondents

After naming all of the desirable traits for the next leader of the Parkway School District through brainstorming in group discussions or individual interviews, we asked the individuals to identify those qualities that were most *mission critical* for this school district at this point in its history. In the table below, are the leadership qualities that rose to the top in our discussions with various people over the course of four days. **Items in bold were mentioned by more than two categories.**

<u>Administrators</u>	<u>Board</u>	<u>Community</u>
<i>Personal Attributes</i>	<i>Personal Attributes</i>	<i>Personal Attributes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovator ● Strategic Thinker ● Student Focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovator ● Strategic Thinker ● Student Focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovator ● Calm ● Professional
<i>Expertise/Experience</i>	<i>Expertise/Experience</i>	<i>Expertise/Experience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicator ● Diversity ● Different Levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicator ● Diversity--Larger District ● Fiscal Leader ● Team Builder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knows Parkway ● Communicator ● Superintendent-proven
<i>Administrative Style</i>	<i>Administrative Style</i>	<i>Administrative Style</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visible & Approachable ● Decisive ● Collaborative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visible & Approachable ● Works well with Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visible & Relatable ● Participates ● Team Builder

<u>Operations Staff</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Certified Staff</u>
<i>Personal Attributes</i>	<i>Personal Attributes</i>	<i>Personal Attributes</i>	<i>Personal Attributes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● People oriented ● Student focused ● Big Picture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovative ● Inspiring ● Student Focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging ● Open Minded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovative ● Empathetic ● Mission driven
<i>Expertise/Experience</i>	<i>Expertise/Experience</i>	<i>Expertise/Experience</i>	<i>Expertise/Experience</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Different Levels ● Communicator ● Large Diverse District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversity ● Facility ● Communicator ● Large Diverse District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher ● Diversity Experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All levels--Large District ● Team Builder ● Communicator
<i>Administrative Style</i>	<i>Administrative Style</i>	<i>Administrative Style</i>	<i>Administrative Style</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visible & Approachable ● Collaborative ● Decision Maker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visible & Approachable ● Collaborative ● Team Builder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visible & Accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approachable & Visible ● Collaborator ● Team Builder (Relationships)

Most Desired Characteristics Mentioned Most Frequently By the Seven Categories of People Above:

Personal Attributes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovator-5 • Student Focused-4 • Strategic Thinker-2 	Expertise and Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicator-6 • Diversity-5 • Large District-4 • Different Levels-3 	Administrative Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible & Approachable-7 • Collaborative-4 • Team Builder-3 • Decision Maker-2
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**The numbers next to the highlighted items indicate the number of categories of respondents that mentioned these items as priorities.*

Summary of Input

Most Desired Qualities from the Surveys and Listening Sessions

Top overall competencies selected on the Online Survey and the survey of the Board:

- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, administrators and school districts. (CE)
- Recruit, employ and retain effective personnel throughout the District. (M)
- Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel. (VV)
- Provide transparent communication.(CE)
- Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population (TL)
- Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life. (VV)

From the listening sessions

Attributes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovator • Student Focused • Strategic Thinker 	Expertise and Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicator • Diversity • Large District • Different Levels 	Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible & Approachable • Collaborative • Team Builder • Decision Maker
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Summary

Desired Characteristics of Superintendent Parkway School District

After receiving input from administrators, community members, faculty, parents, students, and operations staff, the Parkway School District Board seeks an experienced leader who has had successful experience on **different levels** in a **larger, diverse school district**, demonstrating a track record of success with **student achievement and fiscal responsibility** to be its next superintendent.

The Board seeks someone who is an effective **communicator** and **innovator**, who listens carefully while **collaboratively** developing and implementing the Board's vision, and then articulates and advocates for that vision for the school district and its communities.

In addition, the selected candidate will be a **visible and approachable** member of the community and the District, who is present in schools and community, uses exemplary people and critical thinking skills, and **builds teams**--especially with the Board of Education.

The next superintendent of Parkway Schools will work collaboratively with the staff and community as a **strategic thinker** who reflects a **student focus**. The Board of the Parkway School District is looking for a **decisive** person, who will live and become involved in the community, lead in **diversity** related to **human resources** and **student achievement** and is committed to staying with the district for a significant tenure.

Further, the Parkway School District seeks a Superintendent with professional integrity who has a record of demonstrating the following competencies:

- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, administrators, and school districts.
- Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District.
- Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel.
- Provide transparent communication.
- Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population.
- Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life.

Approved by Parkway School District Board on October 9, 2024.