

# *Stakeholder Input Report for*



*submitted by*



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# **McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.**

Executive Recruitment & Development

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## **MOLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 40**

**Moline, Illinois**

### **Superintendent Search**

#### **Executive Summary**

On November 29 and November 30, 2011, consultants Dick Sundblad and Gary McAndrew conducted 18 meetings representing 10 different groups associated with the Moline School District. Input was gathered regarding the selection of a new superintendent for the Moline School District.

Outlined on the following pages is an Executive Summary of the major themes expressed by the participants at these sessions. Following the Executive Summary is a compilation of all the input received from these groups and individuals in response to the four questions asked of each.

#### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Greater Moline Community? (This information is used to help us recruit candidates.)**

- Very welcoming community. Small town feel in a big city without the big city issues. Not too big – not too small
- People genuinely care about one another
- Family oriented community – great place to raise a family
- Strong cultural community – great arts programs
- Great deal of diversity
- Great location – close to major highways and easy access to metro areas
- Many activities to attend – from sports to arts
- Many great sports teams in the area
- River – provides many recreational activities, resources and beauty
- Great business partnerships – Deere, Alcoa, and smaller companies provide many resources both financially and with volunteers
- The adults take a strong interest in the school
- Moline has a school district – education is valued by the community
- Historical value of the Mississippi River and the Rock Island Arsenal
- Great economic climate – many jobs – low unemployment rate
- Low crime rate
- Diverse economic base
- Affordable place to live – cost of living is reasonable
- Moline International Airport

- A wide variety of post secondary education options available
- Very easy commutes
- There are four seasons in Moline
- I-Wireless Center attracts top entertainment to the area
- Good medical facilities available

**2 What are the strengths / assets of the Moline School District? (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- Great teachers – teachers really care about their students
- Diverse staff – seasoned teachers and newer teachers – different viewpoints
- The Moline District has been fiscally responsible – is in good shape financially
- Diverse education at the high school level – many different programs offered
- Many supportive partnerships with businesses and organizations
- The realignment of the middle schools has gone well
- A wide variety of extracurricular activities are available to students
- Strong traditions and activities at the grade school level
- Strong parental support – the parents and community care about the schools
- Teachers support one another
- The facilities are well maintained and in good condition
- Sense of belonging in the schools. Although a larger school, it is a very close-knit school.
- Excellent academics, arts programs and athletic teams
- A strategic plan is in place to help guide the district
- Bilingual program is a positive
- Community has neighborhood schools – kids can walk to school – no bussing
- Great tradition – homecoming parade, Wharton Fieldhouse – Pride in the community and alumni
- Students are well educated and prepared for the next level

**3 What characteristics are most important in the next superintendent of the Moline School District? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)**

- Great communicator
- Honest – trustworthy – person with high integrity
- A motivator – can inspire people
- Creative – innovative – can think outside the box
- Strong financial background – good with budgets
- Understands legislature and how it affects school district and community
- Must be visible in the schools and the community
- Strong curriculum background
- Great leadership skills – collaborative decision maker – can bring people together
- Someone who can engage the community – reach out to the elderly who have no ties to the schools
- Someone with genuine warmth and interest in people’s feelings
- Confident – and remains calm under tense situations
- Not be afraid to make changes – embrace change when appropriate

- Be proactive with the board and not be afraid to suggest things to them
- Someone who is good with technology and understands technology
- Must be approachable to parents – staff and community members. Open door policy
- Learn about the traditions and strengths of the district before making changes – we don't want someone who is going to change things for the sake of change
- Someone with a vested interest in the school and community – not using this job as a stepping stone
- Someone with a good sense of humor
- Approachable
- Someone with classroom experience – can put themselves in shoes of teachers – understands them
- Someone with humility
- Someone who has had experience in a larger community

**4 What are the most significant district, community or state issues the selected person will face and need to deal with in order to be effective immediately? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)**

- Dealing with finances at state and local level
- Must be innovative with limited financial resources
- Balancing enrollment / boundary lines for elementary schools
- Long range plan regarding aging facilities
- The diversity of the school and community can be a positive and a challenge – we don't always reach all students needs
- Aging population that is no longer involved with the schools. How to engage their support
- Implement new evaluation instruments for teachers and administrators
- Needs to make sure schools are preparing all students for careers – not just the college bound students
- Class sizes – better staff to student ratio
- Stay current with curriculum – continue to update so it is current and vibrant
- No Child Left Behind
- As special needs students are integrated into the classroom more support is needed
- We need to get our students back on track academically with the level of education so that the Moline graduates can compete with the rest of the world
- Will need to have roundtable discussions with community members
- Moline is landlocked. New housing not available. New people to area looking for new homes or lots are moving to Iowa
- Someone who can evaluate the green environmental projects and determine if they are cost effective
- Student achievement – AYP – meeting all the scholastic goals that are mandated
- Must be able to work with local government – regarding taxes, TIF, etc.
- Parent involvement appears to be on the decline
- Change in economic demographics – Moline now has 50% of students on free and reduced
- Moline can sometimes be seen as a closed community to people moving in
- Moline property tax rate is high in comparison to Iowa

- Perception that school administration may be heavy at the top and school administrators are paid very well
- The new superintendent will have to deal with new contracts in first year
- New superintendent will have big shoes to fill – current superintendent is very respected

