

# District 518 Superintendent Search

## Public Engagement Superintendent Search Survey

**Overview:** On October 15, 2024, the “Worthington District 518 Superintendent Search Survey” was made available to the public both online and in hard copy. The survey remained open for respondents until November 12, 2024, and a total of 315 people completed the survey (298 English, 17 Spanish).

Although this survey was opt-in (meaning individuals must actively choose to participate), MSBA’s analysis of the results do indicate a cross-section of people who are invested in the district were reached through the survey process. Knowing it took time and effort to do so, the school board and MSBA deeply appreciate each and every respondent who participated in the survey. The information these individuals shared through their responses will provide valuable input for the school board to consider as they move forward in selecting the next superintendent to lead District 518.

The results of all quantitative survey responses are summarized in the first five pages of this report, beginning below with those from across the district who participated in the survey.

**Self-identifiers:** Survey takers were first asked to identify the role that best reflected the basis for their responses. The categories selected by the survey takers are as follows:

- 37.30% of respondents selected “Staff Member”
- 19.94% of respondents selected “Community Member”
- 18.97% of respondents selected “Parent/Guardian”
- 14.15% of respondents selected “Student”
- 5.14% of respondents selected “Business Owner/Agriculture”
- 4.50% of respondents selected “Other”

**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
- Strategic Planning
- Public Relations
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Contract Administration and Negotiations



**Previous Experience:** Respondents were asked if previous superintendent experience is important. Based on the results, 44.69% of the respondents selected “Yes,” while 55.31% of the respondents selected “No.”

**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
- Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
- Strong communicator with proven abilities in human relations and communications
- Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community
- Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork
- Develops and directs an effective leadership team

**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
- Personable
- Consistent

The following tables provide another perspective of the quantitative data, categorizing each question’s responses by self-identifiers. The number of individual responses per category were:

- Staff Member (116)
- Community Member (62)
- Parent/Guardian (59)
- Student (44)
- Business Owner/Agriculture (16)
- Other (14)

**PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED**

Parent/ Guardian (59)	Staff Member (116)	Community Member (62)	Other (14)	Student (44)	Business Owner /Agriculture (16)
Yes: 44.64%	Yes: 38.38%	Yes: 49.12%	Yes: 50.00%	Yes: 47.06%	Yes: 61.54%
No: 55.36%	No: 61.62%	No: 50.88%	No: 50.00%	No: 52.94%	No: 38.46%



## TOP SIX AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Parent/ Guardian (59)	Staff Member (116)	Community Member (62)	Other (14)	Student (44)	Business Owner /Agriculture (16)
Budget & Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance	Public Relations	Budget & Finance	Budget & Finance
Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Budget & Finance	Collaborative Leadership	Strategic Planning
Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Contract Administration & Negotiations	Strategic Planning	Collaborative Leadership	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Collaborative Leadership
Student Testing Results and Achievement	Public Relations	Public Relations	Contract Administration and Negotiations	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Personnel Management
Contract Administration & Negotiations	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Personnel Management	Curriculum Development/ Evaluation	Technology	Business Partnerships
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Personnel Management	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Public Relations	Public Relations

## TOP SIX PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Parent/ Guardian (59)	Staff Member (116)	Community Member (62)	Other (14)	Student (44)	Business Owner /Agriculture (16)
Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Honest and Ethical	Confident	Honest and Ethical
Problem Solver	Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Effective Communicator	Honest and Ethical	Effective Communicator
Transparent	Problem Solver	Problem Solver	Transparent	Creative	Transparent
Effective Communicator	Transparent	Transparent	Personable	Effective Communicator	Resourceful
Personable	Personable	Consistent	Problem Solver	Sense of Humor	Personable
Resourceful	Consistent	Personable	Consistent	Problem Solver	Problem Solver

The following two pages directly compare the school board's responses to the specialized skills question. These results do indicate significant alignment between the board and public, as board members prioritized many of the same categories as a majority of the district's constituencies.



# Worthington – Superintendent Search

## Leadership Profile:

- Embodies honesty and ethical behavior in all interactions with the school board, staff, and community, fostering trust throughout the district.
- Builds a highly proficient leadership team and adeptly delegates authority while ensuring accountability.
- Maintains high visibility and approachability to the school board, staff, students, parents, and the broader community, demonstrating effective abilities in human relations.
- Works cooperatively with the School Board, providing thoughtful, data-driven options and recommendations, and acts as a visionary, creative thinker driving forward innovative ideas.
- Exhibits exceptional communication skills, engages effectively with the community, and builds collaboration throughout the district and with the public.

