



**BEACON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BEACON, NEW YORK
LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2016**

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in August and September, 2016, for the new superintendent of the Beacon City School District located in Beacon, NY. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

Group	Personal interviews or focus groups	Online Survey
Board	7	NA
Building level administrators	9	4
Central office administrators	5	
Faculty	6	10
Community/Parents	24	103
Support Staff	5	7
Students	9	5
Total	65	129

(Note: The “community/parents” group included, e.g., city government officials, parents, community member, community leaders and clergy).

The responses provided by the individuals and focus groups during the interviews are listed in two places – 1) “Consistent Themes,” which are listed beginning on page 5 of the report and 2) all responses from individual and group meetings, which begin on page 9. They are listed alphabetically with no attempt to prioritize them.

A separate appendix includes the results of the online survey. Finally, a first draft of superintendent characteristics, to be discussed with the entire Board on September 26, 2016, can be found on page 16.

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should it necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants' judgment, they warranted the Board's attention.

Strengths of the District

Nestled between the Hudson River and Mount Beacon, 65 miles north of New York City, the Beacon City School District is a small city school district composed of 4 elementary schools, a middle school and a high school. Dedicated teachers and staff serve a diverse student body of 2,900 students. The city of Beacon has a rich history and boasts of a vibrant arts community and a recently revitalized Main Street.

Stakeholders described Beacon schools as deeply committed to the success of all students. They applauded the strong relationship between the community and the schools. They described with great pride the achievements of their students as well as the rising graduation rate which was 86.7% last year. There was broad consensus on the quality and dedication of teachers and parental involvement. The stakeholders also noted the following:

- Strong community support for school budgets which passes every year.
- State of the art high school; with well-maintained facilities as a result of community support for capital projects.
- Curricula innovations and enhancements in the arts and athletics through several community partnerships.
- A transportation hub with easy access to major highways, waterways, railways and an international airport, allowing for easy access to New York City, mountains and area parks.

Challenges/Concerns/Issues Facing the District

Stakeholders generally agreed that issues of trust and communication must be addressed between the district and all stakeholders. They also noted that the district should define better the appropriate role of the school board, superintendent and public, as well as ensure greater consistency in application of policy and procedures.

Stakeholders felt that it was extremely important that the district establish a district vision, priorities and goals to provide a direction for the future. In addition, emphasis should be placed on improving staff diversity and stabilizing turnover of district administrators and staff.

Desired Characteristics

The new Superintendent can best establish a basis for success by being visible and accessible in the community, by valuing all staff, communicating and listening as well as utilizing collaborative practices. A combination of knowledge skills (instruction, governance and finance), self-confidence and humility will serve the new Superintendent well. Also there is a strong expectation that the Superintendent will be a visionary who implements innovative and progressive programming that will become a source of community and school pride, while still establishing consistent expectations and practices throughout Beacon City School District.

The new Superintendent will also need to be masterful at establishing and maintaining genuine interpersonal relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and must engage all segments of the community through proactive efforts. He/she should establish open and supportive relationships with administrators, teachers, and support staff while still challenging them to be their best and holding them accountable. Partnering with school board members will be an essential skill that the new superintendent will need in order to provide meaningful and long-term leadership for Beacon.

The new Superintendent should also demonstrate outstanding operational management knowledge and skills. His/her background should include teaching, building-level leadership experience, working in an Urban/Small City school district, and a proven track record of improving student learning.

In addition, the new Superintendent must be able to manage the political process, with an affinity for forward planning. The willingness and ability to continue, enhance and expand partnerships with city, community and local organizations are important to the school district.

In looking at the desired characteristics identified through the online survey results, five characteristics were identified by the majority of respondents as being very important. They are:

- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. (CC)
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)
- Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (VV)
- Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments. (VV)
- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (M)

HYA cannot promise to find a candidate who possesses all of the characteristics desired by respondents. However, HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an

individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to address the concerns expressed by the constituent groups. We will seek a new superintendent who can work with the Beacon School Board to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance in spite of current and future challenges, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and community.