# Stakeholder Input

## Moline – Parent & Community Members – 9

### 1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?

- An incredibly small feeling in a large community. It is a very welcoming, people friendly community
- It's a very family oriented community
- Strong cultural community – strong arts programs, many events to attend
- School has strong cultural community
- School has many strong traditions (parades, etc.)
- Citizens value education – have had good school board members who care about the schools.
- Many Seniors want to help and care about the school
- Teachers foster lifelong education
- Very diverse community – symphony, sports, arts, entertainment
- Small pockets of diverse cultures who have strong traditions
- Lots of activities to attend
- Great location – easy to travel to major metropolitan areas
- Businesses take an interest in the community – lots of loaned executives
- Having Deere & Co and many other major businesses here is a major asset
- John Deere Golf Classic
- Self perception of being a white collar community
- 39 languages spoken in the Moline school district
- The adults take a strong interest in the schools

### 2 What are the good things about your school district?

- Strong teaching staff – teachers care
- Diverse staff – seasoned teachers and new teachers – different viewpoints
- There are financial challenges but Moline has done a lot with what it has – it has used its resources wisely
- Diverse education at the high school level
- Many supportive partnerships with businesses and organizations
- The realignment of the middle schools has gone well
- A wide variety of extracurricular activities – teachers step up and help
- Strong traditions and activities at the grade school level
- Many schools have strong parental support at elementary schools – community involvement
- Classes and sports programs are encouraged to volunteer and help the needy, they work well together to help the less fortunate
- We support our own
- Teachers support one another
- Volunteers are helping in the elementary schools to help combat illiteracy
- The facilities are in good condition

**3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful?**

- Creative
- Approachable
- A leader who walks with the staff – Doesn't pull from the top.
- Resourceful – get more input from besides the board
- Someone who is on site at the schools unannounced for visits
- Confident and calm
- Realize we do have traditions at Moline – before they change a lot of things they need to understand how things work here
- New – fresh ideas. Step outside the box. Look beyond the boundaries
- Someone who can make our schools and districts attractive to families
- A risk taker
- Have some secondary education based administrators – have a balance
- Look inside the community as hard as we do outside for candidates – look at talent in Quad City area
- We need someone who can engage the community. The 70% who have no ties to the schools – they need to understand that schools are strongest assets of the communities
- Volunteers must feel welcome
- Someone who can embrace the entire community
- We need someone with genuine warmth and interest in people's feelings
- Someone that really wants to become part of the community – be recognized by parents as being concerned about the community
- Someone who will use collective decision making
- Proven fiscal responsibility

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Dealing with finances at state and local level
- Stay current with curriculum – continue to update so it is current and vibrant
- We need more layering of curriculum
- We focus on college bound – we need to look at all student's needs – including industrial arts – day to day needs
- We have a diverse population but we don't always reach them all
- See greater literacy – we are working on it – but we need to enhance it
- Better staff to student ratio
- As special needs students are integrated into the classroom more support is needed
- Concerns with no child left behind
- We need to get our students back on track with the level of education so that someday the Moline graduates can compete with the rest of the world
- Analyze the split classes that are occurring – students turn in to a part time instructor
- The perception that the superintendent is overpaid
- The person needs to understand that the board is their boss and the community is their boss

## **Moline – Community Members – November 29<sup>th</sup> – 11**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- The people. Very caring community. Welcoming new people. Close knit community
- Great place to raise a family.
- Lots of family oriented activities. I-Wireless center. Concerts, sports, numerous options
- Moline has a great school system
- Education is valued. Strong educational institutions in the area.
- The home of John Deere.
- The central location. Easy access to major metro areas
- Historical value of the Mississippi River and the Arsenal
- Many transportation options for highways, rail, etc.
- Lots of diversity in the community
- Moline International Airport
- Lots of employment opportunities in the area
- Cost of living is reasonable
- Real estate has remained steady

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Great staff.
- Sense of belonging in the schools. Although a large school, it is a very close-knit school. The leaders of the schools get along well.
- Recent renovations to the middle schools. A plan in place for updating the facilities in the future.
- We focus on the success of the students. Academically and extracurricular activities. Great Arts program.
- Wide range of services from Tag to special needs. Every child's needs are met.
- Great parental involvement. Moline Parent Foundation
- The teachers truly care about their students
- Opportunities for every child to be involved.
- Staff cares about other staff members – they support one another
- A strategic plan is in place to help guide the district
- Mutual respect between all the employee groups
- Bilingual program is a positive

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Need to be visible in the buildings and get to know our district.
- Meet the staff and understand what programs are in each building. Spend time in each classroom
- They need to have a vested interest in the district
- Be a good communicator – including face time and technology. Communicate with staff, parents and teachers
- Not be afraid to make a change. Embrace change where appropriate.
- Be proactive with the board and not afraid to suggest things

- Collaborative leader who is a team player.
- Need to be approachable to parents, staff, and community members. Open door policy
- Would like them to live in Moline
- Be familiar with bilingual programs

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Revenue/finances
- Balancing enrollments/boundary lines for elementary schools
- Long range plan regarding facilities
- The diversity of the student population and community
- Class sizes
- Support staff/specialists cutbacks
- Parent involvement. Ways to enhance it.
- Aging population that has stepped away from the school environment. The superintendent needs to reach out to this group.
- Implementing new evaluation instruments for teachers and administrators
- Supportive of more inclusive practices for special needs students and programs
- How is the district preparing all of our students – not just the students that go to college
- The programs that are involved with the city. TIF, etc. Needs to be good relationship between the schools and the city.

