

Hastings Area Public Schools - ISD 200
School Board Meeting Agenda

Monday, April 24, 2023
Special Meeting of the Hastings School Board
Middle School Media Center

- I. **Call Meeting to Order**
 - a. Attendance
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Motion to approve the agenda/table file**
- IV. **Items for Discussion**
 - a.
 - Review stakeholder input information
 - Review Superintendent search timeline and process
 - Review and discuss protocol and process for superintendent position interviews
 - Develop first-round interview questions, interview schedule, and procedures
 - Discuss, decide, and schedule the steps necessary for the rest of the hiring process
- V. **Adjournment**

Hastings Public Schools Superintendent Search

Stakeholder Engagement Superintendent Search Survey

Overview: On March 29, 2023, the “Hastings Public Schools Superintendent Search Survey” was made available to the public both online and in hard copy. The survey remained open for respondents until April 10, 2023, and a total of 701 people completed the survey (695 English, 6 Spanish).

RESULTS: Survey takers were asked to identify the role that best reflected the basis for their responses. The categories selected by the survey takers are provided below.

- 60.89% of respondents selected “Parent/Guardian”
- 21.35% of respondents selected “Staff Member”
- 11.89% of respondents selected “Community Member”
- 3.01% of respondents selected “Other”
- 2.58% of respondents selected “Student”
- 0.29% of respondents selected “Business Owner/Agriculture”

Areas of Expertise: Those who responded to the survey were also asked to identify the top six desirable areas of expertise they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted areas of expertise are listed below in order of preference.

- Budget and Finance
- Collaborative Leadership
- Curriculum Development/Evaluation
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- School Reform (i.e. Strategic Planning, etc.)
- Personnel Management

Specialized Skills: The top six specialized skills the new superintendent must possess were identified in the survey results as shown below.

- Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner in dealings with the School Board, staff, and community
- Is visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community
- Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders
- Develops and directs an effective leadership team
- Is a “people person” with proven abilities in human relations and communications
- Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork



Previous Experience: Respondents were asked if previous superintendent experience is important. Based on the results, 43.46% of the respondents selected “Yes,” while 56.54% of the respondents selected “No.”

Personal Characteristics: Survey takers were also asked to identify the top six personal characteristics they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted personal characteristics are listed below in order of preference.

- Honest and ethical
- Effective communicator
- Problem solver
- Transparent
- Consistent
- Personable

The following tables summarize the stakeholder survey’s quantitative data by respondent category:

TOP SIX AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Parent/ Guardian (425)	Staff Member (149)	Community Member (83)	Other (21)	Student (18)	Business Owner /Agriculture (2)
Budget and Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Collaborative Leadership
Collaborative Leadership	Budget and Finance	Budget and Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Cultural Competence	Student Testing Results and Achievement
Curriculum Development / Evaluation	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Personnel Management	Support Services	Technology
Student Testing Results and Achievement	School Reform (i.e., strategic planning, etc.)	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	School Reform (i.e., strategic planning, etc.)	Collaborative Leadership	Declining/Increasing Enrollment
School Reform (i.e., strategic planning, etc.)	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Declining / Increasing Enrollment	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Budget & Finance	School Facility Oversight
Personnel Management	Public Relations	Student Testing Results and Achievement	Public Relations	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



TOP SIX PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Parent/ Guardian (425)	Staff Member (149)	Community Member (83)	Other (21)	Student (18)	Business Owner /Agriculture (2)
Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical
Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Problem Solver	Problem Solver	Transparent
Problem Solver	Problem Solver	Problem Solver	Effective Communicator	Confident	Effective Communicator
Transparent	Personable	Transparent	Transparent	Effective Communicator	Personable
Consistent	Transparent	Consistent	Personable	Creative	Problem Solver
Resourceful	Consistent	Personable	Consistent	Sense of Humor	Consistent

