



# Superintendent Search Leadership Profile Report



Prepared by  
Hamilton County Educational Service Center  
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# Superintendent Search Leadership Profile Report

## About This Report

This report is designed to equip the Board of Education with a clear, evidence-based foundation for selecting the district's next superintendent. It synthesizes input from approximately 800 survey participants and 27 focus group sessions spanning staff, students, families, and community members. The findings reflect a district with genuine strengths, real pressures, a clear desire for direction and they point to the leadership qualities needed to carry the district forward.

*Prepared by HCESC Superintendents in Residence: Natasha Adams and Marlon Styles*

## I. Executive Summary

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Forest Hills School District is a high-performing system with deep community pride, committed educators, and a strong record of academic achievement. Stakeholders across every group reflect genuine confidence in the district's foundations. Stressors on the system have emerged in the data, yet it is not a district in crisis; it is a district at an inflection point.

Student needs are growing more complex. Community demographics are shifting. Post-pandemic realities continue to reshape what schools must deliver. Enrollment has declined, economic disadvantage has increased, students' needs have increased and chronic absenteeism has risen all while academic performance has continued to advance. The system is carrying more weight while operating under greater scrutiny.

Stakeholder feedback is consistent on what is needed next: not total reinvention, but greater coherence, clearer priorities, and stronger trust. The district's next chapter requires aligning what is strong and building for the future.

## What Stakeholders Are Asking For

Across all surveys and focus groups, stakeholders expressed a shared vision for the district's future:

- A unified district capable of navigating division while staying grounded in what is best for students
- A workforce that is supported, developed, and retained
- Schools and departments operating fiscally responsibly with shared priorities and consistent practices
- Leadership that communicates with transparency and earns community trust
- Fewer initiatives, executed with greater discipline and follow-through
- A future-ready educational experience that preserves academic excellence
- A long-term strategic, financial and facilities plan aligned to enrollment trends, student and community needs

## The Decision Before the Board

The focus group conversations revealed the community’s emerging confidence in the potential of this Board of Education. It is also evident that everyone views the selection of the next superintendent as the most consequential decision the Board will make in this phase of the district’s history. The right leader will not only protect what makes Forest Hills School District strong, they will create the conditions for greater alignment, trust, and forward momentum. The leader chosen must be able to build trust, establish clear priorities, align the system from classroom to Board table, and lead with focus and integrity under pressure.

## II. Understand the Context

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Before examining what stakeholders want in a new leader, it is essential to understand the environment that the next leader will inherit — at the national, state, and local levels.

### A. The National Landscape

School Districts across the country are navigating a period of significant complexity. Leaders are being asked to simultaneously address expanded academic, behavioral, and mental health needs; personalize learning while maintaining high standards; prepare students for a rapidly evolving workforce; and rebuild trust with families and communities that experienced disruption during and after the pandemic. Staffing challenges, leadership pipeline concerns, and increased public scrutiny are compounding pressures in nearly every district, regardless of size or reputation.

### B. The State Context

Within the state, Ohio operates in a dynamic environment shaped by evolving funding structures, changing accountability expectations, and expanding responsibilities without proportional increases in resources. Pending legislation presents potential challenges for all districts. High-performing districts like Forest Hills School District also face a competitive regional landscape where family expectations remain high and options including home education, private, charter, and open enrollment are considerations.

### C. Local Shifts and Emerging Needs

The district’s own data tells a story of a system that continues to perform well academically while absorbing meaningful demographic, social change, and post-covid realities:

| Indicator                    | What the Data Show  |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Enrollment</b>            | Recent decrease in enrollment is projected to continue at a slowed rate into future years   |
| <b>Economic Disadvantage</b> | Percentage of students with economic disadvantage has climbed significantly in recent years |

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Students with Disabilities</b> | Significant increase in high need categories |
| <b>Chronic Absenteeism</b>        | Sharp increase over the past decade          |
| <b>Academic Achievement</b>       | Continues to advance                         |