## **Moline – Parents/Community Members - 23**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- Several small communities that combined together make a great larger metro area
- Works well with Iowa communities – sense of cooperation
- Many good colleges in the area – many local options
- The river- recreation and industrial benefits
- Diverse economic base
- Lots of history – river, John Deere – many traditions in the area
- Whiteys Ice Cream
- Midwest values – a larger city with a small town feel – easy commutes
- The arts – lots of cultural and entertainment choices
- Close to a great airport
- Convenient to major metro areas
- Minor league sports are available
- Western Illinois is expanding here

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Community has neighborhood schools – kids can walk to school
- Strong faculty
- There are older buildings but the district has done a good job maintaining the buildings
- The middle schools have recently been remodeled
- District has some very good administrative people – share joys - they have done a lot with what we have
- Great parental involvement
- Tradition – homecoming parade – Wharton Fieldhouse –sense of pride and tradition
- Strong ties to the neighborhoods
- Proud of what the schools do in the arts
- Kids raise money for the needy – care for one another
- Great sports and extracurricular activities
- Students are well educated and prepared for the next level
- A diverse student population is beneficial – a little united nations
- Many immigrant families

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Excellent communicator
- Person of integrity
- Salesperson – community-staff – promoter
- Motivator
- Puts students first
- Follow through on their opinions and tough decisions
- Approachable
- Good sense of humor
- Involved in the community – be known by community members as well as parents

- Someone who has a long term strategic plan but is open to other ideas
- A level of collaboration – a unifier – can bring people together
- Common sense – critical thinking skills
- Creative problem solver
- Not afraid to try new things
- Strong classroom background – good with technology
- Be willing to go into the classroom – put themselves in shoes of teacher
- Be visible in schools
- Visionary
- Someone who understands the workforce and can adapt curriculum to meet those needs
- Looks at all students – not just college bound students
- Clear vision of their role

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Listen to people
- We have some old facilities – need to address these
- Boundary lines need to be looked at- classroom size issues
- Diversity can cause challenges
- Meet the needs of all students
- Will need to get out in the buildings and meet staff
- Have roundtable sessions with community members
- Finances
- Moline is landlocked. New housing is not available. New people are not being attracted to Moline
- Needs to look at diversity in curriculum – a strong vocational program is needed – broad education is needed
- Get to know the district before any radical changes or cuts are made
- It seems like a lot of the cuts take place at the elementary level – need to look at the district as a whole

## **Moline – AFSME & MESPA – 6**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- The Arts
- People give back to the community – fundraising
- Diversity – in a variety of ways
- The size of the community – not too big – not too small. Big enough to have things to do but small enough to have a sense of community
- Sports is big
- Recreational activities – golfing – hunting – fishing – wide variety
- The river – beautiful scenery
- Skiing
- Friendliness of people
- Diversified religions
- Conglomerate of friendly communities
- A wide variety of post secondary education options available
- A welcoming community

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Committed staff at all levels
- Partnership – students – staff – parents – community
- Open lines of communication among groups. Labor groups can speak to the superintendent – approachable.
- Approachability
- The idea of a neighborhood schools
- Students are not bussed because of neighborhood schools
- Have a lot of staff with kids and grandkids in the school district. A lot of loyalty and pride
- Superintendent is sincere about wanting to know what is going on.

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- A good communicator
- Integrity
- Approachable
- Someone who takes responsibility for their decisions
- Appreciation of staff
- Appreciates loyalty of staff
- Humility
- Can talk to a variety of people – no matter what they do
- Sense of humor
- Someone who is vested in the community
- Someone who has had experience in a larger community
- Someone who has experience with special education and its regulations

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Someone who can evaluate the green environmental projects and determine if they are cost effective
- Someone who is good with technology and understands technology
- Review long term goals of district
- Have a broad vision toward the future as to the issues
- Someone who has financial understanding of budgets
- Someone who values the staff that is provided
- Someone who values all of the staff – not just teachers
- Financial crisis – limited resources
- Avoid someone who is going to come in and cut a bunch of programs and then move on just to make the budget look better

## **Moline – Cabinet Members - 6**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- There are 4 seasons
- Cohesive community – people have a sense of pride – amenities are here
- Diverse community
- Quality people, friendly people, strong values – we are the heartland
- Very easy commutes
- Benefits of a smaller community in a larger metro area
- River
- Airport
- Great transportation – rail coming
- Interstate access
- Many successful companies have headquarters here
- Moline has rich history and people are very proud of the traditions
- Affordable housing
- Entertainment is easily accessible
- Easy access to enjoy the outdoors
- Conservative community
- Good place for children to go to school
- Three universities and another one expanding
- The Arsenal

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Employees – very knowledgeable
- Strong infrastructure from a financial standpoint and curriculum standpoint
- Assessment pieces in place – can address students needs – on the cutting edge
- Good relationship with the bargaining units
- Staff members are proud to work for the district – employees well compensated
- One of the highest wage scales in Illinois – we get to pick our labor – get the best of the best
- Integrity – the district tries to do the right thing
- Strong leadership that is acceptable to change that wants to advance the district on behalf of the students
- A variety of programs are available to students that other districts can't provide –students needs are met
- District works well with colleges in the area
- District has many good partnerships with businesses
- The facilities are very good – well maintained
- A very large pre-k program that is successful

**3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Great communicator
- Visionary
- Has demonstrated the ability to hire quality people
- Integrity
- Strong human resources background
- Can communicate well with all stakeholders
- Visibility in organizations in the community – political exposure
- Can take a conservative staff and community and adapt that to the vision
- Someone who encourages risk taking
- Be able to lead a staff without micromanaging
- Willing to take a chance in order to better the educational process
- Must be visible in the buildings
- Builds a sense of community within the staff
- Doesn't need to be involved in all the details of the district but will be the figurehead of the district
- Needs to work well with other superintendents in the area
- Be able to draw the best out of the cabinet members
- Someone who has had prior experience as a superintendent

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Possible consolidation of buildings within the district
- Long term facilities plan
- Transportation issues
- Financing
- Student achievement / AYP
- Thanks to strong leadership in past nothing major to overcome
- Make sure that at risk populations are being addressed as a result of changing demographics
- Affordable housing results in low-income housing
- Communicate sense of urgency to community that changes need to be made in order to improve. Resource allocation to changing demographics
- Examine relationship with Blackhawk Area Special Education District
- Staff may need to realign to react to demographic changes

