

IAA COMMUNITY FORUM 1/23/2020 (51)

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Your responses to these questions help us recruit quality candidates.

#1: What makes your community a good place to live?

- 1 Burlington is small scale.
- 2 Connections of resources.
- 3 Very involved politically.
- 4 Enough jobs.
- 5 A lot of community involvement.
- 6 Physically beautiful (architecture & nature)
- 7 Burlington is diverse.
- 8 Safety and connection among community members.
- 9 The size is right. Allows for easy engagement with government and community.
- 10 Stakeholders feel free to share their differing views.
- 11 Beautiful. Love the mountains.
- 12 Lots of people working hard to make things accessible to others.
- 13 Progressive environment, open to change; innovative
- 14 Many things are more affordable than in a big city, other than housing.
- 15 Many parks and open space.
- 16 Diverse community; effort to engage with the diversity
- 17 Public transportation is available.
- 18 Ecologically minded
- 19 Good salary. Minimum wage is higher than other places.
- 20 The university brings many resources
- 21 Presence of universities creates enrichment of thought and culture. There is an academic thread that runs through the city.
- 22 A university town brings both challenges and cultural opportunities
- 23 Possible future train travel.
- 24 People here help each other out.
- 25 People who live here are passionate about it.
- 26 A lot of art and music for a city its size.
- 27 Students and families from around the world.
- 28 A small city with a lot to offer
- 29 Peaceful community, safe. No wars, no fighting.
- 30 Lots of opportunities for voices to be heard
- 31 Really good coffee and tea
- 32 Strong local food community and network; including access to farms.
- 33 A healthy community - many activities geared towards health and wellness, i.e. the bike path
- 34 Access to countryside, accessible to people in the city.

- 35 Richness of arts, theater, things you can access but without traffic & crowds (low density).
- 36 Housing seems expensive. Childcare is high too.
- 37 Culturally and linguistically diverse.
- 38 International airport, near Montreal and Boston.
- 39 Arts are valued; supporting by a strong city core where art is accessible via walking.
- 40 Access to the lake for recreation
- 41 Lots of small businesses.
- 42 A lot of good things in small package.
- 43 Most people will help to protect each other. Work together in case of trouble or disaster.
- 44 Equity and inclusiveness.

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

- 1 Pays well
- 2 Ability for parents to participate.
- 3 A very heterogeneous community
- 4 The staff cares and they reach out parents as needed.
- 5 School choice in elementary.
- 6 Many different extracurricular scholastic activities e.g. Year End Studies Programs, Crow's Path
- 7 Wide variety of high school courses.
- 8 Human-scaled schools.
- 9 Alternative programs, dual enrollment and flexible pathways.
- 10 Many teachers want to be in this district
- 11 Good teachers.
- 12 Good student support services.
- 13 Commitment to district-wide restorative practices.
- 14 Parents in the community are supportive of other parents
- 15 The School Board is good.
- 16 High proportion of impressive teachers.
- 17 Excellent food service.
- 18 School choice in elementary.
- 19 School buses and school choice.
- 20 Schools are physically distributed throughout the city, they are neighborhood schools
- 21 Flexibility with problem solving with newcomers.
- 22 Diversity of student body.
- 23 After school programs awesome.
- 24 Arts still supported in schools.
- 25 There are a lot of teachers who care about the students as people as well as developing academic beings.
- 26 The focus on kindness is awesome

- 27 The libraries are great!
- 28 School choice, including the magnet schools
- 29 Welcomed students very well. Really make sure the education for each student is going well. They know some are struggling but they see the teachers are committed to their education.
- 30 This is a hopeful, optimistic community; lots of open minds

#3: What are the issues a new Superintendent must know as they come to the district?

- 1 A very heterogenous community with a broad spectrum of abilities and needs.
- 2 Needs to adopt a multi year budget cycle, currently lacking.
- 3 Lack of funding
- 4 We are still trying to figure out who we are as a district,
- 5 Lots of leadership turn over in last few years.
- 6 Burlington demographics are continually changing.
- 7 There is a significant achievement gap that needs narrowing.
- 8 Feels like there is a lot of fear. About speaking out about problems; what contexts are OK to bring up challenges; what the repercussions will be.
- 9 Needs to create a better stakeholder partnership with tax payers
- 10 Constant tug between school funding and property taxes.
- 11 The high school is losing science teachers.
- 12 A lot of turnover in district staffing and leadership.
- 13 We are so much more diverse than our neighbors and the rest of Vermont; we have more challenges in meeting the needs of all students; with limited capacity to meet all the needs;
- 14 There is tension in providing rich, rigorous opportunities for high academic achievers while still providing services to kids who have more challenges.
- 15 Due to high turnover, Issue of trust between students, staff, families and administration. And less trust in administrators, in general.
- 16 There is a need for trauma-informed knowledge and training.
- 17 Staff morale is low
- 18 Need to be culturally aware and sensitive.
- 19 Burlingtonians like participatory engagement and strong and authentic community involvement.
- 20 All student academic needs are met. Competitive once they leave.
- 21 There are a lot of competing needs with the budget.
- 22 People who see themselves as progressive don't necessarily act in a progressive way, especially around diversity.
- 23 Taxpayers need to understand the funding of the budget. With lack of understanding, comes lack of trust.
- 24 The community has a wide range of diversity that presents unique challenges.
- 25 Education funding relationship between the city, state and school district is complicated.