Data Sources: 2014-2015 report card & 2024-25, HR Committee Presentation 3.4.26

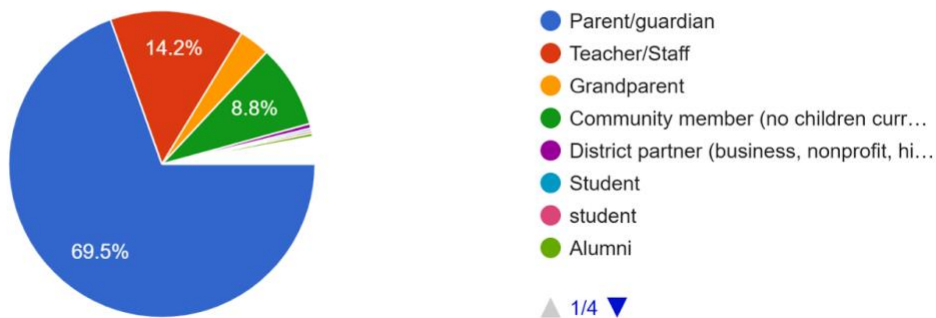
These changes do not indicate decline; they reflect evolving conditions that require different approaches. Forest Hills School District is a strong system that must now adapt and align to sustain its excellence in a more complex environment.

### III. What Stakeholders Told Us

Input was gathered through district-wide surveys (~800 participants), focus groups at all levels of the system (~27 elementary, secondary, central office, and community), and student voice sessions. A SOAR analysis was also conducted with district and building leadership. The survey participation reflects stakeholder representation across the community and the findings are consistent across sources.

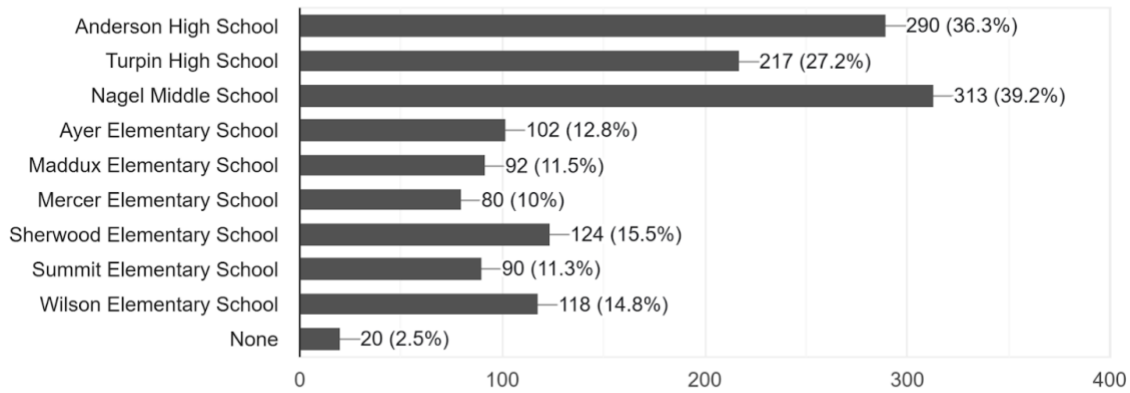
Which stakeholder group do you primarily identify with in relation to our school district?

798 responses



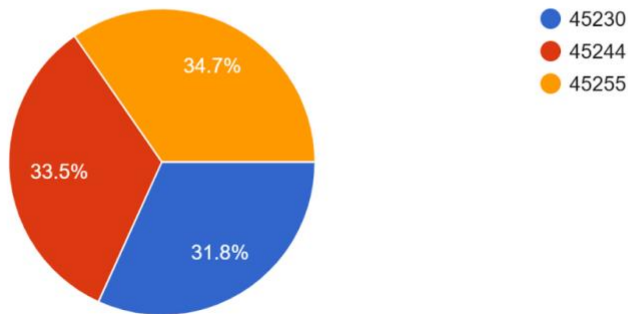
**With which school(s) are you most connected?**

798 responses



**What is your zip code? (FHSD resident home zip code. Non-FHSD resident select work zip code)**

799 responses



**A. Community Confidence: Net Promoter Score**

Survey participants were asked to rate, on a scale of 0–10, how likely they are to recommend the district. This yielded a Net Promoter Score (NPS) — a widely used measure of organizational trust and advocacy.

| Group                         | Result                                     |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Promoters (score 9–10)</b> | ~43% — active advocates for the district   |
| <b>Passives (score 7–8)</b>   | ~41% — satisfied but not fully committed   |
| <b>Detractors (score 0–6)</b> | ~16% — those with reservations or concerns |

|                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Net Promoter Score</b> | +27 — a solid positive indicator |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|

**What This Score Means**  
 An NPS in positive territory reflects genuine community support and more advocates than critics. While the district is not without concerns, stakeholders broadly recommend it. The presence of passives and detractors signals an opportunity: with stronger communication, clearer direction, and more consistent trust-building, Forest Hills School District has a real path from "great" to "exceptional" in the eyes of its community.