## **Moline – MAAES – 3**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- Good Midwest home feel
- More personal and friendly
- Close knit
- Midwest work ethic is very positive
- Quad–Cities athletics teams and sports teams
- Churches- all denominations
- Strong corporations and partnerships
- Diverse community
- Affordable housing
- Cost of living is very reasonable
- Close to larger cities
- Transportation is easy
- Good medical facilities available
- Strong parental involvement
- Airport that is close
- I-Wireless
- Casino

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Staff close knit
- Large student body
- Many programs and extracurricular available to the students
- PATS program for talented and gifted kids
- Preschool program for at risk students
- Extensive special education program for students
- Strong principals-administrative team
- Principal mentoring program and for Administrative Assistants and for nursing
- Web based substitute caller system
- Online application system
- Strong in technology
- Growing ELL program

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Visionary
- Problem solver
- A person of integrity
- A person who is academically excellent
- Bridge builder with relationships
- Understands different cultures-nice if they were Spanish speaking
- Good listener
- Family oriented

- A leader with effective communication skills
- Student centered thinking
- One who doesn't change everything the first year—analyze needs
- One who can set goals for achievement and instruction
- Knowledge of the budget and school finance
- Flexible and with a sense of humor
- A genuine interest in district programs- academic and extra curricular
- Accessible and open minded
- Develop a positive working relationship with staff, community and students
- Highly visible
- Ability to delegate
- Able to handle the media
- Handle any parent/student crisis
- Not one who is here for the short term
- Visit classrooms of new teachers

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Meeting AYP's
- New elementary boundaries
- Purchasing land

## **Moline – November 30, 2011 – Principals -3**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- Moline has a small town feel with some big city issues but fewer issues than larger cities
- People know one another in the community
- Diversity – ethnic diversity
- Easy access to cultural events, medical facilities, recreational opportunities
- Close to major metro markets
- Safe community
- Welcoming community – low crime rate
- Affordable housing
- Moline has grown academically – the administrative team is cohesive and proactive
- Downtown area has improved – newer hotels
- Many good colleges in the area – new Western Illinois campus
- Nice golf courses
- Water sports – ski area
- The river
- Quad Cities offers many big events

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Moline has a competitive salary and is able to attract quality teachers
- There are many resources available to teachers and students
- Decisions are data driven
- District is open minded
- District tries to stay current – on the cutting edge
- District is very supportive of teachers and staff – they are compassionate
- District makes sure things are done right
- Very good communication throughout the district
- District is in a reasonably good financial situation
- Communication and relationship is good between district and emergency responders, businesses and community

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Must be very good with public relations – willing to be out in the community and schools
- Must be visible
- Leadership – not afraid to make decisions but will get input from others
- Someone involved in buildings but is not a micromanager
- Curriculum
- Finances
- Good with technology
- Be able to communicate the vision
- Longevity – someone who is going to be here for a while
- Innovative
- Abreast of legislative action previous and pending

- Approachable – open door policy. Doesn't put himself/herself above others
- Supportive of administrators and teachers – has your back
- Responsive communicator
- Someone from LUDA district – should have experience in larger school

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Will have to evaluate if elementary schools will need to be closed
- Facilities need to be addressed. There are needs
- Boundary lines need to be re-examined
- Must be innovative with diminishing financial resources
- Staff evaluations will be an issue
- Changing demographics within the district. City is not growing as fast as the Iowa side. People with money moving to Iowa. Land not available to build.
- Low income housing is affecting student population
- Finances and buildings affect technology

## **Moline – Principals - 7**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- Big city feel but small enough to have a sense of community
- Strong in the arts
- A small community but conveniently located to major metro areas
- There are neighborhoods and a sense of community
- Great recreation with the river, a variety of activities to do
- Strong business presence. Strong partnering with businesses
- Strong community and four year colleges
- Great tradition – good blue collar, hard working people
- Becoming more multi cultural – religions and languages
- Medical industry is growing – good hospitals

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Strong staff – dedicated and educated
- Because of good compensation Moline can attract good teachers and administrators
- Good size – small enough to be connected but large enough to offer a of programs
- Neighborhood schools – principals and teachers know their students and families (12 elementary schools)
- Many quality programs being lead by quality people
- Very successful both academically and extra-curricular activities
- Very strong arts program
- Has become data driven
- Remodeled Middle Schools – desirable to new families
- Very little bussing
- Wonderful partnership with YMCA for before/after school programs
- Partner with the boys and girls clubs
- Initiatives are supported by administration and are on-going
- The technology available has improved in the schools

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Excellent communication skills
- Allow the principals to run their buildings
- Be supportive of the principals if they can back it up
- Be a proponent of change – make changes that are best for kids
- Someone that is data driven
- Someone that has experience at elementary, middle school and high school level.
- Someone who has been in classrooms
- Someone who is personable and approachable, has a sense of humor
- A strong knowledge base of best practices
- Honor the past but try to improve on it in the future. We have a good strategic plan in place, improve on it
- Someone who understands change

- Someone who doesn't try to take on too many things at once. Be successful in area before moving on to the next.
- Someone who has a vested interest in the school district
- Resourceful with financial matters – good financial background
- Someone who is accepting of diversity – maybe has experience with diversity

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Some facilities need updating
- Possibility of redistricting
- Imbalanced enrollments in middle schools
- Improve test scores
- Someone that can lead them through the new evaluation programs
- Someone who can deal well with unions
- Whoever is hired will be walking in to the middle of negotiations
- A new high school principal will be place when they begin
- Lots of tradition in Moline and there may be some resistance to change – no matter what it is
- Must be able to work with local government – regarding taxes, TIF, etc
- Knowledge base of pension reform