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

Parent/ Guardian (425)	Staff Member (149)	Community Member (83)	Other (21)	Student (18)	Business Owner /Agriculture (2)
Yes: 38.57%	Yes: 57.55%	Yes: 50.00%	Yes: 63.16%	Yes: 29.41%	Yes: 00.00%
No: 61.43%	No: 42.45%	No: 50.00%	No: 36.84%	No: 70.59%	No: 100.00%



TOP SIX SPECIALIZED SKILLS

Parent/ Guardian (425)	Staff Member (149)	Community Member (83)	Other (21)	Student (18)	Business Owner /Agriculture (2)
Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	A "people person" with proven abilities in human relations and communications	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community
Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	A "people person" with proven abilities in human relations and communications	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community	Uses curriculum and other resources to improve test scores
Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	A "people person" with proven abilities in human relations and communications
Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Possesses a strong academic background with experience in curriculum	Understands the effects of poverty on student learning and achievement	A visionary, creative thinker
Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups of stakeholders	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Knowledge of and experience with equity leadership challenges and opportunities	Follows the School Board's chosen educational philosophy which reflects the community's values
Experience in implementing educational priorities	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	Delegates authority while maintaining accountability	A "people person" with proven abilities in human relations and communications	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Possesses a strong academic background with experience in curriculum



Additional comments: Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions in the survey and on average, 475 of the 701 respondents provided additional commentary. These results were then reviewed by MSBA representatives, with reappearing ideas identified and grouped into themes. These themes are highlighted below for each of the questions.

The stakeholder survey asked the following four questions:

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Hastings Public Schools today?
2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?
3. What does the new superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?
4. Additional comments.

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Hastings Public Schools today?