### B. What Stakeholders Want Protected

When asked which current district priorities the next superintendent must preserve, stakeholders were clear:

- **Academic Excellence** — the district's core identity and defining strength
- **Wellness Supports for Students** — whole-learner care (physical, social, emotional, mental)
- **Stewardship of Taxpayer Investments** — responsible, transparent use of community resources

### C. The Top Priorities for the Next Five Years

Looking ahead, stakeholders identified three priorities they want the next superintendent to lead:

- **Modernizing Learning** —e.g., integrating AI, technology, STEM education, internships, and real-world pathways
- **Raising Academic Performance** — sustaining and deepening the district's commitment to achievement
- **Developing a Long-Term Facilities Plan** — addressing enrollment trends, program needs, and responsible stewardship

### D. The Superintendent Skillsets That Matter Most

Survey participants rated the importance of specific leadership skillsets for the next superintendent. The top five, in order:

| Priority Skillset                          | What Stakeholders Are Looking For                          |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Clear, Transparent Communication</b> | Proactive, honest, and accessible — not just informational |
| <b>2. Trust and Relationship Building</b>  | A culture of care, credibility, and genuine connection     |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>3. Instructional Expertise</b>                | Deep understanding of teaching, learning, and what it takes to lead educators |
| <b>4. Financial &amp; Operational Competence</b> | Sound judgment and long-range planning with community resources               |
| <b>5. Visionary Strategic Leadership</b>         | The ability to create and sustain a clear, actionable direction               |

### E. Themes from Open-Ended Responses

When given the opportunity to write in their own words, stakeholders reinforced and deepened these priorities. Six clear themes emerged:

| Theme                                 | What People Said  | What It Means  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Rise Above Politics</b>            | "Keep politics out of schools" / "Focus on students, not agendas"                   | The community is divided yet united in wanting leadership that neutralizes, not amplifies, polarization. |
| <b>Be Visibly Relational</b>          | "Know the staff, know the kids" / "Be in the buildings" / "Listen to all voices"    | Stakeholders want a present, human-centered leader.  |
| <b>Put Students First</b>             | "Students first" / "All students" / "Focus on learning and well-being"              | This is the unifying value across every stakeholder group.   |
| <b>Have Instructional Credibility</b> | "Spent time in the classroom" / "Understand what teachers face"                     | Stakeholders want a leader who understands the realities of the modern classroom.                        |
| <b>Lead With Courage</b>              | "Not afraid to make tough decisions" / "Strong character" / "Stand up to the board" | Stakeholders want someone who holds firm, says no when necessary, and has integrity.                     |
| <b>Stay Focused</b>                   | "Keep the main thing the main thing" / "Avoid trends and bandwagons"                | Stakeholders feel the system is overextended; they want focus, not more initiatives.                     |

## F. Focus Group Highlights

### *Key Take-Aways from Elementary Student Voice:*

1. Relationships Come First
2. Learning Should Be Active and Engaging
3. Balance Is Essential for Learning and Well-Being
4. Safety and Support Are Foundational
5. Student Voice Matters
6. Traditions and Experiences Should Be Preserved
7. Learning Should Be Personalized and Flexible
8. The Physical Environment Impacts Learning
9. Time Structures Shape the Student Experience
10. Leadership Should Be Student-Centered
  - Kind
  - Respectful
  - Honest
  - Helpful
  - Fun

Students across the elementary level are asking for a school day that is:

- More caring** (relationships and belonging)
- More engaging** (learning and experiences)
- More balanced** (well-being and structure of the day)

This creates a clear expectation that the next superintendent must lead with visibility, kindness, and attentiveness to student needs, while ensuring that schools foster strong relationships, engaging learning environments, and a healthy balance between academic expectations and student well-being.

