Your responses to these questions help us recruit quality candidates.

#1: What makes your community a good place to live?
1. Neighborhood schools
2. Strong sense of community
3. The wide diversity of people
4. Vibrant small city - festivals, races, family friendly events
5. College town
6. The lake
7. Good school district, BCL program, Maker's space at school, farm to school program
8. Local food and drink
9. Healthy, active lifestyles
10. Sense of community, people care
11. Quality of life
12. Community-minded, everyone cares
13. Access to outdoor recreational activities
14. Economic and political engine of the state
15. There is an opportunity for people to access politicians and voice their thoughts
16. Vibrant arts culture
17. Thoughtful leadership process in many levels of our government
18. Engaged electorate
19. There are many cultural opportunities due to proximity to Montreal and Boston
20. Good track record of approving of school budgets
21. There is an international airport here
22. City is committed to improving our infrastructure.
23. Historically, Burlington voters have been supportive of schools
24. In 10 minutes, you can be in the country
25. Has an urban center in a suburban setting
26. Good hospital
27. Amazing farm-to-table culture that engages with the community
28. Bike path; access to outdoor recreation
29. Graduates do well.
30. Parents want good things for their kids but are realistic about expectations
31. It's physically beautiful
32. Becoming increasingly bike friendly
33. There is a sense of history in the area
34. Politicians are accessible in a down to earth kind of way
35. Connections to the universities (UVM, Champlain)
36. The sidewalks get plowed
There is not a competitive environment for high schools/few private schools. A lot of people here have deep community roots and come from families who have lived her for generations. Burlington is the big leagues in Vermont; it is a great place to live and work with an exceptional quality of life. Strong queer community.

#2: What makes this a good school community - for Students and Staff?

1. Strong family involvement
2. Magnet schools are an asset
3. Strong teaching staff
4. Grassroots nature of school - community members help out with a lot of engagement
5. The diversity makes BSD unique in Vermont
6. Neighborhood schools build community
7. Many opportunities for students
8. Schools have good synergy and collaboration with wrap-around services.
10. Engaged students. Student voice is valued.
11. Flexibility for students within the system; taking care of all kids
12. Innovative for the potential for more
14. Music programs
15. Magnet schools are an asset
16. Community partnerships
17. Exposure to diversity, many kinds. Racial, gender, ability, socio-economic
18. Theater and drama program
19. Most people send their students to neighborhood/public schools
20. Incredibly caring and kind community
21. Faculty has a strong community of support
22. Easy for families to get involved
23. There are community schools-many of them are in walkable distance
24. After school programs are great.
25. Kids can walk to local schools or take public transportation
26. Great preschool program, EEE
27. Librarians amazing. Enrichment activities.
28. A culture of innovation...in pockets
29. Burlington has a culturally diverse population which exposes kids to diversity that they would not experience in other schools in VT
30. High school has good track record of student going onto post-high school programs
31. Burlington Tech Center has good reputation of programming
32. Classes (regardless of grades) interact
33. Schools leverage their immediate local area
School board is dedicated and hardworking, communicates well.
There is some choice for schools - not just limited to local.
There are ton of amazing teachers and staff
There are ton of volunteers
Very good communication from the district & schools
Burlington is highly coveted as a place to work and live; therefore they have neighbors and colleagues for many years
There is racial, ethnic and socio-economic diversity
There is a strong union that protects salary and benefits
High school offers a wide range of programming
After school programming accommodates working parents
District finances have been well managed for the past few years