<p>Stakeholders of the Hastings School District appreciate the quality and variety of educational programs and extracurricular activities offered to the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Success with academics, many students winning awards at the high school.</i> • <i>The specific changes being implemented at the Elementary level to improve literacy and social/emotional educational curriculum.</i> • <i>Students are getting a good education provided by people that truly care about them.</i> • <i>Additional support positions added in the wake of post covid challenges.</i> • <i>Students are receiving a quality education.</i> • <i>Access to advanced curriculum for students self-motivated to succeed.</i> • <i>The work being done to diversify teaching methods to meet students at all levels of learning.</i> • <i>Still maintaining a better than state-average student competency rate.</i> • <i>My kids are getting the extra help they need.</i> • <i>Solid education system and extra-curriculars at the high school.</i> • <i>Fantastic early childhood/special education.</i> • <i>Test scores are increasing (above state average).</i> • <i>Strong academics plus additional programs keep the students interested and involved.</i> • <i>Focus on education and improvement.</i> • <i>High graduation, aligned to one strategic vision.</i> • <i>We love all of the opportunities in the schools. Our kids will have a well-rounded future with all of the opportunities currently available.</i> • <i>We have many great programs and students are successful.</i> • <i>Strong music and athletic programs.</i> 	<p>228 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Show choir, marching band and music programs in general have been excellent experiences for our kids. Academics seem to be strong.</i> • <i>Good and diverse extracurricular programs.</i> • <i>Opportunities for students. Music program, foreign language, extracurricular opportunities.</i> • <i>Extracurricular opportunities, earning college credit, industrial tech & the arts, and much more!</i> • <i>Lots of strong academic programs and opportunities.</i> • <i>Great extracurricular activities. The college in the schools programs is extremely beneficial to our high school students. The literacy focus in the elementary has proven to be very helpful.</i> • <i>Lots of opportunities for students to be involved in sports and extracurricular school activities.</i> • <i>Students are engaged and are being challenged at just the right levels, especially in elementary school English/Language Arts.</i> • <i>I feel there are a lot of great opportunities for the students. I think it is easy and affordable for the kids to be involved in extracurricular activities to keep them involved.</i> • <i>Our diverse offerings for students and our music programs.</i> • <i>Engagement in activities and athletics is high, and a good portion of students who participate in these activities are also academically sound and stable.</i> • <i>The music program is top notch and so is our sports program.</i> 	
<p>The dedicated, talented, and hard-working staff are deeply appreciated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff are dedicated to supporting student needs, academic and other, including mental health.</i> • <i>All of the teachers I have had the pleasure to deal with have been great.</i> • <i>The teachers seem to really care about education and the students they teach.</i> • <i>The staff in Hastings Public Schools are amazing! They go above and beyond in all areas and all levels.</i> • <i>We have some amazing staff. I would love to help them to feel how amazing and special they are to us, and how much we appreciate all their hard work.</i> • <i>Staff at all three levels seem to genuinely care for their students.</i> • <i>We have talented teachers and staff. This district has very dedicated employees.</i> • <i>There are so many teachers that care and want the best for their students.</i> • <i>There are many wonderful teachers and staff members who work hard and really have students' best interests in mind.</i> • <i>We have high quality, dedicated educators who consistently go above and beyond to serve our students and families.</i> • <i>Relationships teachers are able to build with their students.</i> • <i>The teachers care about the students</i> • <i>There are staff that truly care about the kids.</i> • <i>The teachers and staff are great and truly care about our students as people.</i> • <i>The teachers I've had experience with have all been amazing!</i> • <i>There are some great teachers at every level.</i> 	<p>219 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We have a great staff of teachers.</i> • <i>I truly believe we have amazing teachers in Hastings.</i> • <i>There are some very passionate and dedicated individuals.</i> • <i>Teachers seem open to change and growth in areas of inclusivity.</i> • <i>The teachers and staff seem to be engaged and care.</i> • <i>The teaching staff is wonderful.</i> • <i>The paras are a very valuable to our students.</i> • <i>The younger teachers in the schools are breathing fresh life and enthusiasm into their curriculums.</i> • <i>We have a group of staff who want what is best for students and are willing to work together to find solutions to problems.</i> • <i>I believe that we have very qualified teachers who are working extremely hard to provide students with the best education possible.</i> • <i>It is clear that the staff in the schools truly cares about the students.</i> • <i>Fabulous teachers and support staff.</i> • <i>This district is full of staff members who are dedicated, hard-working, and do all they can to make sure each student is successful.</i> 	
<p>Stakeholders believe Hastings Public Schools strives to be a welcoming and inclusive district, and tries to address student mental health needs and social/emotional learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Innovative social-emotional learning/MTSS with a focus on equity and inclusion.</i> • <i>Growing value in diversity and inclusion.</i> • <i>That the students have the ability to be who they feel they are on the inside as well as the outside.</i> • <i>Students participate in seasonal holidays and make it fun to learn about other cultures.</i> • <i>The teachers and staff are great and very welcoming.</i> • <i>An inclusive and welcoming environment for all.</i> • <i>Welcoming teacher and student relationships and trust.</i> • <i>Our community has been working on being more inclusive to all.</i> • <i>High school students are learning about different perspectives, and I think that is a big part of learning.</i> • <i>That there is equity & inclusion being integrated throughout the district.</i> • <i>Bringing more understanding that each child is different and more culture.</i> • <i>Working on equity and how to support our most marginalized students.</i> • <i>Working towards equity and inclusion.</i> • <i>Increased mental health support.</i> • <i>Social emotional learning, inclusivity.</i> • <i>Support for student and staff mental health.</i> • <i>We have invested in social/emotional supports.</i> • <i>We have noticed how impactful the social-emotional curriculum has been. Our kids talk about it at home and replicate what they learn in relationships with their peers.</i> 	<p>103 related responses</p>



2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?

According to stakeholders, the Hastings community is experiencing political divisiveness and conflict which has resulted in divergent visions for the future of the school district.