### *Key Take-Aways from Secondary Student Voice:*

1. Strong Relationships with Teachers Are Foundational
2. Desire for Student Voice → From Input to Impact
3. Leadership Visibility and Relational Trust
4. Demand for More Personalized, Relevant Learning
5. Prepare Students for Life Beyond School
6. Student Stress and Well-Being Are Growing Concerns
7. Importance of Belonging, Inclusion, and Community
8. Desire for Modernization and Future Readiness
9. Equity and Fairness Matter to Students
10. Definition of an Effective Superintendent (Student Perspective)
  - Student-centered
  - A strong communicator
  - Visible and relational
  - Empathetic and humble
  - Inclusive and collaborative
  - Responsive to feedback
  - Forward-thinking and innovative

Students across both levels are asking for a system that is:

- **More connected** (relationships and voice)
- **More relevant** (learning and pathways)
- **More responsive** (leadership and decision-making)

This creates a clear expectation that the next superintendent must lead through visibility, trust, and meaningful engagement, while simultaneously advancing modern, student-centered learning experiences.

*Key Take-Aways from Elementary Staff Focus Groups:*

1. Relationships are the foundation
2. Stay focused on the whole child
3. Simplify and stabilize the system
4. Value and trust educators
5. Increase support systems and staffing
6. Address student behavior and changing needs
7. Balance equity with flexibility
8. Lead with both strategy and grounded presence
9. Rebuild a sense of being known and valued
10. Protect and strengthen community and culture

Elementary staff across the district are asking for a system that is:

- **More connected** (relationships, visibility, and trust)
- **More supported** (resources, staffing, and meeting diverse student needs)
- **More focused** (clarity, coherence, and fewer initiatives)

This creates a clear expectation that the next superintendent must lead with a strong, visible presence in schools, prioritize people and relationships, and bring disciplined focus to the district's work ensuring access to resources without forcing uniformity, so that all students are supported appropriately while honoring the unique needs of each school community.

*Key Take-Aways from Secondary Staff Focus Groups:*

1. The district is at a critical turning point
2. Strong desire for visible, connected leadership
3. Trust, transparency, and communication are essential
4. Staff want a voice in decisions
5. Need for bold, decisive action
6. System coherence is lacking
7. Equity gaps are a concern
8. Student experience is a strength
9. Culture is strong but fragile
10. Need for a clear identity and future vision
11. Desire for innovation with stability
12. Need for a stronger partnership with central office

Staff across the secondary level are asking for a system that is:

- **More aligned** (coherence, consistency, and shared vision)

- **More inclusive** (voice, collaboration, and trust)
- **More decisive** (clear direction, bold action, and follow-through)

This creates a clear expectation that the next superintendent must lead with visibility, transparency, and strong relational trust, while establishing system-wide coherence and making timely, student-centered decisions that move the district forward.

*Key Take-Aways from District Office Focus Group:*

1. Relationships and people matter most
2. Stability is a strength to protect
3. Strong system but needs greater alignment and coherence
4. Leadership must be visible, present, and connected
5. All staff want to feel valued, trusted, and empowered
6. Clear communication and transparency are essential
7. Leaders should inspire and motivate rather than control
8. Decisions must remain student-centered and grounded in integrity
9. Listening deeply to staff is a critical leadership expectation

District office staff are asking for a system that is:

- **More connected** (relationships, visibility, and approachability)
- **More aligned** (clear expectations, consistency, and shared direction)
- **More empowerment** (trust, value of all roles, and distributed leadership)

This creates a clear expectation that the next superintendent must lead with presence, transparency, and integrity, while building trust across all roles, aligning the system around clear priorities, and empowering staff to do their best work in service of students.

*Key Take-Aways from Family/Community Voice:*

1. Strong Desire for Stability After Perceived Leadership Disruption
2. Community Division is a Central Reality
3. High Expectation for Leadership Strength (Not Just Likeability)
4. Tension Between Tradition and Innovation
5. Trust is Low and Must Be Rebuilt Intentionally
6. Concern About Direction, Focus, and Coherence
7. Expectation of Superintendent as Both CEO and Community Leader
8. Urgency Around Future Readiness
9. Deep Value Placed on Teachers and Staff

Community members are asking for a district that is:

- **More unified** (bridging divisions, reducing conflict, and creating shared purpose)
- **More transparent** (clear communication, honest decision-making, and visible leadership)
- **More future-focused** (modernized learning, expanded pathways, and long-term planning)

This creates a clear expectation that the next superintendent must lead with courage, clarity, and consistency, while rebuilding trust across a divided community, aligning the system around a focused vision, and preparing all students for success in a rapidly changing world.

## Top Priorities for the Next 5 Years

Across groups, family and community members consistently identified a need to both **preserve excellence and modernize the system**.