## **Moline – Business Members – 6**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- The Quad Cities has done well in the economic crisis, low unemployment, good housing market
- Great history with John Deere
- Has revitalized its economic development regionally, bringing in new jobs and working together as a regional community
- Cultural events
- Quad Cities work well together as cities
- Strong quality of life
- Good educational systems in Scott Community College and Blackhawk College
- Colleges work well together and collaborate on projects
- Great airport, great location, close to many major cities
- Culturally diverse community
- Loyal alumni, many alums return to Moline to contribute to school
- Sense of pride in community

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Board has been stable and Cal has been here 11-12 years – stability
- Communication is very good from district and schools to parents and community
- Principals and teachers really care about the kids and cooperate with outside organizations
- Willing to look at what they do well and what they need to improve on and are trying to improve
- Recent increase in diversity in the school
- Middle schools have recently been remodeled

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Strong manager who can build teams from top – down
- Solution focused approach – where are the gaps and what are the solutions to those gaps
- Strong interest in economic development
- Visibility and attachment to residents and students and is accessible to students and residents
- Complete commitment to children and success of children
- Politically savvy – strong with legislature
- Attuned to what kids are doing when not in school
- Build strong community partnerships

### **4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Parent involvement appears to be on the decline
- Parents may not feel as welcome in the schools
- Only two of our schools have been made AYP
- Change in economic demographics, now have 50% on free and reduced

- Bond issues and funding issues - state of Illinois
- Moline can sometimes be seen as being a closed group
- Change can be difficult
- If neighborhood schools are closed it will be difficult
- Aging population and community is not growing as fast as rest of country (observation – not fact)
- Moline property tax rate is high in comparison to Iowa
- Perception that school administration may be heavy at the top and the perception is that the administrators are paid very well

## **Moline – Teachers - 12**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- Diversity
- Small town feel in a big city environment
- Great arts, symphony, theatre, blues society, jazz – great culture
- Great place to raise a family
- Very generous community – giving – contribute to charities
- Supports activities in the area
- Great location – middle of country – close to major metro areas
- Good access to good health systems
- Close to rural areas
- Lots of good colleges in area
- Sporting events and arts are strong
- The river – entertainment and activities
- Very affordable place to live – affordable housing
- Doing more for schools with less tax money

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Lot of great staff members
- Diversity within the schools – different programs in schools students can take advantage of
- The school does a lot for the students with limited resources
- Great community support – lots of volunteers
- Strong leadership – keep up to date and is not afraid to try new things
- Stability in what they do
- Strong athletic programs
- Moline is the school parents want their kids to go to on the Illinois side
- Each school is unique but the staff works well together at each school
- Teachers are given a lot of curriculum resources (regular education students)
- PATS program for gifted
- Vocational program for students for special needs students

### **3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Someone who has experience with school improvement plans
- Someone who has a good understanding of marketing
- Wants someone who loves academics – ultimate dream
- Not afraid to make tough decisions and stand by them
- When the tough decisions are made – that person needs to deliver it
- Direct and honest communicator
- Good listener
- Someone innovative – new ideas
- Excited to be on the cutting edge of technology
- Be open to ideas and people who come from other places
- Someone who is going to stick around to see things through

- Empowerment – many teachers are extremely valuable but their abilities are not always utilized
- Well rounded – able to address the needs of all the students – not just college bound students
- Someone who has been in the trenches – understands education from ground up
- Understands big picture and can move the district forward
- Someone at the top making sure that everyone is on the same page – collaboration
- Has the look
- Compassionate

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Some families work in Moline but choose to live in Iowa – for schools
- Nowhere to grow in Moline – no newer neighborhoods for younger people to buy homes
- Iowa has newer schools
- It can be tough for outside people to be accepted
- Finances
- Dealing with legislation on funding and other topics
- Many people in Moline don't have students in school – how to get their cooperation and communicate with them
- Good old boy network – Would like someone with no ties to Moline and is willing to go against the Good old boy/girl network
- Deal with new contract – salary issues

## **Moline – School Board Members**

### **1 What are the greatest assets of the Moline community?**

- Great place to raise a family – great place to live
- Affordable living
- Many attractions and activities in the area
- John Deere, Alcoa, and many other strong businesses based in Moline
- Good economic development board – striving to bring in new industry
- Many excellent higher education institutions in the area
- Western Illinois is expanding in Moline
- Low crime rate
- People take care of one another – community cares
- A lot of people volunteer their time
- Diversity
- Great fine arts in area
- Many recreational activities in the area
- Centrally located – close to many metro areas
- The river is an attraction and great resource
- Older neighborhoods are being revitalized
- New Amtrak station being built in downtown Moline – train will run from Moline to Chicago

### **2 What are the good things about your school district?**

- Great teachers
- Good reputation – Moline district is ranked very high and well thought of
- A lot of support from people – loyal alumni
- Community gets involved and gives back to the school district
- Good partnerships with businesses – John Deere as an example
- Good leadership – Good administrators
- Great parental support – good PTA system
- Good pay for teachers and staff compared to other schools in area
- Strong cabinet
- School district employees use of data – data driven
- Board has no agenda – no preconceived notions
- Board gets along well – can disagree without hurting feelings
- Very balanced – excellent academics, excellent fine arts and excellent athletics
- Cal has provided consistent leadership
- District does a great job maintaining facilities
- Moline district has been fiscally responsible
- Remodeled middle schools
- Longevity with staff
- Professional development is encouraged with staff
- Mentoring program with teachers and staff