- 26 Significant number of kids in our district who have experienced trauma. District needs to better understand how trauma impacts learning.
- 27 Hard for parents to know how and to whom to advocate for things. Lack of transparency on who has decision-making authority.
- 28 Lack of foreign language programming in elementary & middle school levels
- 29 Burlington is most diverse, lots of New Americans need ELL supports and other supports. Education system is new to them so any kind of academic decision is difficult. This includes kids with learning disabilities and IEP. Need higher standards and go above and beyond.
- 30 EL classes aren't comprehensive enough to meet all students.
- 31 Burlington Charter states Superintendent must live in Burlington.
- 32 Too heavy of an administrative burden. Too many people in central office.
- 33 More resources.
- 34 Should live in the community because s/he will be effected by their decisions.
- 35 We are welcoming to newcomers, but there is a big difference between how students are treated. The achievement gap is real. All kids need a future. Alternatives need to be given.
- 36 Not a high priority of academic excellence.
- 37 Track record to be able to fight for resources.
- 38 The high school Guidance Department recently had significant turnover and personnel issues.
- 39 Needs to be committed to implementing uniform COA set in place by the state.
- 40 Lack of continuity between middle schools and high school.
- 41 Stay regionally competitive school district to attract and retain students, families, staff and teachers.
- 42 Statistics for kids or color being disciplined to white kids.
- 43 It is really cold, and the winters are long.
- 44 Many old buildings that require continual maintenance.
- 45 Per-pupil spending is higher than national average and putting pressure on taxpayers
- 46 There are racial tensions.
- 47 That the Superintendent should live in the city
- 48 The community is ready for a person with a productive work style.
- 49 The community is tired of being pushed away.

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

- 1 Diplomacy and tact
- 2 Authenticity
- 3 Respect for student, staff and school board
- 4 Transparency in processes
- 5 Commitment to a long-term commitment to the community
- 6 Innovative and thoughtful regarding the impacts of dramatic change.
- 7 Should live in the community because s/he will be effected by their decisions.

- 8 Awareness of how change impacts all stakeholders
- 9 Great communicator, listens to people, informed decision making.
- 10 Someone with a long-term vision
- 11 Must have prior, preferably many, years of experience. Not a "newbie" to the superintendent position.
- 12 Good listener
- 13 Analytical about trends in education; thoughtful about impact of trends on student's real life; make decisions based on evidence.
- 14 Someone who actively listens and is present.
- 15 Able to articulate their vision and reasoning behind their decisions to all stakeholders.
- 16 Able to build strong relationships (with the board, staff, students, parents, etc.)
- 17 Do what you promise to do, follow through with parent concerns. Do what's right.
- 18 Understands the importance of appreciate inquiry.
- 19 Should be the best person for the job; don't have to reflect the makeup of the student population.
- 20 Visible at all school and community events.
- 21 Superintendent should live in our community and send their kids to our schools.
- 22 Ability to keep the critical foundational priorities of the district strong while giving attention to details and critical issues.
- 23 They know what is happening at each school.
- 24 Loves managing because they love people, building a team.
- 25 Track and follow what the teachers are doing with the students in each school. What resources might they need? What is lacking? What do teachers need to better their education? If they don't, they won't follow up and know how to fix situations.
- 26 Prioritizes academics.
- 27 Approachability
- 28 Able to handle conflict resolution.
- 29 Foreign languages must be started in elementary as early as possible.
- 30 Wielding of power should entail a spirit of collaboration.
- 31 Promoting the school to help us pass budgets.
- 32 Provide more summer programs for all the schools.
- 33 Must be a good partnership builder.
- 34 Hit the ground running, but observe how things are going before making big changes.
- 35 Visit each school and principals often and work with them.
- 36 Encourages people to speak up with repercussions. Embraces dissent.
- 37 Keep the bar high for all students while trying to meet the needs of all students - academic rigor
- 38 Empathy
- 39 Productive leader; get things done
- 40 Knowledge of state and federal laws

- 41 Performance, expectations, consequences and achievements are not dirty words.
- 42 Projects optimism
- 43 Someone who pays attention to climate and culture in district
- 44 Embrace high standards.
- 45 Must CARE
- 46 Someone who has professional leadership experience
- 47 Great facilitator
- 48 Multi-lingual
- 49 Be an American citizen
- 50 Interested in a multi-year commitment to Burlington
- 51 Be present