210 related responses

Divisiveness in the community

- *There is division within our community.*
- *Dealing with the divide in the community.*
- *Agendas to promote divisive policy and curriculum.*
- *Navigating an increasingly polarizing population.*
- *How to handle conflicting and strong opinions from community members about everything. It's causing chaos and a divide when we should be united.*
- *There is a divide... not collaboration. We need to move forward.*
- *More division, it's been more political, less educational.*
- *Current and future challenges are similar to the state of the broader United States. Folks are divided and have a difficult time having productive conversations.*
- *Division of opinions but we need to come together for our students.*
- *I fear that the political climate in our country has trickled down to the local school level.*
- *I would like to see less focus on how we're different and more on how we can become a solid welcoming community.*
- *Maintaining focus on educating ALL students.*
- *Divisiveness in our leadership and an inability to work together for the greater good. All students should be at the center of everything that we do.*
- *Division in the community, culture wars distracting from practical issues in our schools, dwindling population.*
- *Putting politics behind us. Working together to help the kids get better test scores. All in a safe environment.*

Desire to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts

- *We need more diversity and inclusion in schools.*
- *The external influence of national groups trying to undermine public education.*
- *Hastings had been on such an honest, good track toward inclusivity and progress, and it's been so frustrating to see its progress held back.*
- *I'm concerned overall about the trend of forcing rules and restrictions on schools that prevent them from inclusively serving the needs of students.*
- *We need to accept and include those that are different than the mainstream of Hastings. Which includes race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomics.*
- *Allow more diversity and inclusion in the schools.*
- *The District will need to figure out how to accept different worldviews, religions, and beliefs among the students and teachers.*
- *Students need to feel not only safe but supported in our schools.*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Be inclusive for all students, and that means all of them despite their physical, social, religious, or economic differences.</i> <p><u>Desire to focus on education and keep politics out of schools</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Focus more on academics and standardized test scores instead of other issues.</i> • <i>Keeping politics out of the school. Teach the kids the basics and how to form their own opinions.</i> • <i>Refocusing the schools on the core components of education: reading, writing, math, science, logic, and reasoning.</i> • <i>Leave politics out of the school. Stay committed to the student's education. Math, Reading, Science, History.</i> • <i>Test scores, Lack of focus on basic education, and more focus on social issues. Back to basics and results focused.</i> • <i>Keeping political conflicts out of school so children can focus on learning basic, sound life skills.</i> • <i>Getting rid of equal outcome and help students as individuals and develop their strengths.</i> • <i>Teaching basics such as reading, science, math, and getting away from pushing political views which have nothing to do with the curriculum.</i> • <i>We need a greater emphasis on academic excellence and less time spent on special interest social issues.</i> 	
<p>Hastings stakeholders are concerned about the district's decreasing enrollment and how this will affect district finances.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Changes in enrollment, competing with other districts, need to be more welcoming to families coming in.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment due to a lack of affordable housing, rising rates of special services, and student behavior.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment, finding funding to keep extra positions.</i> • <i>Decreasing enrollment and increasing costs.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment will continue to have a negative impact on our district.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment resulting in declining funding - this poses a potential major 'right-sizing' situation in the near future.</i> • <i>Hoping to bring more students to the schools to help with declining enrollment. Doing everything we can to make sure our Levy is renewed.</i> • <i>Meeting the challenges of declining enrollment without punishing the students by making their class sizes unreasonable or cutting the programs that keep families and students excited about staying or coming to our district.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment, building maintenance costs.</i> • <i>I believe the school district will see a significant decrease in student enrollment, Enrollment and budget.</i> • <i>Continued need to provide more for students while revenue/financial support declines. The aging facilities also pull from the budget.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment will be stressing finances.</i> • <i>If enrollment continues to decline, finding creative ways to restructure facilities to cut costs rather than cutting people and programs.</i> 	<p>168 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dealing with the budget & declining enrollment I think will be the biggest challenge.</i> • <i>Financial stability and providing the best possible experience for students by fairly compensating staff and maintaining programs.</i> 	
<p>Survey responses indicate a concern about the increase in negative student behavior.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Many challenges like growing conflicts between students.</i> • <i>The school might get more violent and more use of drugs.</i> • <i>Trying to get the bullying stopped. Students are afraid of going to school.</i> • <i>Behavioral policies are going to continue to be hard to define and enforce.</i> • <i>Fights in school, disrespectful students.</i> • <i>A lot of negative student behavior. Finding a way to get kids back to kindness would be a great start.</i> • <i>Covid has caused social challenges that show up in schools as an increase in poor behaviors.</i> • <i>I wonder if our current methods of discipline are effective with our current students. Student behaviors and frustrations are high.</i> • <i>Lack of student respect for the staff.</i> • <i>I would like to see the District address negative speech and behavior of students. Help inform and educate the student body (and parents) to create a more inclusive space for ALL students.</i> • <i>Student accountability and involving parents with child's behavior.</i> • <i>Lack of funding for behavioral and mental health supports and needs in the schools.</i> • <i>Increasing behavioral challenges. Not enough staff to provide intervention and support for students with higher needs.</i> • <i>The increase of student behaviors has become exhausting to teachers and staff.</i> 	<p>112 related responses</p>
<p>The Hastings community would like the school board to work together, focus on the students, and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to be heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We want the school board to listen, work together, and show respect to all parents and students.</i> • <i>Having a school board with personal agendas that are not necessarily putting students first.</i> • <i>Cohesiveness with the board regarding the direction of the district, budgetary choices, supporting diverse students, and gaining back the trust of the community.</i> • <i>The Board needs to be more open to the public, especially the regular meetings.</i> • <i>Board members pushing their individual political agendas over performing their duties in the best interest of our schools.</i> • <i>Parents and community members should be able to address concerns with the board.</i> 	<p>88 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Getting ALL school board members and the community to focus on the students.</i> • <i>Continued board actions distract and divide the community from the amazing learning happening.</i> • <i>That our school board needs to focus on working for the students and not for their views to "win". That we need to focus on the best for our students.</i> • <i>Having a divided school board come together and focus on the areas that really matter.</i> • <i>A cohesive, productive school board who works together and positively contributes to our kids' experiences and supports our teachers.</i> 	
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3. What does the new superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?