## Worthington Hiring Criteria and Public Input Survey:

### Specialized Skills - Board

1. Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner with the School Board, staff, and community
2. Delegates authority while maintaining accountability
3. Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community
4. Works cooperatively with the School Board; provides options and recommendations
5. A visionary, creative thinker
6. Develops and directs an effective leadership team
7. Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
8. Strong communicator with proven abilities in human relations

### Specialized Skills – Public Input

1. Acts with honesty and in an ethical manner in dealings with the School Board, staff, and community
2. Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
3. Strong communicator with proven abilities in human relations and communications
4. Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community
5. Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork
6. Develops and directs an effective leadership team
7. A visionary, creative thinker
8. Familiar with state and federal education laws

### The following areas of expertise rose to the top in the public input survey:

- Budget and Finance
- Collaborative Leadership
- Strategic Planning

### Is previous superintendent experience important?

Board: Yes =20%; No = 80%      Community: Yes = 45%; No = 55%

All highlights are to show where there is alignment with both the school board and the community.



## TOP SIX SPECIALIZED SKILLS

<b>Parent/ Guardian (59)</b>	<b>Staff Member (116)</b>	<b>Community Member (62)</b>	<b>Other (14)</b>	<b>Student (44)</b>	<b>Business Owner /Agriculture (16)</b>
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	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
Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Experience in implementing educational priorities and/or a strategic plan	A visionary, creative thinker	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
Experience in implementing educational priorities and/or a strategic plan	Strong communicator with proven abilities in human relations and communications	Strong communicator with proven abilities in human relations and communications	Familiar with state and federal education laws	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Experience in school district management practices
Possesses a strong academic background with experience in curriculum	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	Knowledge of and experience with special education needs	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Delegates authority while maintaining accountability
Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	A visionary, creative thinker	Visible and accessible to the School Board, staff, students, parents, and community	Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives; values teamwork	Experience in school finance
Strong communicator with proven abilities in human relations and communications	Develops and directs an effective leadership team	Delegates authority while maintaining accountability	Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities	Delegates authority while maintaining accountability	Knowledge of and experience with special education needs



**Additional comments:** Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions in the survey, and on average, 195 of the 315 respondents provided additional commentary. These qualitative 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 superintendent search survey asked the following four questions:**

1. What are some of the good things taking place in District 518 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 in order to be successful?
4. Additional comments.

**1. What are some of the good things taking place in District 518 today?**

<p><b>Survey respondents recognize that the district has dedicated staff and leadership who prioritize student success with professionalism, collaboration, and care. Teachers and staff are celebrated for their passion, innovation, and strong relationships with students, creating a supportive and positive learning environment across all grade levels.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The teaching and communication with the teachers and the beautiful building.</i></li> <li>• <i>One good thing happening is the teachers and how they teach students.</i></li> <li>• <i>The teachers are friendly.</i></li> <li>• <i>Amazing staff that care deeply about the students in our district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Good office people.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers are treated like professionals. Principals are exceptional.</i></li> <li>• <i>You have a hard-working staff and leadership that wants the best for students.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are a lot of passionate people who are a part of the district and committed to students.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have good teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>The educators are dedicated to their craft and their students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Dist. 518 has amazing staff dedicated to the students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Excellent staff members.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have strong staff that strive to do the best they can every day.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a caring staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>Great staff who sincerely values student growth.</i></li> <li>• <i>I love working at District 518. There are a lot of hardworking people here.</i></li> <li>• <i>A highly talented teaching and support staff that operate the day-to-day functions of the school all while educating students to a high standard.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teacher and staff building relationships with students.</i></li> </ul>	<p>75 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I believe we have good staff members that truly are concerned about the success of every student.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are many amazing staff and faculty working in the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Staff are supportive of each other.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a collaborative, innovative, and resilient staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a lot of experienced staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have some really great school staff that do amazing things with our students and truly care about them.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have very effective leaders in each building. They are competent and caring.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Stakeholders also feel District 518 offers a wide variety of programs and opportunities, including flourishing music, arts, sports, and extracurricular activities. The district supports students and families with valuable resources, fostering engagement, creativity, and success.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We have great music programs in all of the schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>The music and art programs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Lots of sports and music options.</i></li> <li>• <i>Still offering a variety of classes, clubs and extracurricular opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>The teacher path program both in school and paras, is wonderful.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are many resources provided to help families like free English classes and also bussing to many programs like ECFE and ABE programs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Implementing programs and practices to engage students in pathways to success. Attempting to provide students with career opportunities at low costs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Variety of learning programs i.e. PSEO, concurrent classes, music classes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Well-rounded education opportunities.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are numerous opportunities for students for enrichment (sports, music, PSEO).</i></li> <li>• <i>The District 518 have provided a lot of resources to schools that can help students with different learning needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>A wide variety of learning opportunities for students of all ages.</i></li> <li>• <i>Options and variety for students in terms of classes, clubs, sports, etc.</i></li> <li>• <i>The arts programs in District 518 (Music, theater, visual arts) are thriving!</i></li> <li>• <i>Diversity in class offerings; quality over quantity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teacher Pathway Program and the support for this pathway program.</i></li> <li>• <i>ISD 518 offers so many clubs and organizations to help kids find their passion. We have strong fine arts and business programs, and many of our sports teams have advanced to state tournaments.</i></li> <li>• <i>I love the Grow Your Own program.</i></li> <li>• <i>The variety of classes and programs offered by the district, the help that is provided to both students and parents.</i></li> <li>• <i>Music programs, extracurricular options.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school lets people express their creativity a lot, there are a lot of clubs that offer homework help.</i></li> </ul>	<p>59 related responses</p>



