

Stakeholder Input Report for

***Spearfish School
District
Spearfish, South Dakota***

submitted by

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EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT

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Spearfish School District Spearfish, South Dakota District Stakeholders Report, February 2026

Executive Summary

Beginning January 20, an online survey was available for stakeholders to provide responses to four questions on the superintendent search for the Spearfish School District. Outlined below is an Executive Summary of the major themes expressed by the respondents. Following the Executive Summary is a compilation of all the input received.

1. Good Things About the Community

- Strong small-town, close-knit culture where people know one another and step up in times of need
- High levels of safety, low crime, and a clean, well-maintained environment
- Exceptional natural beauty and outdoor recreation (Black Hills, trails, parks, year-round activities)
- Strong support for public education, families, and youth
- Active community engagement (volunteering, civic pride, school events)
- Balance of small-town values with growth, though growth is viewed with both optimism and caution
- Presence of BHSU adds cultural, educational, and arts opportunities
- Welcoming atmosphere for families and newcomers, with a strong sense of belonging

2. Good Things About the Schools

- Highly dedicated, caring teachers and staff who prioritize students and relationships
- Strong academic outcomes, with preparation for college, careers, CTE pathways, and the military
- Broad extracurricular offerings (arts, athletics, clubs, activities)
- Emphasis on educating the whole child (academic, social, emotional)
- Generally small class sizes and positive school climate
- Strong community and parent support for schools

- Positive leadership at the building and district levels
- Pride in schools and graduates; schools viewed as a central community asset

3. Issues the Superintendent Should Be Aware Of

- Rapid growth creating pressure on class sizes, facilities, and staffing
- Budget and funding concerns, including long-term sustainability and fair allocation
- Teacher recruitment, retention, burnout, and compensation
- Increasing student behavioral challenges, bullying, vaping, and mental-health needs
- Concerns about political polarization affecting public education
- High cost of living and housing, impacting staff recruitment
- Perceptions of cliques, favoritism, or lack of inclusivity in parts of the community
- Need to balance athletics vs. other programs in priorities and funding

4. Superintendent Characteristics

- Desire for a superintendent who:
 - Communicates clearly, transparently, and consistently
 - Respects community values and traditions while managing growth
 - Maintains a strong focus on student well-being and safety
 - Supports and values teachers and staff
 - Keeps schools focused on education rather than politics
 - Proactively addresses bullying, mental health, and behavior supports
- Expectation of continued collaboration with families, staff, and the broader community
- Strong interest in steady, trust-building leadership rather than major disruption

Q1 Tell us the good things about your community. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

Answered: 186 Skipped: 15

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The helpfulness of every one	1/26/2026 10:23 PM
2	The natural beauty of Spearfish makes it a great place to live. It is a safe community with exceptional health care options and a liberal university that feeds a lively arts and culture scene. There are 60+ restaurants, 14 coffee shops, and many grocery stores, so you don't have to travel far to get what you need.	1/26/2026 12:48 PM
3	We are a close knit community, this can be good and bad. But we seem to rally together and help each other when needs arise.	1/26/2026 12:00 PM
4	Public education is a pillar of the community. Value placed on reading & the arts.	1/26/2026 11:36 AM
5	Spearfish is small town community so eventually people get to other people. I like it here because the people are more open minded to other cultures, ideas, and attitudes.	1/26/2026 5:13 AM
6	This community is supportive and welcoming. Most importantly, the people who support the school are the ones who make sure that students succeed academically.	1/25/2026 9:39 PM
7	This is a community of involved citizens. We are ranchers, business people, outdoor enthusiasts, and hard workers. We take pride in our home and stand up for what is right. We love our kids and want them to succeed.	1/25/2026 9:34 PM
8	safe	1/25/2026 6:40 PM
9	Spearfish is a close-knit, welcoming community with a strong sense of shared responsibility and pride. Residents value relationships, civic engagement, and collaboration across generations. There is a long-standing commitment to supporting families and youth, evident in the way schools, local businesses, higher education institutions, faith communities, and civic organizations work together for the common good. The community benefits from a balance of small-town values and forward-thinking leadership. Spearfish attracts families who care deeply about education, character development, and opportunities for young people. Community members consistently invest time, resources, and energy into school activities, athletics, arts, and service initiatives. This collective investment creates a stable, supportive environment in which students are encouraged to succeed academically, socially, and personally.	1/25/2026 6:09 PM
10	Spearfish still has the smaller hometown feel. There are many people that live here that truly value the community and area.	1/25/2026 6:00 PM
11	Spearfish is a nice town. It has a bit of an identity crisis but I think it is starting to settle out a bit. Still too much outside influence and that needs to be watched out for.	1/24/2026 8:28 PM
12	Spearfish is a wonderful community of caring people. It is a close community	1/24/2026 11:29 AM
13	Our community is very supportive and small, we seek the common good for the students and a proper education	1/23/2026 9:14 PM
14	Spearfish is a wonderful community. The diversity of the people with the college here makes it unique. It has changed rapidly though since COVID, and we need to be very intentional about ensuring we don't lose the strengths that make it unique.	1/23/2026 6:35 PM
15	Caring Outdoor activities Supportive	1/23/2026 5:40 PM
16	Our community is welcoming and committed to helping others.	1/23/2026 3:12 PM
17	Spearfish is a great place to live and raise a family. Small town feel with outdoor activities and quality public schools.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM
18	The beauty of the Black Hills with a kind and compassionate community.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM

19	They care about the education of their students. They are active and will help when needed.	1/23/2026 10:43 AM
20	Beautiful location with a great climate and many outdoor activities available. It is a safe, clean community that has many activities for youth. Vibrant and active outdoor culture. Forward looking leadership that is planning for continued city growth.	1/23/2026 10:21 AM
21	I can see my friend during the day	1/23/2026 9:46 AM
22	Active community and very close knit	1/23/2026 9:44 AM
23	Many in our community are caring, goal driven, and empathetic.	1/23/2026 9:25 AM
24	Small community with hometown values. Plenty of things to do, and close enough to Rapid City for shopping. Natural beauty and outdoors activities is a draw.	1/23/2026 6:14 AM
25	It is a small close knit community with so many option for culture, art, recreation, outdoors, etc. it is experiencing explosive growth which may be good and may not be in some aspects. This will definitely be something the new superintendent will need to deal with.	1/22/2026 8:52 PM
26	The community has a rich feel for its history and tradition of being a district that is held in high regard. Community members expect these high standards to be upheld and are willing to support and back the district if the information and vision is conveyed properly.	1/22/2026 4:10 PM
27	Spearfish is a unique community. Changes in demographics have challenged the traditional culture and values. With the university, the community has a diverse mix of political and social views and beliefs that creates an interesting and often challenging community.	1/22/2026 3:21 PM
28	They are usually pretty involved and helpful to the school district.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
29	Everyone is very friendly and kind.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
30	There are nice and welcoming people	1/22/2026 2:09 PM
31	Job opportunity	1/22/2026 1:23 PM
32	Spearfish is a safe community and most people are friendly and welcoming. The Black Hills are beautiful, and a great area for outdoor enthusiasts and adventure seekers!	1/22/2026 1:20 PM
33	Bike trails and parks	1/22/2026 1:14 PM
34	Small town, lots of coffee shops, lots of churches to find the right fit, small college town, great restaurants, parks and park paths to access end to end town, beautiful area with year round activities in all 4 seasons.	1/22/2026 1:12 PM
35	Several people willing to volunteer to help with activities. Expensive to live in Spearfish which helps to keep crime and negative behavior at bay.	1/22/2026 12:25 PM
36	Our community likes to come together to support families and businesses in need.	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
37	It is very clean.	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
38	its clean	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
39	Our community is respectful. The people genuinely care about each other.	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
40	The community is always, warm and welcoming. Everyone is always super kind	1/22/2026 12:11 PM
41	The opportunities given to us	1/22/2026 12:08 PM
42	Small, friendly town with lots of outdoor activities! 30 minutes from a ski hill, rec path throughout town makes biking and walking very accessible through town, 25+ miles of hiking trails in town and on Lookout Mountain. Even more within a 30 minute drive.	1/22/2026 11:14 AM
43	Its not crazy	1/22/2026 11:12 AM
44	Lots of great people, great schools, education. Beautiful part of country to live in.	1/22/2026 11:02 AM
45	This question is too plain to evoke deep thought. I think a more forward-looking question would yield better responses, like "When you think about your community, what matters most and where would you like to see it develop in the years ahead."	1/22/2026 11:01 AM
46	Fairly safe from violent crime, beautiful trail and parks system	1/22/2026 10:56 AM