### Key Priorities:

- **Academic Excellence (Foundation)**
  - Maintain strong academic performance and reputation
  - Increase rigor and relevance for all students (not just top performers)
- **Future-Ready Learning**
  - Integrate AI and technology intentionally
  - Emphasize critical thinking, real-world skills, and adaptability
  - Ensure students are prepared for college, careers, trades, and military pathways
- **Expanded Student Pathways**
  - More career exploration, internships, and non-traditional opportunities
  - Broaden access beyond AP/college-bound tracks
  - Attend to gaps in the the “middle” average student
- **Mental Health & Student Well-Being**
  - Continued and expanded focus on social-emotional supports
  - Recognized as both essential and, at times, a point of community tension
  - Evaluate appropriate use of technology level
- **Long-Term Facilities & Financial Planning**
  - Address aging infrastructure and configuration challenges
  - Plan proactively for enrollment shifts and levy needs
  - Increase efficiency and sustainability
- **District Reputation & Brand**
  - Restore and strengthen the district’s image as a “destination district”
  - Attract and retain high-quality staff and families

## G. What Differs Across the System

While the broad themes are consistent, each level of the district experiences its priorities differently. Understanding these differences helps the next superintendent lead the whole system:

| Level                | What They Value Most                                      | Core Message                     |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Elementary</b>    | Belonging, safety, early learning foundation, consistency | "Build the right foundation."    |
| <b>Middle School</b> | Alignment, coherence, and support across the system       | "Make the system work together." |
| <b>High School</b>   | Rigor, relevance, and meaningful outcomes                 | "Deliver results that matter."   |

|                 |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| <b>Students</b> | Relationships, voice, and authentic learning experiences | "Know us. Including us. Challenge us." |
|-----------------|--|--|

The next superintendent must be able to simultaneously protect academic rigor and relevance, build coherent systems, and strengthen culture and belonging, meeting each level of the system where it is while moving all of them forward together.

## IV. District & Building Leadership Perspective: SOAR Analysis

District and building administrators completed a structured SOAR analysis — examining Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Risks. Their perspective adds critical depth as these are the leaders closest to the daily work of the system.

Their central message was consistent and clear: this is not a system that needs to be fixed. It is a system that needs to be re-focused.

### Strengths

- High-quality, committed people at all levels of the organization
- Strong building leadership and a culture that invests in leadership development
- Collaborative, trusting culture with appropriate autonomy at the building level
- Deep pride in the district's schools, programs, and community identity
- An already opportunity-rich environment for students

### Aspirations

- Simplified, clear direction — a shared and coherent definition of excellence
- Stronger district-to-building alignment that enables consistent execution
- Deeper implementation of the right work, rather than broader expansion of initiatives
- Meaningful innovation aligned to the future of learning and work
- Systems designed to meet the needs of every student, including those most underserved
- A unified community with less noise, more shared understanding, and greater trust

### Opportunities

- Shifting from initiative overload to disciplined execution of clear priorities
- Establishing consistent messaging and transparent communication across the district
- Strengthening early learning and foundational support systems
- Improving alignment between district strategy and the building-level experience
- Developing a culture of focused leadership: prioritize, say no, follow through

### Risks

- Community division and pressure from vocal groups on both ends of the political spectrum
- Initiative fatigue and the loss of focus that comes from too many competing priorities
- Growing behavioral, academic, and demographic complexity without aligned systems

- Reactive decision-making in place of proactive, strategic leadership
- Staff morale and retention challenges under sustained pressure
- Falling behind the pace of change in a rapidly evolving educational landscape

**Important takeaways:**

- The district is not broken; avoid unnecessary disruption to what is working.
- The Board plays a critical role in setting the tone, culture, and focus of the organization.
- Strong alignment between the Board and the next superintendent is essential.
- The Board and next superintendent will need to govern effectively to lead a strategic vision — the next superintendent will need the space to lead.