The consultants would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings and/or completed the online survey. Also, we would like to thank all of the Beacon City School District staff members who assisted with our meetings and particularly thank Kelly Pologe and Ann Marie Quartironi for their efforts in facilitating our time in the District.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Raizes
Edward L McCormick
HYA & Associates

Consistent Themes

Strengths

Active and supportive parents
Community support and involvement
Dedicated faculty, staff and administrators- committed to the District
Diverse community
Location – flourishing community, revival of Main Street, beautiful area
Students
Talented, interested and involved parents

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Define the role of the Board
District needs a clear vision
Diversity among staff should be representative of community
Establish District vision, priorities and goals
Identify state and local issues - how they impact each other
Manage public expectations and roles
Need to formalize systems structure – define roles in CO – lack of consistency
Need to rebuild trust – culture of fear, mistrust, retribution, intimidation
Stabilize turnover of administrators and staff

Desired Characteristics

Able to rebuild trust within the District and the community
Can establish a long term plan
Committed to Beacon, longevity
Courage of convictions – can make tough decisions
Energetic, enthusiastic
Good communicator – can articulate vision
Is honest and has integrity
Outgoing, engaging
Proven track record of success
Provide open and transparent direction
Sense of humor
Urban, small city experience preferred
Visible in the schools and the community
Visionary

Online Superintendent Profile Survey Results

The Superintendent Profile survey was completed by 129 stakeholders. Over half of respondents were parents (67 percent). Thirteen percent were community residents. The rest were faculty members, support staff, students, and administrators.

Stakeholder Group		
	Frequency	Percent
Administrator	4	3.1
Community Resident who does not have children in the Beacon City Schools	17	13.2
Faculty Member	10	7.8
Parent/Guardian	86	66.7
Support Staff	7	5.4
Student	5	3.9
Total	129	100.0

Percentages may not add to one hundred percent due to rounding.

The top-rated characteristics respondents selected for a superintendent were:

- Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators. (CC)
- Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members. (CE)
- Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change. (VV)
- Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments. (VV)
- Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools. (M)

Percentages of respondents overall who selected each item, as well as percentages by stakeholder group, are given in the tables on the following pages. Benchmark results from over one hundred and twenty comparable districts, incorporating the ranking of over sixty thousand stakeholders, are also provided in the table to allow for a comparison of results to national norms.

In addition, differences were examined for statistical and practical significance to determine whether the mean scores by stakeholder group differed. Results indicate that, for many items, the various stakeholders were in agreement. On the other hand, there was one item that certain stakeholders valued more than others.

- Administrators and faculty members were significantly more likely than community residents, parents/guardians, and students to choose the Communication & Collaboration item "Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner."

Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)									
Number indicates rank order by overall results		National HYA Benchmark	ALL (129)	Admin. (4)	Comm. Resident (17)	Faculty (10)	Parent/Guardian (86)	S.S. (7)	Student (5)
1	Foster a positive professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators.	40%	68%	50%	65%	90%	69%	57%	60%
2	Listen to and effectively represent the interests and concerns of students, staff, parents, and community members.	45%	51%	0%	41%	40%	56%	71%	40%
3	Have a clear vision of what is required to provide exemplary educational services and implement effective change.	39%	45%	75%	53%	20%	48%	29%	20%
4	Hold a deep appreciation for diversity and the importance of providing safe and caring school environments.	30%	44%	75%	35%	30%	48%	29%	40%
5	Recruit, employ, evaluate, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools.	33%	42%	25%	47%	20%	41%	86%	40%
6	Be visible throughout the District and actively engaged in community life.	33%	36%	75%	35%	50%	30%	43%	80%
7	Promote high expectations for all students and personnel.	34%	35%	25%	24%	40%	35%	57%	40%
8	Lead in an encouraging, participatory, and team-focused manner.	31%	35%	100%	24%	80%	31%	29%	0%
9	Identify, confront, and resolve issues and concerns in a timely manner.	31%	34%	25%	24%	40%	35%	57%	20%
10	Maintain positive and collaborative working relationships with the school board and its members.	25%	33%	25%	65%	30%	29%	29%	0%
11	Increase academic performance and accountability at all levels and for all its students, including special needs populations.	33%	30%	25%	35%	0%	35%	0%	40%
12	Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and in a variety of ways.	27%	29%	25%	53%	20%	26%	29%	40%
13	Hold a deep understanding of the teaching/learning process and of the importance of educational technology.	35%	29%	25%	29%	30%	29%	29%	40%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE- Community Engagement	CC- Communication & Collaboration	M-Management
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Percentage of Respondents Who Selected Each Item (By Subgroups)									
Number indicates rank order by overall results		National HYA Benchmark	ALL (129)	Admin (4)	Comm. Resident (17)	Faculty (10)	Parent/Guardian (86)	S.S. (7)	Student (5)
14	Involve appropriate stakeholders in the decision-making process.	23%	29%	0%	18%	50%	30%	57%	0%
15	Align budgets, long-range plans, and operational procedures with the District's vision, mission, and goals.	24%	29%	0%	41%	20%	31%	14%	0%
16	Provide meaningful guidance for systematic and comprehensive district-wide curriculum, instructional services, assessment programs, and professional development.	27%	28%	25%	47%	20%	28%	14%	0%
17	Encourage a sense of shared responsibility among all stakeholders regarding success in student learning.	33%	26%	25%	35%	20%	27%	14%	20%
18	Strive for continuous improvement in all areas of the District.	31%	25%	25%	18%	30%	23%	29%	60%
19	Effectively plan and manage the long-term financial health of the District.	30%	21%	25%	29%	40%	16%	14%	40%
20	Be an effective manager of the District's day-to-day operations.	21%	21%	25%	18%	30%	15%	57%	60%
21	Develop strong relationships with constituents, local government, area businesses, media, and community partners.	22%	19%	25%	35%	20%	17%	0%	20%
22	Seek a high level of engagement with principals and other school-site leaders.	21%	19%	50%	29%	20%	16%	29%	0%
23	Guide the operation and maintenance of school facilities to ensure secure, safe, and clean school environments that support learning.	22%	18%	25%	12%	20%	15%	57%	20%
24	Act in accordance with the District's mission, vision, and core beliefs.	27%	14%	0%	18%	20%	13%	0%	40%
25	Utilize student achievement data to drive the District's instructional decision-making.	17%	9%	0%	18%	0%	8%	14%	0%

