

Background

On June 30, 2024, the resignation of Superintendent Keith Posley became effective. On August 29, 2024, the Board approved a contract with Hazard, Young, Atea & Associates (HYA) to conduct a search for a new superintendent.

On September 26, 2024, the Board approved a salary range of \$275,000 – 350,000 and the position was posted for recruitment with an application deadline of November 30, 2024.

In September and October 2024 HYA facilitated a community engagement effort that included interviews, focus groups, and a survey.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Individual interviews were held with all Board Members, Board Candidate for District 4, Interim Superintendent, MPS Foundation, Milwaukee Mayor, Milwaukee County Exec, NAACP, Wisconsin State Superintendent, Wisconsin Governor.

Group interview sessions were offered for elected officials, MPS central services staff, students, all staff, community groups, city services, parents, community members, business community, and union leadership.

ZOOM / Virtual Sessions- Sessions were also offered as an alternative for families, parents, caregivers, staff, and community and various times throughout the dates.

63 individual interviews and focus groups were conducted.

Survey

An online survey was provided in ten languages. Originally scheduled to close on October 10, 2024, the survey remained open until October 30, 2024, to encourage stakeholders to complete the survey.

The survey was pushed out through all social media platforms and other methods to communicate with students, families, community and residents.

District Profile Leadership Report

On November 21, 2024, the HYA search team presented the District Profile Leadership Report, a summary of the engagement findings, to the Board. HYA reported that participation in the engagement opportunities was low, but those who did participate were genuine and engaged.

Strengths

What are the strengths of Milwaukee Public Schools that the next superintendent can build upon?

Interview and Focus Group Themes

- Strong Milwaukee Community
- Caring Dedicated Staff
- Variety of Program Options for Students and Parental Choice
- Diversity Valued

Highest Scoring Survey Items

- Technology is integrated into the classroom.
- The District engages with diverse racial, cultural and socio-economic groups.
- Teachers personalize instructional strategies to address individual learning needs
- District technology infrastructure is sufficient to support use of technology in the classroom.
- The District employs effective teachers, administrators and support staff in its schools.

Challenges

What are the challenges facing Milwaukee Public Schools that the next superintendent should be aware of, or you would like to see addressed?

Interview and Focus Group Themes

- Organizational Structure and Alignment
- Expectations and Accountability
- Board Governance

- Trust and Relationships

Lowest Scoring Survey Items

- District is financially responsible
- Transparent communication from District
- Students are on track to be ready for next grade, and college and career ready
- District heading in the right direction
- District schools are safe

Desirable Characteristics of the Next Superintendent

Interview and Focus Group Themes

- Visionary Relationship Builder
- Organizational Manager and Courageous Leader
- Restore Trust and Transparency
- Student Focus for Success
- Knowledge and Skills for Urban Leadership

Survey Themes

- Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators
- Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District
- Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools
- Provide transparent communication
- Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel

Transition

Stakeholders expressed the conditions the board must support for a successful transition. Those thoughts are also shared here:

- A board willingness to adhere to their role of governance and accountability
- A willingness to allow the new superintendent to lead the district
- Support for an audit of district operational practices, procedures and structure
- Clear articulation of high expectations and accountability for students and staff
- Demonstrate an appetite of hope for envisioning the future of MPS
- The consideration of a mentor for the new superintendent and transition support for the new superintendent and board
- The consideration of individual transition teams for
1.) student success 2.) finance, 3.) engagement

Next Step

HYA will receive and screen all applications.

The presentation of a confidential slate of candidates to the Board is planned for a Special Meeting on December 17, 2024.