**V. From Current State to Future State**

The stakeholder data tells a coherent story. Understanding where the district is, where it needs to go, and what must be established to get there is the foundation for identifying the right leader.

| Current State          | Conditions to be Set                | Desired Future State                                  |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Strong but fragmented  | Clarity of direction                | Focused and coherent                                  |
| Initiative overload    | Disciplined execution               | Fewer priorities, fully implemented                   |
| Community division     | Unifying, trust-building leadership | Shared vision and common ground                       |
| Communication gaps     | Transparent, consistent messaging   | High-trust relationships                              |
| System misalignment    | District-to-building coherence      | One district, one direction, best in class reputation |
| Evolving student needs | Adaptive systems and supports       | Every student prepared and supported                  |
| Short-term focused     | Staff & community collaboration     | Long term strategic and facilities plan               |

This leader does not need to transform a struggling system; they need to **align a strong one**. The work ahead is about coherence, trust, and clarity. That is a different and, in many ways, harder challenge than turning around a district in crisis. It requires a leader who can hold complexity, resist distraction, and move people toward a shared future without disrupting what already works.

## VI. The Leadership Profile

The following profile reflects what stakeholders across the district have told us, synthesized into a prioritized framework. It is organized into three tiers to reflect the district's most urgent needs first, followed by the capabilities required for sustained performance, and finally the qualities that will position Forest Hills School District for long-term success.

### Core Leadership Statement

The next superintendent must be someone who builds trust, provides clear direction, and leads the system toward continuous improvement while honoring the strengths of the Forest Hills School District and its community. They must demonstrate leadership impact in **engaging stakeholders, solving complex problems, leading through conflict, driving change at scale, and developing talent in a large, high-expectation system.**

### TIER 1 — NON-NEGOTIABLES

#### Trust and Stability

These qualities are essential. Without them, success in Forest Hills School District is compromised.

#### 1. Student-Centered Leadership

- Keeps student success and well-being at the center of every decision
- Balances academic rigor with real-world readiness
- Ensures safety, belonging, and opportunity for every student
- Demonstrates a deep and genuine belief that all students can succeed

#### 2. Integrity and Trust

- Communicates openly, proactively, and with clarity
- Follows through on commitments consistently
- Makes decisions that align with stated values — and explains them
- Is approachable, visible, and authentic in relationships

#### 3. Unifier and Bridge Builder

- Listens to diverse perspectives with respect and genuine neutrality
- Finds common ground and builds alignment around students and learning
- De-escalates tension and resists reactive leadership
- Creates a sense of "one district" across differing viewpoints

#### 4. Community-Connected Leader

- Regularly present in schools, classrooms, and community settings
- Builds authentic relationships with students, staff, families, and community members
- Understands and honors the history and identity of the district
- Demonstrates a long-term commitment — not a stepping-stone mentality

## TIER 2 — CORE CAPABILITIES

### Performance and Alignment

These capabilities move the district forward once trust and stability are established.

#### 5. Commitment to Academic Excellence

- Serves as the district's lead learner, modeling curiosity and growth
- Demonstrates deep understanding of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and technology integration
- Sets clear expectations for rigor and consistency across schools
- Develops and supports teachers and leaders as the district's greatest asset

#### 6. Complex Systems Leadership

- Leads teams effectively up (board), across (cabinet/district), down (principals/buildings) and outward (community)
- Serves as a credible advocate for public education
- Maintains focus on students despite political noise or external pressure
- Works to strengthen Board-Superintendent alignment and healthy governance
- Makes decisions grounded in values, evidence, and student impact

#### 7. Commitment to the Whole Child

- Creates environments where every student feels known and valued
- Prioritizes safety and student well-being alongside academic performance
- Supports diverse learners and removes barriers to access and opportunity
- Balances high expectations with the appropriate supports to achieve them

## TIER 3 — ENABLERS OF LONG-TERM SUCCESS

### Sustainability and Future Readiness

These qualities ensure the district's coherence, sustainability, and growth over time.

#### 8. Strategic and Future-Oriented Planning

- Establishes a focused, actionable, and broadly understood vision
- Prepares students for a changing world: technology, careers, and life
- Aligns systems, people, and resources to long-term priorities
- Communicates strategic direction clearly and consistently

#### 9. Fiscal Stewardship

- Demonstrates strong budgeting, financial planning, and resource management
- Communicates transparently about financial decisions and their rationale
- Aligns spending with strategic and educational goals
- Plans responsibly for facilities, staffing, and long-term organizational needs

#### 10. Courageous and Decisive Leadership

- Makes timely, informed decisions using a clear, transparent process
- Addresses challenges directly rather than avoiding or deferring them

- Holds self and others accountable for results with fairness and consistency
- Stands firm in student-centered decisions, even when they are unpopular

## VII. Guidance for the Board of Education

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The stakeholder data provides the Board with more than a candidate profile; it provides a call to action. The following considerations are designed to help the Board use this information effectively in the selection process and in the leadership transition ahead.