#3: What are the issues a new Superintendent must know as they come to the district?
1. Community involvement can be intense
2. Some groups in the community need to be engaged
3. A little knowledge can be a dangerous thing (parent involvement). Can overpower other voices. Only voices are the upper, educated class. How to figure out how everyone has a voice.
4. Wide array of needs and lack of resources
5. Schools provide many social services
6. PBL controversial in our district. Lots of questions around that. How to best serve students move into higher education. Transcripts not well understood.
7. There has been a lot of change in leadership in the last few years
8. Governance is an issue. School Board changes all the time. AOE interaction is different in every community. A lot of local control.
9. Huge disparity among non-white students receiving a significantly higher levels of punishment than their white peers.
10. There needs to be a new Burlington High School; the bond passed but work has not commenced
11. There is always an overwhelming need of services when kids enter the district.
12. Because of diversity, there is a language barrier to overcome when the district and schools are communicating.
13. Big changes in special education funding. Students with IEPs aren't getting what they need already.
14. VT is the 7th highest taxed state in the nation; Burlington is one of the highest taxed cities in the state; people are suffering from tax fatigue
15. Need for improved coordination between High School/Middle Schools for curriculum. Example: mandated HS freshman Earth Science that has significant overlap with Middle School coursework
16. Our policy (4500) is not legal. When can hands be on, when off, when can constraints be used, seclusion, etc.
17. The state, as a whole, is grappling with proficiency based grading
Need for improved communication/coordination between departments at the HS
Complication around implementation of state mandates; teachers and parents are confused about them
In high school, the shrinking number of honors classes, gaps in schedules.
Burlington is a very political city, need to be aware of the multiple facets that need to be recognized and kept in balance.
Both Central Office and the campuses need better oversight.
Guidance issues from the past few years.
College fact sheet hasn't been accurate the past few years.
The High School renovation project is currently estimated above the bond-approved amount.
Need for enhanced physical security at schools
The superintendent is required to live in the school district so that he or she has skin in the game
Transgender students feel some discrimination (elementary and middle)
The middle school foreign language program is severely lacking, and absent in the elementary schools
Teacher morale is low for many teachers due to lack of engagement and transparency. They don't feel valued or heard.
Parents choose alternative, out-of-school programs because opportunities are not being provided in the elementary schools
Television is used for programming for a surprising amount of time.
Athletics: We don't have the kind of programs, performance, or leadership that we should have. Include athletic directors just as you would teachers in curriculum and learning.
Burlington is a very political city, need to be aware of the multiple facets that need to be recognized and kept in balance.
Need to look hard at the entire K-12 curriculum
The super should be aware that there is a new guidance counselor team at the high school, and ask why
Burlington Technical Center and BHS are competing for dollars
Some schools allow kids to have access to their cell phones during class time.
District operates in silos. No alignment or synergy with the good things or bad things so things get addressed at the higher level. System thinker is needed!
"Initiative Fatigue", lack of holistic approach to new programming
Proficiency-Based Learning is a hot topic in Vermont, especially Proficiency-Based grading. Implementation at BHS was lacking, was not done consistently.
Culture around our schools, don't move teachers around. Teachers were disempowered. Give teachers a voice in the work and to where they will go.
There could be greater infrastructure/personnel to support quality instructional practices in all subjects
Aging buildings. Some bathrooms have no sinks (Champlain).
BHS has had a rough few years, especially in terms of changing leadership & guidance department.
Shrinking student population and the VT population (taxes to support schools).

There have been a lot of changes in leadership over the past few years, especially in principal positions.

No clear vision for teacher Professional Development

Climate surveys that were recently done indicated staff, teachers, and parents showed many areas to work on. Questions were terrible too.

Special Education at BHS needs an assessment

State aid for schools is dwindling

The Agency of Education is concerned about our district and there have been / are multiple investigations.

Student teacher ratio in elementary schools is very high

Parents/community members are opinionated

Recent history in the district has been rocky in terms of district leadership

District has history of turmoil

Racial conflicts in our schools and how they get addressed.

Role of police in schools. Level of involvement. Which children?

Lots of tension seen among staff all the time. What does this demonstrate to students?

#4: What skills, qualities, characteristics will the new Superintendent need to be successful?

1. Understanding of proficiency-based instruction, PLPs and a willing to support and lead
2. Ability to have difficult conversations around race, inequality, culture
3. Willingness to support teachers and staff, listen to them and to lead
4. Previous superintendent experience is essential
5. Ability to manage resources and be transparent about choices
6. Be prepared to work in a district going through a major capital plan
7. Each school is a unique community center within a larger ecosystem
8. Willingness to learn about magnet schools
9. Knowledgeable about the various ways students and staff self-identify
10. If something is not working, ability to address problem and make change
11. Transparency and communication skills are important
12. Knowledgeable about policy governance
13. Ability to leverage community partnerships
14. Data-based decision making
15. Sense of humor
16. Ability to meet the needs of students with disabilities
17. Aware of the various programs that support families, ie. Parent University
18. Experience with technical education
19. Skilled in SEL and trauma-informed educational practices
20. Good listener.
21. Ability to make decisions.
22. Leader.
Understands equity.

Needs to be internally focused: how can we get systems aligned, be in the schools, talk with teachers, high expectations, holding everyone to the same standard.

Willingness to learn

Someone who can bring in a sense of calm and stability

Follow through.

Community builder who involves students, parents, faculty, and all stakeholders.

Someone who works well with our school board.

A learner themselves.

Stability and willingness to stay long term. Not just a stepping stone. Committed to our community.

Come with core beliefs with what education means while also taking the time to understand our community and our values.

The super must provide appropriate educational opportunities for a wide range of abilities

Creative problem solving and the courage to stay when something isn't good.

Good communicator both written and verbal with ALL stakeholders internal and external.

Excited about students and learning

Facilitate a more inclusive hiring practice and ability to sustain and maintain an inclusive staff

Advocate for strong academics for all students.

A manager and a leader who understands how districts change

Knows how to ask for help and support

Confident enough to delegate and trust their managers/staff can execute

Well spoken in crowds but also 1on1

Good facilitator of broad communication

Focused on growth going forward; not looking backward

Focused on engaging and creating allies across the community

A good politician for working with people outside the district, and a good manager within the district

Knows education

Effect positive change with excitement, energy and verve

Respect for classroom teachers and building principals

Ability to build morale / social capital

Must be resilient

Better help getting kids into college. Tests to take, courses, no guidance, no rides to tests or college fairs, the application process.

Understands and promotes excellence in education. Meets every kids at where they are.

Encourages collaboration

Being charismatic would help

Someone who is visible in the community
Prior super experience mandatory.

Thinking about education for global citizenship

Good experience in dealing with diversity issues and programs