<p>Many respondents feel the next superintendent should know Hastings was once a rural and agriculture-based community, but it is quickly growing into a diverse and suburban town.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hastings has historically been a town with conservative values and traditions. We need to hold on to that while also welcoming others and developing new traditions.</i> • <i>We are a community of rural, suburban, and city folk - each with different gifts, talents, needs and wants.</i> • <i>The community has been quite conservative in the past, but the community is trying to move forward and change with the times to a more inclusive community.</i> • <i>We are diverse. We are a small, rural town but are also part of Dakota County and the suburbs. We have students whose families have been here for generations and students that just moved here.</i> • <i>Hastings is a small-feeling river town, and many would like to keep it that way. However, the issue with holding tradition so tightly is that it leaves little space for growth.</i> • <i>Being able to balance small town feel but city life expectations.</i> • <i>Tight knit community that can be slow to newcomers.</i> • <i>Hastings tends to believe itself to be a relatively small town and is struggling to reconcile with the fact that it is a moderately sized suburb with an increasing (and increasingly diverse) population.</i> • <i>Small town culture and relationships are important and valued.</i> • <i>Hastings is a unique community - we are big enough to have access to many things and yet small enough to be different. I think we can grow and stay true to our values and ethics.</i> • <i>There's a mix of families who have been here for generations who tend to hold more conservative values mixed with new families drawn by the strong arts culture who hold more liberal values.</i> 	<p>126 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Small town community with many firmly set in their ways and don't take change well. But the town is growing and the school needs to be promoting itself the best way possible to want new families to move to Hastings and its district.</i> • <i>Originally a small farming community but it's become more of a suburb. This leads to a change in the ethnic and socio-economic demographics.</i> • <i>Understand what type of town Hastings is. We are a smaller town with big city issues.</i> • <i>Until recent years Hastings was a very rural community that did not have a lot of influence from the cities. As it continues to grow demographically, there have been many new families coming to town, and this will bring in a natural 'urban' feeling.</i> • <i>Long history of families staying in the community; conflicts with new families moving into the area. Challenging the cultural changes occurring.</i> 	
<p>Survey responses indicate a desire for the next superintendent of Hastings to be visible and transparent with strong communication skills, and that all voices be included and respected across the district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All voices (staff, students, families, community) are important and should be considered.</i> • <i>Many within the community feel like they are not being heard. Others feel like they have been (and continue to be) kept in the dark.</i> • <i>Be transparent and open with people and treat community members with respect.</i> • <i>Parents need to be able to be involved and have a say in their children's education.</i> • <i>Strong need to get back to a community where all individuals feel heard.</i> • <i>Ask for parent and student opinions before implementing policy or changes on curriculum.</i> • <i>Work with staff and create relationships with them. This will increase morale.</i> • <i>The new Superintendent needs to be transparent with the community/parents.</i> • <i>The superintendent needs to transparent and be collaborative with both sides. Work as team to build community connections in Hastings.</i> • <i>People will always find something to complain about but if you put the kids first and what is best for their education that is what matters most.</i> • <i>Be a part of the community. Be fair, be consistent, and work together to make Hastings Schools better. Stop the divide!</i> • <i>This is a community that is not used to change. He or she needs to be very personable and effectively communicate the need for change in a world that is constantly changing.</i> • <i>Be Involved with the parents and community. Let our voices be heard.</i> • <i>I hope that the superintendent comes with new ideas that will support and improve the current goals of the district.</i> • <i>Talk to community members from 'both' sides of the local disagreements to understand the full depth and details of the disagreements that have been plaguing the district.</i> 	89 related responses