Key	VV-Vision & Values	IL-Instructional Leadership	CE-Community Engagement	CC-Communication & Collaboration	M-Management
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Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

August 30 and September 14, 2016

Listed in alphabetical order

BOARD

Strengths

Blended urban/suburban community
Great size
Improving graduation rate
Money from state, public supports the budget
Resiliency of staff
Robust history; longevity of families

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Clear vision, clear goals, accountability, benchmarks then can start building
Could do more to tap the resources of our parent community
Low morale
Managing change
Managing the expectations of the community
Managing the merger of “Old Beacon” and “New Beacon”
More parental involvement, more parental demands
Need to be proactive with communication
Need to recognize untapped potential of community
Not having enough resources for our students
Preparing our students for the real world

Desired Characteristics

Able to work with the Board
Address problems without being paralyzed
Advocate for staff and students
Can build strong community ties
Commend people for successes, positive reinforcement and follow through
Consistent
Empathy toward employees
Good PR skills
Knowledgeable in education law
Strong leader
Think in big ideas
Understands the financial workings of the district
Well organized, focused

ADMINISTRATORS

Strengths

Community foundations
No budget deficits
Not resource deprived/not financially strapped

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Better understanding of the needs of all children; socio-economic, racial, special needs, ethnicity
Embrace change
Establish clear lines of communication with the community
Establish equity in all schools
Future funding
Hiring and retention of highly qualified staff – competitive pay scale
Knowledge of systems approach to curriculum development k-12
Maintenance and upgrades of buildings and grounds
Manage 6 schools to 1 district
Manage community, board and staff interactions
Need more consistency in curriculum development
Superintendent and Board need to work together/cohesively

Desired Characteristics

Able to deal with the public
Demonstrated record of leadership, academic growth
Dynamic leader able to navigate between various segments of the community and the District
Educational leader – experience as teacher, principal and CO
Empower staff
Experience in small cities and/or urban districts
Experience with bonding projects
Honor work that has been done
Record of closing the achievement gap
Team player
Transparent management process
Willing to listen – not just go through the motions
Willingness to hold staff accountable for responsibilities

FACULTY

Strengths

Relationship with Dia, Calico Ball
Teachers, staff ready to work with the administration

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Dealing with state mandates – misinformation
Financial cutbacks – “extras” have gone away – minimal AP courses, arts programs diminished
Haven’t had the benefit of a long term coherent plan
Low morale
More resources in the schools for the arts – don’t have strings, jazz band
New hires need better guidance – aren’t sure what the expectations are – what is the culture, the vision – no handbook
Technology – initial purchases but no plan for replacement, repair, staff development

Desired Characteristics

Able to work with a diverse group of students, faculty and staff
Advocate at the local and state level for effective teaching
Approachable
Encourage and support partnerships with community groups
Understand what is required from us from the state and what is involved

