

**Your responses to these two questions help us recruit quality candidates.**

**1. What makes your community a good place to live?**

1. The entire city is like a summer camp for adults
2. Kid friendly
3. There are lots of invested, committed community stakeholders
4. Many universities nearby-lots of cultural events
5. Vibrant downtown
6. Bike paths
7. Lots of microbreweries and great coffee
8. It is very diverse
9. There are great outdoor activities year round
10. It is close to Montreal and Boston
11. There is an international airport in Burlington
12. It is progressive and increasingly more diverse
13. Maple syrup and farm-to-table food
14. UVM offers great sports viewing
15. There are lots of college options
16. There is easy access to local and state politicians
17. There are lots of opportunities in technology
18. There are options for spousal employment; very low unemployment rate
19. It is beautifully situated between the Adirondacks and the Green Mountains
20. It has an independent, demand for participation by local citizens
21. There is a high degree of volunteerism; Burlington is # 1 in the USA for Americorps and Peace Corps participation
22. It is consistently ranked as one of the healthiest city and state in the nation
23. It is beautiful with amazing food e.g. farm-to-table
24. Most people are active-art shows, VT marathon, UVM activities
25. There is a beautiful bike pathway along the lake.
26. People are very involved in the community/a high level of participation by residents
27. The public schools have a lot of support from the community
28. Families stay in the city and are committed to public education
29. Vermont is the whitest school in the nation but Burlington is a very diverse city
30. It is a refugee resettlement city—and we are happy about that

31. It is 1 ½ hours to Montreal
32. You can be out of the city and into the country for hiking or skiing in 20 minutes
33. It is a liberally political city—the home of Bernie Sanders
34. More diversity in our community
35. Lake
36. Mountains
37. Access to outdoors
38. Across the board – safe community regarding crime
39. Ranked high to live
40. Healthiest cities in the area
41. Smart town
42. Invested in Burlington being successful such as business and a young town – lots of energy
43. Community close knit
44. Still a state that values small town values and community input
45. Cannot be run like a business
46. Close to Montreal and Boston
47. Need to want and enjoy knowing the people who live and work here
48. Huge amount of innovation
49. Many employment opportunities?

## **2. What makes this a good school district – for students and staff?**

1. There is a diverse student population; 47 languages are spoken in the school
2. The systems leaders team is highly dedicated
3. The staff is highly educated
4. The schools have great community partnerships with local businesses and entities e.g. Shelburne Farms, colleges, etc.
5. Teacher interns participate in Burlington schools, providing a great partnership and offering new thoughts
6. The hub of mental health services is in the schools
7. There is a nationally recognized food service, after school, and tech center
8. The district is on solid financial footing
9. There is a well-articulated capital plan; a \$110 million project was approved
10. There is a Pre-K program for 3-5 year olds
11. Student voice is encouraged
12. High expectations for inclusion and equity
13. Inclusion for SPED students is a high priority
14. Innovative practices are the norms

15. Funding of the schools is built on an equity index
16. Social emotional learning, including restorative practices is a high priority throughout the district; there is a partnership program with UVM and a community justice center
17. School choice is offered at the elementary level
18. Magnet schools
19. Safety plans are always being updated
20. Strong support for professional development and professional service e.g. serving on local and national boards and conference attendance
21. The district is committed to working toward elimination of out of school suspensions
22. There is a strong commitment to maintaining and improving school facilities—there is strong public support to do so.
23. PBIS is in most schools
24. There is a strong emphasis on the use of data to inform academic and social programs
25. There is a lot of diversity in the student population which provides a rich learning environment around social issues
26. Kids get a global experience through their contact with students from many nations
27. The schools are very accessible to parents
28. Teachers are passionate; they want to do what is best for students
29. Teachers like their jobs—there is a student-centered focus
30. There is great support for the arts
31. There are partnerships with local theater programs
32. There are strong student support and enrichment programs
33. Diversity
34. Union school district – teachers have right to bargain our contract
35. Community feeling
36. Colleagues respect each other
37. Internship with UVM, St. Michael's and Champlain College – teaching school district
38. School counselling program
39. Strong system of school support
40. Sixth best school breakfast, lunch and dinner program (free breakfast and dinner for all) 'Burlington School Food Project'
41. Progressive and inclusive curriculum
42. Many opportunities for students such as clubs
43. Afterschool childcare
44. Fine Arts Department (music/visual arts/engineering)

45. One to one technology – 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>
46. Increasing Board Certified Teachers
47. Strong and vibrant elementary schools including two magnet schools and one place-based learning school and one STEAM focused school.
48. School choice for elementary school.

**Your responses to these questions help us to screen applicants and the school committee to choose finalists.**

**3. What are the issues that a new superintendent needs to know about as he or she comes into the district?**

1. A town meeting day is held in every town in VT; it impacts the culture of democracy in the state
2. It is a rural state that values local control
3. School climate could be improved following a teacher strike in 2017
4. There is an unevenness of school climate throughout the schools; that is a hindrance in moving forward.
5. The Board trusts and uplifts and supports the teachers but not necessarily the administrative staff
6. The district is subject to audits by the State Education Department because it is so large—that is both a positive and a negative
7. There is a close relationship with the Department of Justice based upon a complaint that was substantiated through the Office of Civil i.e. lots of training on bullying, hazing, and harassment. That relationship will be ongoing until 2023.
8. Policies around those issues are in place. The staff needs to be educated on those policies and policy implementation.
9. Systems need to be improved around bullying and harassment
10. Two schools are eligible for Comprehensive Support (due to low achievement)
11. Some schools have poverty challenges and mental health challenges
12. Four out of 6 elementary schools have 60%+ free and reduced lunch population
13. The Opioid crisis results in problems for schools; there is a need for more full-day pre-school programs rather than half-days
14. The Board needs to make investment in full-day pre-school. There is a waiting list for pre-school. Additional buildings are needed.
15. The State has not invested in any pre-school buildings for over 10 years.
16. There is a large childcare crisis in the State due to State requirements.