47	Good teachers and an amazing environment	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
48	I have made friends through the athletic programs	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
49	Our community is fairly involved and active	1/22/2026 10:44 AM
50	everyones nice	1/22/2026 10:41 AM
51	Lots of outdoor activities and small town feel. The town is located in a good position to travel on interstate to other larger towns with more options.	1/22/2026 10:37 AM
52	This community is very giving. If students need anything all you have to do it reach out.	1/22/2026 10:28 AM
53	N/A	1/22/2026 10:26 AM
54	I have friends that help me when i need it.	1/22/2026 10:26 AM
55	Everyone is nice	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
56	People are chill	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
57	very fun	1/22/2026 10:24 AM
58	The teachers try to help me.	1/22/2026 10:22 AM
59	Collectively I think we all have a genuine interest in our kids getting a good education. The definition of good varies, but I think all of us want our kids to have opportunities (education, sports, work) downstream and to be able to compete against kids that had access to opportunities that our kids might not have due to low budgets and underpaid teachers.	1/22/2026 10:04 AM
60	We are a smaller community that is growing and expanding. We value our community, conservative and no nonsense when it comes to making decisions.	1/22/2026 10:01 AM
61	there kind	1/22/2026 9:39 AM
62	Aside from the motorcycles and trucks, the people are very quiet.	1/22/2026 9:38 AM
63	I feel like we're very close knit. Also I feel as though our community talks a lot.	1/22/2026 9:35 AM
64	Quiet community. I believe it is safer for kids to be out on bikes/park/walk/hang out with other kids than some cities in the US.	1/22/2026 9:34 AM
65	Everybody is willing to jump in and help/care for families in need. A village.	1/22/2026 9:25 AM
66	good communication	1/22/2026 9:20 AM
67	Friendly and welcoming	1/22/2026 9:15 AM
68	The community has so many opportunities for activity, family outings and good neighbors.I have lived here 62 years and I have watched as the community grows, becomes more diverse and I still get such a warm feeling as I drive into town after going to Rapid or coming to town from the ranch.	1/22/2026 9:11 AM
69	People know and help each other.	1/22/2026 8:59 AM
70	Spearfish is the gem of the Black Hills with unlimited things to do. Outdoor recreation is 2nd to none.	1/22/2026 8:27 AM
71	Family friendly Clean parks Very low crime Lots of events throughout the year for families Vibrant downtown Outdoor activities second to none	1/22/2026 8:02 AM
72	Our community's foundation is still family, small business and church based. The Spearfish school district needs to respect our foundations. A newly hired superintendent who is not a South Dakota local can fall crossways with not understanding the foundations of the Spearfish School District.	1/22/2026 7:11 AM
73	Our community really feels like a community; like people know people and are friendly.	1/22/2026 12:24 AM
74	Low crime, Beautiful, All the things you need in a town except a sporting goods store, Good Healthcare, Nice place to retire, Better weather than the vast majority of the surrounding area, College town	1/21/2026 11:32 PM
75	Safe, friendly and clean town. Foot of the Black Hills for endless outdoor recreational	1/21/2026 11:18 PM