**3 What are the characteristics, skills, and qualities the new superintendent will need to be successful here?**

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Community involvement
- Must be visible in buildings and community
- Good communicator
- Strong financial background
- Be able to relate to a district Moline's size
- Long term commitment
- Experience with researching new resources for funding
- Good handle on early childhood education
- Raise the bar for average students – challenges students
- Strong – will stand up for their own convictions
- Not satisfied with status quo – willing to rock the boat
- An academic – have discussions on literature – on topics that could help district
- Outwardly supportive of the arts
- Good listener
- Work well with unions and professional organizations
- Strong curriculum background
- Open minded
- Willing to make changes when appropriate – in a collaborative manner
- Familiar with the legislative process

**4 What are some of the issues the new superintendent should be aware of in order to hit the ground running?**

- Challenge of coming in to a new district
- Aging population will make revenue a challenge
- Aging buildings
- Decision to possibly close some schools in future
- Meeting all the scholastic goals that are mandated
- Fiscal challenges – funding issues
- Finding younger – qualified teachers to replace retirees
- Test scores are going down
- Newer families to area – many younger – are moving to Iowa
- Older community – older homes
- Demographics are shifting
- Making AYP
- New superintendent will have to deal with contract negotiations in first year
- New superintendent will have big shoes to fill – Cal is very respected
- What happens with No Child Left Behind
- Possible redistricting – new boundary lines
- Class sizes
- The media can hurt the district at times – negative press

*Survey Monkey Results for Moline School District No. 40*  
*24 responses*  
*December 2011*

*(NOTE—these responses have not been edited,  
they are printed as entered by the stakeholders)*

**Administrators**

No responses

**Classified Staff**

No responses

**Community Members**

**Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- Athletics Pride Caring
- Our schools were are one time the best part of Moline. There are families who have worked here to raise their families and have made Moline home and have an invested interest in Moline. Of course, John Deere Headquarters and jobs is important. Our neighborhoods are well kept. We are prideful, hardworking people. There is a small town quality to Moline.
- This community will come together in times of crisis and need. It is a safe community with good resources for quality of life--parks, library, et.
- Caring, family oriented, plenty of activities,
- Our community has many valuable resources that can be drawn on. Become part of the community and think about all groups. Many of the businesses in this community are willing to be a part of the learning process or donate to the school district as they see how it will impact them in the future.

**Tell us the good things about Moline School District No. 40. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- Teachers Caring Nurturing
- When my children went to school, graduated 1999, 2002 and 2006, the parental involvement was huge. The teachers welcomed parents in the classroom and the PTA was very involved. We had Principals who attended events and stayed to close the doors. Hiring from within is an idea also. this person would already know Moline and we have good people who are already working in our district. By promoting from within, it demonstrates that we value people who already work in the district. Bringing someone from outside the community has its positives for sure, but we have people who know our system and how Moline works.

- Moline has a good school district. With commitment and leadership it could be a great district. We have lost great staff members to retirement in the last few years. I hope the new teachers are mentored and evaluated honestly. Our staff has always been the strength of the district. Historically, Moline has done a fine job of being a good steward of the tax dollars. I hope that continues.
- Great partnerships with the school district and/or specific buildings
- many of the schools have partnerships with churches that support learning and have volunteers who help in a great way. Our schools each have their own identities and take pride in their school spirit. Many of the schools have second, third, and even fourth generations attending them. Most of the teachers are dedicated to the classrooms and spend many hours preparing for their class.

**What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)**

- Collaborative Genuine Supportive
- A person who can communicate well, who attends events and welcomes input from the community. A person who makes things happen by asking and listening what is going on in individual schools. We are in a situation now that people are moving away and we need to all work together to put Moline Schools at the top again. It definitely takes a village to raise a child and the whole community has to understand that with good schools, comes the jobs and a good place to live. Hiring from within the district is an option. Asking people to apply who are already familiar with Moline and the schools has its advantages.
- Having been through five superintendent searches while on the board of education, I have answered this question many times. I think in today's world it is essential that the superintendent being the number one public relations voice. He or she should at every opportunity be speaking about the schools to parent and civic groups. Instill community pride in your schools. Moline seems to be afraid of the parents and taxpayers and criticism. You can make them your allies by honest communication. If something is wrong admit it and fix it. Don't go on the defense immediately all the time. Of course, sports are very important but so are so many other activities. The super and board need to show interest in all activities by attending or supporting in another way.
- willingness to listen, good communicator
- work with a variety of social economic groups. Be willing to listen to all stake holders, especially those who deal with the students on a daily basis. Listen to the positive and negative of the textbooks and new programs that are started in the district. Look for quality teachers who care and work to improve the school district. Don't just hire a teacher because they are cheaper. This district let go many experienced teachers due to pay and hired first year teachers in their place. Due to economic times they need to use resources wisely and think about how layoffs will affect student learning. Keep more teachers in the classroom. They should also understand that Moline is like a big Salad Bowl in that we have many emigrants from over 30 countries. They need to have a strong backbone and stand up for their employees when they are right and be willing to go out and observe teachers and give input. When they are observing a classroom they should meet with the teacher after the day the visit to let them know what they can do to improve on their teaching. They need to be active within each school as much as possible and attend events to learn the dynamics of each building.

**What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)**

- Administrative disconnect Lack of marketing Lack of community intermix
- I believe that we have a whole attitude within the district that teachers feel they are not appreciated as well as the para professionals. We need to make the staff feel that they are part of something that is truly important. We need more parent involvement. We need to open the whole retirement package that teachers receive as far as cost of living raises. We do not have the money to keep paying the retirement packages. Money is an issue! If we pay for the best, then the taxpayers expect the best from their teachers and administrations. We have to start somewhere to turn this around and the superintendent, right or wrong, should be the catalyst for making changes that will have positive results for our children's education and the taxpayer. We have many seniors who do not understand many of the programs that are offered...it is upto the superintendent to have an open attitude explaining what good things are happening in the schools as well as addressing the problem areas and communicating back to the taxpayer what will be done to make things better and see results.
- I think the climate of fear of parents/taxpayers. I know this isn't unique to this district, but I think the staff and community want someone they can talk to who is visible and will listen and is willing to take responsibility for decisions good and bad.
- budget, diversity,
- That this district lost many of it's schools in the 70's and 80's due to economic times. People in this community are not afraid to tell you how they feel about their child's education and they want the best for their children. They also want to see that their child is learning no matter what and they want to keep the teachers in the classroom. They realize that times are hard but at all cost the teacher is the one who has contact with each child and is responsible for their learning. The more children in a classroom means that the teacher is pulled in different directions and may not be able to work with each child as much.