17. The Opioid crisis results in students coming to schools with significant emotional challenges; the staff needs to have the capacity and systems to meet those needs especially for the general education population
18. A significant number of students are considered homeless
19. About 750 students in the district are classified as special education- resulting in significant special education costs.
20. There is a fair amount of transience.
21. There is an aging population in Burlington; therefore recruitment of staff is difficult
22. Housing costs in Burlington are high.
23. There are underlying racial tensions in the school and community
24. Teaching demographics do not match the student demographics
25. Each school board members is driven by individual agendas rather than the best interests of the school district.
26. The school board demographics do not represent the student demographics
27. A large number of students (about 16% or 550) who are not fully proficient in English.
28. There are about 950 students who live in families where English is not the first language.
29. There is a large number of interpreters and family liaisons.
30. Teachers were on strike in 2017 and trust needs to be restored between the central office and the teachers.
31. Decisions made by administrators should be made in a transparent manner.
32. There needs to be a long-term vision which is followed through on e.g. in terms of school operations, discipline models, curriculum, professional development, etc.
33. Teacher strike in 2017 over imposed contract
34. Superintendent must reside in district and if they have children they should send their children to the schools they run
35. They need to come with Vermont certification
36. Agency of Ed working with district to evaluate and improve SPED post-secondary transition program.
37. DOJ is working with the district to ensure that LBGTQ+ students are seen and to improve the systemic responses to bullying and harassment.
38. Present faculty and staff are hungry for a leader to bring all together and move forward in the spirit of fair play.
39. Proficiency Based Learning and Reporting mandated by VT legislation.

40. Restorative Practices in place, need real knowledge, support, guidance for Level 2 and 3.
41. School Budgets are voted upon by community residents and must be sold to the residents.
42. Budgetary decisions need to be explained thoroughly so that the budget will be supported.
43. The capital project approved by the voters should be implemented as soon as possible to repair and upgrade the school buildings.
44. State aid for building projects is uncertain
45. The city and school district finances are intertwined
46. There is a need for more therapeutic care for children who have experienced trauma

**4. What skills, qualities, and characteristics will the new superintendent need in order to be successful?**

1. Experience as a superintendent
2. A good listener
3. Someone who will readily engage with the community and the schools
4. Someone who knows the culture in Burlington or who is willing to learn it before making major decisions
5. Be willing to understand the culture
6. Someone who is willing to support principals in the schools and not just look for good press
7. Someone with a moral purpose and strength of character who can work with challenging personalities toward the best interests of the school district
8. Someone who can make hard decisions in a timely manner
9. Systems oriented who can keep the whole in mind at all times
10. Evidence of implementing systems processes
11. Open door policy
12. Being present-be available and approachable
13. Be in the buildings often and recognize the building leaders as valuable resources; collaborate with all of the systems leaders
14. A track record of a commitment for efforts of equity and achievement and evidence-based ways of doing that
15. Strong belief in the importance of professional development for employees
16. An awareness of and knowledge of the importance of school culture e.g. after school programs
17. Realize that many people have helped the district be as good as it is. Honor the past and involve people in making decisions

18. Someone who will stay for a while.
19. Someone with an understanding of restorative practices and who is willing to support them.
20. Open to enhancing relationships with community partners.
21. Someone with a core value of a growth mindset and who with words and demonstrated actions that understanding in actions
22. Understand that emergent bilingual students are not are deficit, rather an asset
23. Be a persistent, tireless worker
24. Be a good team-builder so that all members of the team can support the work of the school district
25. Empower people, collaborate with them; share the leadership
26. Communicate abundantly and redundantly
27. Experience supporting magnet schools
28. Someone who will examine the student-capacity of buildings and balance enrollment accordingly; make a plan to do so
29. Use an equity index/lens to place students in schools and appropriate funding for them
30. Examine magnet schools along with the Board
31. A willingness to form advisory committees
32. Good listener
33. Good communicator
34. Understand community, want to get to know the community
35. Model best practices, start with building relationships
36. Promote dialogue; share responsibility; listen to teachers – be open minded
37. Cultivate a safe working and learning environment
38. Take ownership
39. Explain the rationale for decisions when possible
40. Put people before PR
41. Make decisions in best interest of students
42. Ask central office staff to work in partnership with the schools
43. Have a compassionate HR department that is a resource for teachers. Staffing HR with people who want to kindly help the 1000 employees
44. Advocate for resources- in particular human resources- staffing.
45. Understand how to balance a budget and serve ALL students
46. Care and grow the alternative programs
47. Someone who will adequately staff all educational programs at the HS
48. Be transparent, be transparent in decision making
49. Someone with strong classroom experience

50. Communicate actual reasons for decisions versus rhetoric; be straightforward
51. Seek out the opinions of stakeholders before making curricular decisions
52. Sell a budget with positive info about why the budget serves students well vs. touting what is cut
53. Someone who understands what it takes to engender good will with the community
54. Someone with experience examining their own biases about diversity