<p><b>It is believed 518 thrives due to a welcoming and inclusive community that values diversity as a strength. The district fosters strong relationships among students and staff, promotes cultural understanding, and ensures all students feel supported, creating an environment where each and every student belongs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Good amount of attention from staff and the kindness of the people.</i></li> <li>• <i>People help each other.</i></li> <li>• <i>District 518 does a wonderful job of not discriminating against anyone. We are all human and that is it.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have good relationships in our district, whether it is between staff members, students, or adult-student.</i></li> <li>• <i>Welcoming environments that provide unique opportunities for students.</i></li> <li>• <i>There's a lot of school spirit and community support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Diversity and inclusion for all.</i></li> <li>• <i>Schools are working hard to create great community connections.</i></li> <li>• <i>My children get to experience the amazing opportunity to have a group of friends and peers that come from so many different backgrounds.</i></li> <li>• <i>Diversity is the future of our community.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a very diverse student body that get along very well.</i></li> <li>• <i>Blending ethnic diversity well.</i></li> <li>• <i>Handles diversity well.</i></li> <li>• <i>New initiative to support all student populations.</i></li> <li>• <i>The amount of different cultures we have in our schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>Diversity is our strength.</i></li> <li>• <i>The opportunity to work with many diverse groups.</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusion of our diverse students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Building a colorblind, inclusive district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Students seem to get along with their fellow students.</i></li> </ul>	<p>51 related responses</p>
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## 2. What challenges do you see for our district over the next five years?