### 1. Protect What the Community Values Most

Stakeholders were consistent on what the next superintendent must preserve. These are non-negotiables, the core of what makes Forest Hills School District worth choosing:

- Academic Excellence
- Wellness Supports for Students
- Stewardship of Taxpayer Investments

### 2. Advance the District's Highest Priorities

Stakeholders are ready for the district to move forward. The next superintendent should be evaluated on their readiness to lead in three areas that reflect broad community alignment:

- Modernizing learning for a changing world
- Raising academic performance for all students
- Developing a credible, long-term strategic & facilities plan

As a new Board of Education, there is a critical opportunity to use this stakeholder data to establish shared clarity as a leadership team. Stakeholder feedback is consistent: Forest Hills is a strong district that has a clear desire to move forward to elevate the student experience and overall district reputation. While there is broad alignment on key priorities, there is less agreement on “how” and differing views on the pace and scope of change. This creates an important responsibility for the Board to calibrate both the direction of the district and the degree of change required—setting a clear “north star” that reflects the needs of modern learners, increasing student complexity, the needs of a modern workforce and the community’s commitment to excellence.

The next superintendent must be able to build shared understanding across differing perspectives and translate that direction into aligned action. This includes engaging stakeholders in a clear vision for the future, identifying the specific areas that require transformation, and leading the appropriate level of change at the right pace, ensuring progress is meaningful, focused, and sustainable.

### 3. Address the Most Urgent Need: Unity and Trust

Across every data source, one need rises above all others: the district needs leadership that can build genuine relationships, restore trust, and unify a community that has experienced real division. Candidates should be assessed directly on their track record in this area.

**Sources of Division the Next Leader Must Navigate:**

- **Structural and equitable challenges** between the district’s two high schools, one middle school and six neighborhood elementary schools
- **Political and ideological polarization**, including differing perspectives on belonging, curriculum, DEI, and the role of schools
- **Tradition and innovation**, there is a desire for both with a need to see these as complementary rather than competing priorities
- **Differing views on the purpose and design of education**, including the role of technology, the focus of college, career, military, and entrepreneurial pathways, and the need to expand and diversify learning experiences for the continuum of students we serve.

Critically, this tension is navigable. Both sides of the ideological divide share a core desire: student-centered, trustworthy, stable leadership. The next superintendent's ability to articulate shared values — without inflaming divisions — will determine how effectively the district moves forward.

#### 4. Five Questions to Guide Your Selection

The Board should be able to answer each of the following confidently before making a selection:

| Evaluation Question   | What to Look For  |
|---|---|
| <b>1. Does this candidate have a documented record of unifying a divided community when making decisions on controversial topics?</b> | Concrete examples of building trust across differing stakeholder groups, clear decision making processes and decisiveness |
| <b>2. Can they reduce complexity and drive aligned, focused action?</b>   | Evidence of strategic prioritization, disciplined execution, and measurable results                                       |
| <b>3. Do they have instructional credibility and a record of improving strategic outcomes?</b>  | Demonstrated impact on teaching, learning, and student achievement in a complex system                                    |
| <b>4. Do they possess political acumen?</b>   | A history of principled, student-centered decisions under pressure  |
| <b>5. Are they committed to the FHSD schools and community for the long haul?</b>   | A posture of investment — not a candidacy of convenience with a clear understanding of the future of education            |

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## VIII. Conclusion

Forest Hills School District has what many districts aspire to: committed educators, strong academic performance, proud community roots, and a genuine desire to be excellent. The work ahead is about elevation and unlocking full potential.

The next chapter of this district's success depends on finding a leader who can hold the tension between honoring what works and building what's next. Someone who listens before they lead, earns trust before they ask for change, and stays relentlessly focused on students when everything else competes for attention.

This report is designed to help the Board set direction for the future of the district and find their next superintendent to inspire and execute on the vision.

## IX. Appendix

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### March 2026 Survey Data

- [Spreadsheet](#)

### Focus Group Summaries

- [Elementary Students](#)
- [Secondary Students](#)
- [Elementary Staff](#)
- [Secondary Staff](#)
- [District Level Staff](#)
- [Family and Community](#)