PARENTS/COMMUNITY

Strengths

District can be a model for the nation
District has so much potential
Faculty make great connections with the students
Town is proud of the high school
Wealth of resources in the community

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Board does not allow superintendent to do his/her job
Educational opportunities mediocre – should offer more advanced courses – more
Expulsion/retention versus restorative justice
Financial challenges
Have a culture in the district that is open to parents and community ideas
Must reach out to underserved groups
Need public forums – maybe twice a month
Need to change narrative – do not focus on the challenges – challenging population –
lower expectations – differences exploited
Need to create a new culture – collaborative environment – meaningful, timely
communication – transparent – follow up – “organization’s culture can devour the
vision”
Need to seek out more grants – lost opportunities
Offer babysitting for meetings
Power has been centralized – need to empower staff – treat with kindness and respect -
culture of opposition
Public comments aren’t allowed until late at night
Racial divide – recognize inherent, hidden biases
Reach out to community groups – bring them into the schools
Should hold Executive Sessions on different days than Board meeting
Special Education – parents feel marginalized
Teachers and building administrators need to feel supported by Central Office
Technology instruction
Time limit for comments off putting
Two Beacons – need to appreciate both
Uncertainty in the community about the Board, Board is changing – are they committed to
continuous improvement – culture of secrecy
Use poverty as an excuse to say “no”
Vocational opportunities

Desired Characteristics

Can bring diverse populations together
Can have an open dialogue with teachers, staff, community, Board

Committed to social justice
Creative problem solver
Embraces a welcoming environment
Energy for change – not fear the process
Enjoys meeting with parents
Excited by the challenge of unifying the community
Experience in managing growth and changing demographics
Experience with children of color – different cultures
Fresh set of eyes
Inspirational
Knows Special Education – treats parents and children with respect
Not afraid to hear hard truths – can build on strengths
Open to constructive criticism
Open to hearing parents
Proactive, creative thinker
Proven track record of accountability
Proven track record of innovative ideas
Recognizes and retains strong administrators
Recognizes the importance of all children
Strong background in instruction
Strong leader who can give direction
Take a stand on state issues
Values arts in education

STUDENTS

Strengths

Academic programs, drama, sports
Arts and tourism
Safe community

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Academic equity across the board
Equity in sports programs
Instill school pride
More involvement in after school programs by students and parents
More superintendent visibility in the schools
Overcome negative reputation
Seek input of students on issues directly affecting the students

Desired Characteristics

Knowledge of Beacon
Understanding of urban community
Will display pride in the school

SUPPORT STAFF

Strengths

Clerical staff holds the District together
Good employees who want to see the District succeed

Challenges/Concerns/Issues

Additional staff training
Inconsistent application of rules
Low morale – who can you trust
Manage politics between superintendent, Board, staff and community
Many single parents, guardianships – need support
More accountability for both management and staff
Need for healing
Need programs for high school students not going to college
Need to hold people accountable – yearly evaluations – define roles
People do not feel appreciated – low pay scale

Desired Characteristics

Appreciate the people who are here
Develop and implement a 90 day plan
Experience developing afterschool programs
Fair – doesn't play favorites
Hands on
Has experience through all the levels
Inspiring
Needs to be the face of the District
Strong leader – decisive – doesn't micromanage
Transparent management
Will have no hidden agenda
Willing to engage employees
Willing to stay 5 years



DRAFT FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

**Beacon City School District
Superintendent of Schools
Desired Characteristics**

After seeking input from its Board members, parents, staff, students, and community via focus groups, interviews, and an online survey, the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District seeks a **strong and energetic educational leader** who possesses the following characteristics:

A collaborative and engaging communicator who:

- Builds trust and engenders respect through collaborative, consistent and transparent interactions with the Board, faculty, staff, administrators, parents, and community members
- Invests time and energy in building relationships with all stakeholder groups
- Interacts in an approachable and authentic manner with all stakeholders
- Demonstrates fairness, honesty and integrity
- Is visible throughout the District and actively involved in the community
- Is an effective communicator who can set goals and effectively articulate a vision
- Has a sense of humor

An effective and insightful systems thinker who:

- Embodies the vision, mission and values of the Beacon City Schools
- Establishes and implements long and short range plans
- Holds him/herself accountable as well as the faculty, staff and administrators for implementing the shared goals

With regard to leadership experiences and accomplishments, the successful candidate will:

- Be certified, or capable of gaining certification, in New York State
- Demonstrates a solid track record of increasing responsibilities and success