<p><b>There is a sense District 518 will face challenges of rapid student population growth, potentially leading to overcrowded buildings. Addressing space constraints and maintaining manageable class sizes will require careful planning for facilities and resources, while simultaneously balancing it with the need for community financial support.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Overcrowding.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not enough space for all the students in the high school building.</i></li> <li>• <i>Accommodating for continued growth in our district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Keeping the class sizes down.</i></li> </ul>	<p>91 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Growing class sizes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Growing population of students.</i></li> <li>• <i>We will outgrow the high school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Accommodating continued growth.</i></li> <li>• <i>The continued growth of the district will require strategic planning for facilities and staffing.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continued growth, squeezing for space.</i></li> <li>• <i>Overcrowding at the high school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Accommodating the growing community and enrollment numbers without additional buildings.</i></li> <li>• <i>We continue to see an ever-increasing student enrollment but have a community that doesn't necessarily support the financial responsibilities associated with a continuing need for facility enhancements.</i></li> <li>• <i>Classroom and testing space.</i></li> <li>• <i>Overcrowding. Teacher stress with larger class sizes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Space for students and activities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continuing to keep up with new facilities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Space in buildings without overstretching the taxpayers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Addressing high school space needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>The high school must have more space.</i></li> <li>• <i>Needing more space for students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Space at the high school will become a premium.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not enough classroom space. The school is continuing to grow and we are going to need more learning space.</i></li> <li>• <i>Our biggest challenges are keeping up-to-date facilities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Space has been an issue for forever. Our student population is growing without compensating for it with more/bigger classrooms.</i></li> <li>• <i>The ability to expand (classroom space for all teachers).</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Survey respondents feel significant challenges may lie ahead in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and staff, particularly in specialized areas. High demands, low morale, and staff shortages could contribute to burnout and turnover, making it difficult to meet the district's growing needs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Not enough teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Loss of quality teaching staff due to high demands and lack of empathy about the high demands and low morale.</i></li> <li>• <i>Finding and maintaining staffing for all subject areas.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not enough employees, teachers, paras, subs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hiring and retaining teachers and staff. Management of existing administration and staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>The SPED program needs help. Need more qualified and quality staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>Keeping teachers and finding new teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Enticing SPED teachers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Finding qualified staff members.</i></li> </ul>	<p>84 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think hiring and retaining quality teachers is an issue and will remain an issue. The staff feel overworked and not respected as professionals, and it is leading to teacher burnout.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continued challenges with staff turnover and retention. Difficulty filling vacancies for special education and more specialized staff roles.</i></li> <li>• <i>Finding teachers is a challenge.</i></li> <li>• <i>Being able to hire qualified people to fit our districts needs. Many positions go unfilled and need to be covered from within. Staff are overwhelmed and offered little support or help.</i></li> <li>• <i>Drawing in quality staff to this remote location.</i></li> <li>• <i>Staff shortages, turnover amongst staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not being able to find qualified teachers. We often have open positions that staff have to absorb so we are stressed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Dealing with staff shortages along with increased student needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>I foresee continued challenges in staff retention.</i></li> <li>• <i>Recruiting and keeping qualified educators.</i></li> <li>• <i>The turnover in the special education department has been huge over recent years.</i></li> <li>• <i>Quality teaching to meet the needs of our students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Bringing in new educators to the district (teacher retention).</i></li> <li>• <i>We are struggling hiring and keeping teachers.</i></li> </ul>	
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<p><b>District 518 may also face challenges in improving student achievement while keeping students motivated and engaged. Priorities will include raising test scores, enhancing graduation rates, supporting college and career readiness, and addressing learning loss, particularly in foundational skills like reading and math.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The biggest challenge I foresee is maintaining student motivation and engagement. This new generation requires a different approach to education in order to stay engaged and achieve success in life.</i></li> <li>• <i>Kids are not getting the attention they need. They are overlooked in the system, and it may be too late for them to get the help they should have received.</i></li> <li>• <i>Students need to see the value in getting a good education.</i></li> <li>• <i>I would like to find a way for us to improve our scores with our demographic and diverse learners.</i></li> <li>• <i>Student achievement - I hope the new superintendent builds better structures to monitor student achievement and improve instructional practices.</i></li> <li>• <i>Academic and athletic growth.</i></li> <li>• <i>Graduation rates and proficiency. Social issues that are becoming incredibly divisive, time-consuming, and detracting from education.</i></li> <li>• <i>Test score improvement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Differentiation for diverse learners - ability groups in schools to challenge higher level learners.</i></li> <li>• <i>Focus on education and test scores.</i></li> </ul>	<p>54 related responses</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The district needs to raise student achievement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Closing the achievement gap between different race groups.</i></li> <li>• <i>College preparation for all students. High expectations for all students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Returning to teaching core and basic needs. Example economics, math, social skills.</i></li> <li>• <i>There is little time during the day for students to accurately assess and manage time to complete assignments when most teachers teach from bell to bell.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need to continue to address the lost learning due to COVID.</i></li> <li>• <i>Academic challenges of local students not reading at grade level.</i></li> <li>• <i>Students are behind and no one who can do something about that seems to care.</i></li> <li>• <i>Difficulties in bringing students up to grade level.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Many respondents see challenges ahead in meeting the needs of its growing and diverse community, including connecting with students from various cultural, linguistic, social, and socio-economic backgrounds.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Making sure ALL students feel welcome and included in the district. This includes all types of diversity from race/ethnicity to gender and sexual orientation.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are more minorities and non-English speaking students.</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges in ethnicity and language spoken in schools.</i></li> <li>• <i>I fear that in the next 5 years district 518 will become less understanding to our future generations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Embracing diversity and building a community culture within the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are going to have to learn to build a more inclusive school district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Being inclusive without creating problems with staff, students, and the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>Multi language learner challenges that effect state &amp; district assessment scores.</i></li> <li>• <i>There are a lot of families that are non-English speaking at home. Makes it hard to help with homework or meet expectations of the student.</i></li> <li>• <i>The time that teachers have to spend with non-English speaking students. The other students are left behind and not learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Challenges with enrollment of EL learners who make up most of our classes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continued work with a diverse community in a positive way.</i></li> <li>• <i>I see that acceptance of differences are still a struggle within the district. We need more safe spaces for students and faculty.</i></li> <li>• <i>Needing to shift our focus from the Latine population to our growing Asian and African populations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Inclusion and high expectations for all students. Closing the achievement gap.</i></li> <li>• <i>Being able to meet the needs of an ever-growing diverse and contemporary community.</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased diversity.</i></li> <li>• <i>Embracing the diversity of the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Continuing influx of new Americans to the community, ESL.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have an increasingly open LGBTQIA+ community and student population. These individuals need to feel safe and free to be who they are within our facilities.</i></li> </ul>	<p>45 related responses</p>