## **Parents**

**Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- We stick together. We support our children, teachers and staff. We don't want or need an outsider to come in with ridiculous ideas and expectations. Really tired of paying outrageous salaries to someone outside of our community.
- Our school district has very dedicated, outstanding teachers.
- Big enough to provide resources and bigger city experiences but still has opportunity to experience smaller town amenities. Think i-Wireless Center, Class A Baseball, CHL Hockey, QC Symphony, Community Theater, Shopping etc...
- Friendly and helping people

**Tell us the good things about Moline School District No. 40. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- We have quality teachers and support staff. We have great parent participation. Keep this in our own community and quit recruiting overpaid worthless people who could care less about what we want as a community and just use our district as a stepping stone for a higher paying job.
- Our schools provide a very good education to every student.
- I've experienced the great teachers that Moline schools can offer at the elementary school level. We recently started our oldest at Wilson Middle School with more good experiences.
- Quality staff

**What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)**

- I want someone from our community that knows what our parents and teachers need and want. I don't want some stranger making my child's educational decisions. I want someone who respects our teachers. I want someone that respects our traditions.
- The superintendent must value his teachers and administrators, as they are the foundation. Also, the superintendent should strive to improve our building facilities to attract new families.
- Be ready to administer many roles. Manage the vision the district will follow, manage the administrators and teachers, work with the school board to provide leadership and manage the people/perceptions of the Moline school district.
- People management Problem solving Thinking out of the box Change management Technology oriented Results driven

**What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)**

- I want a Superintendent from our community. Not some overpaid know it all that thinks they can come into our community and make decisions by what they have done in the past in other communities.
- Our community has more lower income students than in the past. We need to attract new families to our community.
- Class sizes - Who can teach when they are trying to survive. 2. Schools - what is the vision for the elementary schools? More consolidation/fewer neighborhood schools?
- Complacency in the test scores results in just meeting standards and not exceeding  
Common approach to all students results in leaving out what or how a child actually needs or learns  
Open discussion needed with parents rather than everything OK approach  
Transparency in curriculum so that parents can reinforce the same at home  
Awareness of opportunities for children who are new to school district  
Focus on all children rather than just children of teachers

## **Teachers**

### **Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- Moline is a nice, caring community. People pull together for many good causes. There is a diverse population, and many different cultures are represented in Moline. There are many activities and sporting events to attend. Even if you wish to travel to a larger city for more to do, you do not have to travel far to reach Chicago or Saint Louis.
- safe, mid-size, lots to do, mostly middle class, shopping, colleges, river town. civic centers so concerts and entertainment, sports, good restaurants
- Many educational and enrichment opportunities available to the general public for a community of its size.
- Our community is just big enough to offer many opportunities and entertainment options. Yet it is also small enough to feel a sense of togetherness. It is a wonderful place for all age groups.
- We're big enough to have lots to offer, but small enough that we look out for our neighbors. Also, the cost of living is low, so a salary less than Cal Lee's would still be more than comfortable.
- Moline/Coal Valley and the Quad Cities in general are very generous communities. We support many charities, volunteer countless hours, are involved in activities that support the arts and sports. The Quad-Cities has a small town feel and small town pride but many amenities of a big city. It is an excellent place to raise children. My own children participate in many community activities and feel part of Coal Valley/Moline/Quad-Cities. It is with pride that I shop at wonderful farmers markets and support local small business and restaurants. I grew up in Eastern Iowa and have lived in other states. I live in Coal Valley now and I have been welcomed by my community and can truly call the Quad Cities my home.
- We are caring, supportive, and diverse.
- Moline is a wonderful place to reside.
- Family oriented
- People are nice. Small town values in a bigger community.
- Willingness to participate in student achievement.

### **Tell us the good things about Moline School District No. 40. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)**

- Moline schools work very hard at reaching all students. There are many programs in place to help all students succeed. The PATS program, ESL, Reading Recovery and Title I Reading are all assets to the students in Moline.
- teachers, size, friendly, neighborhood schools - no bussing!!
- Dedicated and hard working staff; Quality district initiatives like Kagan, RtI, and Continuous Improvement
- Our schools have dedicated, knowledgeable staff members that strive for excellence and success for each student. We have the technology to embrace the future, along with the basic educational tools to form a solid foundation.
- The staff is very dedicated, and kid directed. All the support staff is equally involved.
- Innovative, dedicated teachers, and some very motivated students.