<p>The political divisiveness and conflict is apparent to stakeholders and they would like the new superintendent to help unify the district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Remove the political agenda for a neutrally positive education.</i> • <i>Realize tension between certain groups that may be present and consistently work to make sure that all students feel understood and heard.</i> • <i>Understand the divisiveness that has been created with a divided school board and caused members of the community to not respect public education.</i> • <i>Hastings is experiencing unprecedented division in our community on moral and political issues. These will need to be navigated very cautiously by someone who can defend their choices without alienating half the town.</i> • <i>There is a current political division that needs to be mended.</i> • <i>I hope that the new superintendent can be a bridge in closing the divide.</i> • <i>Our community is not as unified as it once was. The division shows up in all sorts of areas within the school district. A great leader will focus on our community.</i> • <i>We are currently experiencing divisive politics in a system that should be politically neutral. These divisive elements are eroding the strength of a very good school district.</i> • <i>There is an us against them mentality that prevents cooperation and an ability to support all students' needs.</i> • <i>Hastings is at a point where rumor and innuendo have thwarted the advancement of education. These need to be addressed and hopefully a collaborative solution can be found.</i> • <i>The current political climate surrounding the school board and the school system itself reflects the dichotomy seen nationally with strong opinions and voices from all sides.</i> • <i>Like much of America, we are caught up in politically grounded differences in who is welcome or not welcome and what views are present vs what views are comfortable.</i> 	<p>84 related responses</p>
<p>The Hastings community wants the next superintendent to understand they have a history of supporting the district, but some are struggling to continue this support due to the current climate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There had been a long tradition of trust and support for schools from the community, school board, and staff. This atmosphere of trust has come under attack in the past few years.</i> • <i>The community of ISD 200 has historically been very supportive of the school district but that support has been challenged recently due to the political climate, discourse on cultural topics, and inconsistent performance.</i> • <i>We love our town and have a lot of pride in it and our schools and our kids. We need to come together to continue to build strong community through education, not bring each other down about silly things that are political issues.</i> • <i>Hastings supports its schools and only recently, due to outside national special interests and groups, has there been divisions created for political benefit.</i> • <i>We have a lot of traditions and pride in our history. However, it is not always easy for staff to understand and support changes when they are introduced.</i> 	<p>75 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, the district has a good historical track record of working together for the good of all students. • It was a great district 20 years ago and needs to go back to a focus on learning math, reading, and writing and less on dividing people. • Until recently, the community was one and wholly supported the school district. Unfortunately, politics have caused the community to be split into two. We need to get back to being one. 	
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4. Additional Comments:

<p>Survey responses indicate the Hastings School District's next superintendent should have strong leadership skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The superintendent should focus on leading and running the district in partnership with the board. The candidate must be savvy and have a defined sense of their leadership identity when challenges arise. • We need someone who uses the talent and experience of the staff and can take us forward together. Someone who encourages creativity and values input from stakeholders and fosters an effective leadership team that is able to promote a positive environment that supports all students and staff to be successful. • Honest, respectful conversation skills will be needed. • Please find a superintendent that can bring our community together. We need to listen to all stakeholders in the community. • The new superintendent should hold people accountable and create a positive culture. • Respect is very important for a superintendent. Respect to Hastings community, parents, school board members and the students and children. • The superintendent must be open to listening to the views of everyone. • Focus should be on student success, strengthening our educational opportunities, and know the community needs a strong leader! • I am hopeful the district will be able to find someone who is fair and professional. • The next superintendent needs to be a confident leader who is willing to be transparent. • District 200 needs a "healer" in the Supt's office. Someone who can bring the school board together and lets the staff know that he or she has their backs. • Listening to all stakeholder groups is important - treat each group as equally valuable. • Strong experienced leadership to create a trusting creative successful learning environment to keep educators in this rewarding career. • We need a strong but humble and gentle leader that is a good listener but will speak with conviction when it is time to make a decision. 	<p>79 related responses</p>
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5. BONUS FOCUS – Student Comments:

<p>What are some of the good things taking place in Hastings Public Schools today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The classes.</i>• <i>Planning and problem solving.</i>• <i>Hiring back alumni as coaches/instructors; more meetings for minority groups which helps them find connection.</i>• <i>A lot of clubs for students, a lot of different chances musically for band, choir, or orchestra. Nice teachers who are understanding. Many different extracurriculars and college level classes, PSEO.</i>• <i>Some school sponsored events like ping pong and cultural experiences, clubs like latinx, etc; Avid/Work It Wednesdays; alternate food choices, at least there used to be; after school sports/activities.</i>• <i>Most staff are nice and understanding; The school is taking serious things more serious and giving better punishments.</i>• <i>The good things that have happened at Hastings Schools is that everyone respects each other.</i>• <i>There are many opportunities to be part of the community.</i>• <i>Students help each other.</i> <p>What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Diversity, poverty, student/staff opinions, funding.</i>• <i>Student happiness.</i>• <i>Violence and drug-use.</i>• <i>Using technology in curriculum instead of banning them; teachers need to be more educated how their behavior affects kids.</i>• <i>Less diversity, more students who start using drugs, stress levels getting worse, mental health getting worse.</i>• <i>Many changes like growing drug problems and conflicts between students.</i>• <i>Fights, smoking problem, and food for lunch.</i>• <i>The school will probably see more drug addicts because things with drugs are getting worse.</i>• <i>We had a problem with the people who take care of the food so I think a challenge is how we manage the workers.</i>• <i>Communication.</i> <p>What does the new superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community in order to be successful?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Funding and meal options/opportunities.</i>• <i>The superintendent needs to know that all of the students have lives and need help every little while.</i>	18 related responses
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- *I think it's important they know what problems there were in the school before the strike.*
- *History of bullying, especially against LGBTQ+.*
- *That there's not very much diversity.*
- *Change food options – make them better quality and lower prices of it, because it's overpriced for extra drink or food.*
- *Kids out of the school that have caused multiple problems and we don't see change.*
- *The kids here sometimes will need help but they don't know how to ask for help or they are afraid.*

Additional comments:

- *We need lunch change: better food.*
- *Doing more fun things.*
- *More students taking band.*
- *Make it a safe space.*