### 3. What does the next superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?

**The next superintendent must understand Worthington’s unique history as a rural, agriculture-based community that has been revitalized by its growing and diverse population. Embracing the district’s cultural richness, fostering inclusivity, and addressing the needs of English learners and families from many different backgrounds will be key to uniting the community and supporting student success.**

103 related responses

- *The community is always changing.*
- *Understand rural Minnesota and the diversity of Worthington.*
- *Knowing and understanding the history of the different cultures and minority groups in Worthington.*
- *The diversity of our community and the need to better educate ESL students to learn English.*
- *There’s a lot of diversity.*
- *We have a lot of diversity.*
- *Very diverse community.*
- *Our community functions exceptionally well with multiple cultures.*
- *They need to be aware of how diverse of a community we have and how strong it can be when everyone is united.*
- *The diversity of the community and district. How we need to be more inclusive of different cultures.*
- *The diversity of our community and how it has changed over the years.*
- *We are a very diverse community, and ALL our staff needs to have had informative, real-time training in accommodating different cultures, groups, and socioeconomic statuses in order to truly fulfill the needs of the students in an equitable manner.*
- *ISD 518 is a diverse district. There are many students from different backgrounds and a lot of diverse needs that impact student learning.*
- *They should embrace the wonderful diversity of Worthington.*
- *Worthington is very diverse and the next superintendent needs to do a lot of work with all ethnic groups in the community.*
- *They need to know how much we value our community and how well our diverse community lives together. We truly are a unique niche in the world.*
- *Needs to understand and be able to work with a very diverse staff and student population.*
- *We are an area firmly rooted in agriculture, with a community revitalized by immigration.*
- *Understanding difficult home lives for students.*
- *We have a very diverse school and community that protects the students and staff that feel they are being misunderstood by District 518.*
- *The community seems to be growing and has a very diverse population.*