- The Moline School District is full of people who have the best interest of students first in their priority list. This includes administrators, teachers, paras, support staff, specialists, custodians - everyone. We know that the work we do is important. We support each other, encourage each other, and push each other to do our best. Most staff is committed and willing to learn and change to make things better. Many staff want to be team players and take on leadership roles to help others. There are many curriculum experts in our buildings that are highly educated and committed to Moline. Many parents are involved and want what is best for their children. I see students try their best everyday, even when it is hard. I think that that speaks to the quality of the relationships that teachers have with their students. Despite the diversity of students and size of schools teachers work together to create positive places for children. Our administrators are good listeners and questioners, and encourage staff to push themselves and their students. They also give many teachers the flexibility to work and think creatively.
- We are caring, supportive, diverse and want to do the best for the students.
- We have wonderful and very hard working staff.
- Viewed to be the best in the area Hardworking staff
- Our teachers are highly qualified. Many of us have master's degrees or above. Very dedicated teachers and staff.
- We have amazing teachers. We have some amazing programs.
- Great principal with the flexibility to make decisions for our school/staff. Great hardworking/caring staff positive atmosphere

**What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)**

- young(er), enthusiastic, great people skills, optimistic, good leadership skills, willing to make tough decisions, outgoing, approachable, knowledgeable
- Outstanding leadership ability. The superintendent should be able to communicate effectively with staff, students and the community. They should be a visible presence in the schools.
- no micro managers, someone who has been a very successful principal and teacher!! someone who understands that PEOPLE are the most valuable and important commodity of the district - all including paras, tutors, lunch personnel, custodians, all our specialists - that is what makes this district outstanding in addition to the teachers!!!!
- Listening, critical thinking, decision making, knowledge about best practices, leadership, and visibility; this person should not have to ask what is happening in the district-he/she should be around enough to know what our strengths and weaknesses are
- Our superintendent should be friendly, knowledgeable about the best practices in education, and ready to work with the staff and community to help us find success for each child.
- Someone with the skills, ability and or desire to rebuild the vocational programs that have been gutted over the last ten years. Since not all students are going to college, why are we not preparing them for the workplace? Autoshop, building trades, machine shop and welding.
- Needs to be a people person, good humor, and has to have experience at either elementary or high school level. Has to be compassionate to the economic issues of this community.
- A good listener, so that s/he can make informed decisions in the students' best interest.

- Someone who can/will: lead effectively through hard times make hard decisions and explain why build trust among all levels of staff knowledgeable about literacy, dual language, RtI Excellent communicator Knowledgeable about political issues and factors that effect our schools Build and increase morale
- They should be motivated, be present in the schools, know the students, teachers and staff. They should be a proponent of differentiating and be familiar with all of our current and forthcoming initiatives (Kagan, Dual Language, Quality Tools)
- It should be a requirement that she is bilingual. She should be able to speak English and Spanish. We have a population that is not represented in administration. It would be a complete package for her to be able to have meetings for the Hispanic population without an interpreter. We need a superintendent that meets not only with staff once a year but with their students. She should have quarterly Open Houses to meets with parents. There is a gap between superintendent and parents. There is an emphasis for teachers to have an open door for parents why should the superintendent be any different?
- The ability to build a culture of collaboration and teamwork, rather than competition and favoritism The ability to listen to feedback that is different from his/her perception of events Values the contribution of all staff members, even those from women The ability to break up the culture of the "boy's club" that is based on favoring others within the district (mainly men) that is based on relationships and supports the inappropriate treatment of others (mainly women) Builds a sense of trust among staff
- The candidate should have prior experience in leadership or teaching in all levels to include: elementary, middle school and high school so they will have an excellent understanding of the curriculum. He or she should be a stakeholder in our community. In other words, someone who has shown commitment to do their part by giving back to our community through active involvement or volunteering. Therefore they would have a good understanding of the demographics of our school district. The candidate should be personable with all staff members by being visible in each school building on a regular basis and also being visible in the community.
- We need a superintendent that we actually see at school and not just at sporting events. We need an administrator who cares about curriculum. We need to get beyond the test scores to educating the whole person. We need more openness to teacher input.
- Being Visible and interested in staff and students (not just a figurehead). Outgoing Driven Understanding

**What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)**

- I hope the superintendent is aware of the many great programs (such as Reading Recovery) already being used in Moline and how effective they can be helping students to succeed. I think it is imperative that we keep the things in place which are already helping students. I am proud to be part of a school district that although we have experienced recent budget cuts, Moline has continued to put students' learning first.
- that we have issues like anyone else, but we are open to new ideas as long as it remains student oriented and a great place to work!!!!

- Understaffed in many areas (example: need more counselors, interventionists, deans, etc.), work load is not equally shared between employees; many staff choose not to embrace/learn about best practice but are stuck in the "way things used to be"; many district initiatives are not promoted or enforced consistently or with fidelity; lack of leadership and best practice at the administrative
- The staff in Moline is experienced and hard-working. We value education and work together well.
- Financial instability among several families in the area.
- Big socio-economic disparity. Also, the elementary and middle school curricula need better alignment and enforcement of that alignment.
- They are coming to us at a critical time - we are facing many challenges and we need someone who will move us forward and help us create a new Moline.
- They need to balance teacher/student ratio. Instead of hiring so many support staff or experts...we need more teachers in the buildings. If you want quality education then give us the proper staff. MSD should look at hiring new teachers with ESL endorsement to meet the needs of all students. New mainstream teachers should know how to teach ESL students to help with low state scores.
- budget, changing state and federal expectations
- Our class sizes are too large. We need to redistrict immediately, instead of study it for a few more years. Taxes need to be raised to help fund our schools. Teachers are exhausted and overwhelmed with so many initiatives...we can't keep up with everything that is expected of us and some of these things cost too much i.e. Kagan.
- We need to have a solid K-12 curriculum. We need to focus on educating the whole person not just teaching test taking skills. The high school has become a tension ridden place to work. There is a dictator who is ruling over the teachers making policy and curriculum without any approval. This is why we have a mess with freshman academy and CCR (test prep) half hour.
- Truency - What standards will be parents be held to? Seems like we are lacking at the elementary level of enforcement. Hard to not leave a child behind when they don't attend. Special Needs - How will students with special needs be served? Not sure our current policy is best serving ALL students. Staffing - When will decisions for each school year be made? Will split classes still be in play? I understand the split classes from a budget perspective, but they are such a disservice to students.