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The school has changed over the years as the community has, this has given students a wonderful opportunity to learn about those who are different from themselves but not all adults in the community are as welcoming.</i></li> <li>• <i>Strong community support of both townspeople and farmers, both community groups need to be represented within the district. Large diverse and ever-changing population, which complicates traditional curriculums.</i></li> <li>• <i>We are a small diverse community with many of the challenges of a larger city.</i></li> <li>• <i>It is rural, conservative and very diverse.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a diverse population, and it's important ALL students feel seen and respected, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual identity, etc.</i></li> <li>• <i>We have a diverse population, and it is crucial to find ways to reach out and deliver the very best for our students.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new superintendent needs to understand that our school population is very different from other districts; more than half the students are EL. This means that we need more inclusive ideas and strategies, and decisions need to be made with diverse families, cultures, and languages in mind.</i></li> <li>• <i>I think the history of the diversity of our school district is of utmost importance. Our district is not like every other district and the superintendent needs to embrace and celebrate those differences.</i></li> <li>• <i>They need to understand that the district is changing in demographics whether it is cultural diversity, socioeconomic status, or population.</i></li> <li>• <i>The diversity of the school and the impacts it has on the economics and school cultures.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Respondents also felt the next superintendent will need to address community concerns regarding fiscal transparency and past failed referendums, as well as rebuild trust through open communication and accountable spending practices.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This history of getting buildings completed and the public perception. It would help to understand why some referendums failed and how to manage the public moving forward.</i></li> <li>• <i>Must be aware of the tensions involved with the previous referendum.</i></li> <li>• <i>The amount of distrust in the district and the failed referendums.</i></li> <li>• <i>People don't want to pay higher taxes. don't make the farmers mad with lease levies.</i></li> <li>• <i>The school district is very divided about how to fund school operations and projects.</i></li> <li>• <i>Don't spend money foolishly. You make the taxpayers mad; you're going to have another failed referendum.</i></li> <li>• <i>The community has been upset with spending in the past and needs to control spending and be accountable to the taxpayers. Lack of support for referendums shows the dissatisfaction of the community.</i></li> <li>• <i>They need to understand that members of the community are weary of referendums.</i></li> <li>• <i>Referendum failures.</i></li> <li>• <i>The failed referendums.</i></li> </ul>	<p>68 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>There is no commonsense spending. We have been taxed to death.</i></li> <li>• <i>Failed bonds - people can't keep paying so much.</i></li> <li>• <i>There seems to be lots of hidden agendas and decisions made behind closed doors.</i></li> <li>• <i>The community doesn't trust the administration.</i></li> <li>• <i>Needs to be open and honest with the community about the real needs of the school.</i></li> <li>• <i>Residents are generally supportive of education but at the same time very fiscally conservative.</i></li> <li>• <i>There has been incomplete communication between the board, superintendent and the community related to facility needs and spending. Especially funding mechanisms.</i></li> <li>• <i>Do not spend so much of the taxpayer's money without asking them first.</i></li> <li>• <i>Will need to bring the community together and stop spending money secretly. This has backfired greatly and made the community unable to trust the district.</i></li> <li>• <i>Taxpayers are wise people who want more input into how their money is spent.</i></li> <li>• <i>Not everything is always explained equitably to the community and transparently.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>There is also a desire for District 518's next superintendent to be an approachable, visible, confident leader who values transparency, listens to staff and the community, and embraces collaboration to address the unique challenges and characteristics of the district.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Needs to understand the needs of each teacher and student.</i></li> <li>• <i>Have knowledge and experience with challenges.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be confident.</i></li> <li>• <i>Know how to handle difficult situations.</i></li> <li>• <i>Don't be afraid to make changes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Let them make a difference - the way they want to lead. Change is not a bad thing. Embrace it.</i></li> <li>• <i>A good leader will come in and take the time to see who the leaders are in the district and capitalize on the strengths of those around.</i></li> <li>• <i>They need to listen to the community and their staff. The ones who are living the classroom life need to be heard.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new superintendent needs to be visible within the schools and community to show they care and are working with all staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>They need to be open-minded about community engagement.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new hire should be someone with a fresh perspective.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new superintendent needs to have previous leadership experience in a school district with high diversity and high poverty rates.</i></li> <li>• <i>Connect with community.</i></li> <li>• <i>There is a need to be very transparent with community members.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new superintendent needs to be approachable and visible in the building and in the community.</i></li> </ul>	<p>49 related responses</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Understanding and empathizing are important characteristics of an effective superintendent.</i></li> <li>• <i>This new superintendent needs to open to change. Be able to keep an open mind.</i></li> <li>• <i>Communication and collaboration with students, educators, and the community is most important.</i></li> <li>• <i>The superintendent needs to appreciate and understand the challenges associated with this unique pop.</i></li> <li>• <i>They need to listen to staff and their needs, and work with them, not against them. They cannot make changes just for the sake of change.</i></li> </ul>	
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**4. Additional Comments:**

<p><b>Overall, survey respondents felt the next superintendent should be a trustworthy, compassionate leader with strong communication skills, a focus on inclusivity, and possess the ability to address both academic and community needs while managing district resources effectively.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We need the superintendent to listen to issues with the students, staff, and community.</i></li> <li>• <i>An important characteristic of the next superintendent is being intentional about making staff feel welcomed.</i></li> <li>• <i>The new superintendent should be a person that believes every employee is valued and needed. Believes that our jobs are important.</i></li> <li>• <i>They should have good communication skills.</i></li> <li>• <i>I'd like to have a person of high moral character.</i></li> <li>• <i>There needs to be more transparency with the public about decisions that are made.</i></li> <li>• <i>I believe the next superintendent needs to be a people person and stand up for their staff.</i></li> <li>• <i>The community needs to see trust, compassion, and a business person.</i></li> <li>• <i>Someone with experience in a diverse school population is necessary.</i></li> <li>• <i>The superintendent needs to address the issues we have in our schools that are beyond academics.</i></li> <li>• <i>I would like to see a leader that listens to experts.</i></li> <li>• <i>We need a competent superintendent that will build trust in our community while managing finances adequately.</i></li> <li>• <i>The district needs someone with more common sense in financial and personnel matters.</i></li> <li>• <i>Superintendent needs to put kids first.</i></li> <li>• <i>Past superintendent experience would be extremely beneficial in order to navigate the issues to be encountered.</i></li> </ul>	<p>36 related responses</p>
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