	activities.	
76	Smaller town, family like atmosphere People genuinely care about one another Our city is generally fairly safe	1/21/2026 9:36 PM
77	Our community is built on strong values, respect, loyalty, and looking out for one another. People show up when it matters, whether that's supporting a good cause, lending a hand, or just being there for a neighbor. We take pride in where we're from, keep our traditions alive, and work hard to make things better than we found them. It's a place where relationships matter, trust is earned, and everyone pulls together to get things done.	1/21/2026 9:24 PM
78	Supportive of our youth, generous with our local organizations and programs, engagement in our schools, strives to be continue growing in many ways	1/21/2026 8:27 PM
79	This is a welcoming, supportive, and diverse community. Community members are actively involved and desire to make Spearfish a wonderful place to live.	1/21/2026 8:01 PM
80	I love ██████ and ██████	1/21/2026 7:11 PM
81	Spearfish community, businesses, and organizations are so supportive of our schools!	1/21/2026 5:31 PM
82	I believe our community is invested in our educational process, I believe the large majority support our education system and are highly invested. We have a very well rounded community with many different options for students and adults.	1/21/2026 5:21 PM
83	Tight knit community.	1/21/2026 5:19 PM
84	Spearfish is a supportive, caring community with a lot going on for all ages. Our public schools rock!	1/21/2026 4:44 PM
85	Spearfish is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise children. The outdoor oppoportunities and communicaty-based activities bring an abundant amount of options to fill your time and follow passions.	1/21/2026 4:37 PM
86	It is friendly.	1/21/2026 4:02 PM
87	Safe. Outdoor Rec opportunities. Fairly mild winters.	1/21/2026 3:44 PM
88	Our community is very supportive and truly cares about kids. People show up! Whether it's for school events, sports, fundraisers, or just helping a neighbor out. It feels safe, welcoming, and like a place where families want to stay and put down roots. Which is what my family chose to do! We love it here!	1/21/2026 3:30 PM
89	fun small safe	1/21/2026 3:13 PM
90	nice people? but some suck at driving	1/21/2026 3:12 PM
91	Small enough that it's a personal community where we know most people, for example law enforcement. Beautiful area are well.	1/21/2026 2:47 PM
92	Our community is small and feels very safe.	1/21/2026 2:34 PM
93	We have a great community that supports education and our teachers. Our community is centered around the outdoors and many of our biggest annual events are used to broadcast that; Chinook Days, Downtown Friday nights and the Festival in the Park.	1/21/2026 2:30 PM
94	Recreation; BHSU; friendly community	1/21/2026 2:05 PM
95	friendly community, naturally beautiful, great choices for outdoor activities	1/21/2026 2:02 PM
96	Close knit Supportive Involved	1/21/2026 1:59 PM
97	Picturesque with ample outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, beautiful parks with handicap accessibility, running/biking trails, etc. Great local restaurants and shopping.	1/21/2026 1:58 PM
98	The community bonds together in hard times. There's a sense of belonging	1/21/2026 1:50 PM
99	Helpful people	1/21/2026 1:42 PM
100	Progressiveness	1/21/2026 1:23 PM
101	It has a small-town feel even as it's growing (which we'd like to keep). It has a thriving arts	1/21/2026 1:15 PM

	community.	
102	We are a small community but not too small. We have some amenities like Walmart, Walgreens, Knechts to get by without always having to run to RC. The area is generally safe and calm (except for the Rally). Families feel comfortable living and raising children here (except during the rally)	1/21/2026 1:13 PM
103	The Spearfish community is growing and becoming a diverse area surrounded by nature and people that enjoy the beauty it has to offer.	1/21/2026 1:01 PM
104	Your superintendent is amazing! He works well with the community and the kids and parents.	1/21/2026 12:58 PM
105	We have good people. The university helps promote the importance of education.	1/21/2026 12:57 PM
106	Theres plenty to do	1/21/2026 12:55 PM
107	Mostly Helpful	1/21/2026 12:40 PM
108	Spearfish has a small town, help your neighbor vibe while still having necessary amenities for day to day living. It is a friendly community that tends to support each other.	1/21/2026 12:37 PM
109	Spearfish still has the feel of a small tight-knit community, yet has many of the opportunites found in a larger town.	1/21/2026 12:25 PM
110	Our community is very good at knowing each other. You can always run into someone you know or someone who's new to you but knows someone you know. We also care about self image because of the care we take with the presentation of Spearfish. There's plant life and decoration everywhere. We also appreciate the old and the new. Downtown has lots of historic buildings that have been preserved and we add the modern buildings in areas that are open.	1/21/2026 12:24 PM
111	We have a wonderful community to live in. It is safe and clean and we have a lot of outdoor activities right out our back door!	1/21/2026 12:12 PM
112	Being part of and involved in this community is a great privilege.	1/21/2026 12:08 PM
113	No homeless problem, low crime, outdoor recreation	1/21/2026 12:07 PM
114	The goo things about our community is that it is a well nourished kind place to live in. Many helpful people live here and people cherish it very much. It is also small making it not to busy all the time unlike bigger cities.	1/21/2026 12:04 PM
115	Free Breakfast	1/21/2026 12:03 PM
116	Spearfish is a wonderful community where everyone greets you with a smile or a helpful hand. The people in this town is what make it special.	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
117	I notice kindness and respect from our children, which is something not as prominent in other communities. I believe this comes from holding each other accountable.	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
118	Awesome businesses, great location, very beautiful. Awesome parks. Good community involvement.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
119	Our community is supportive, close-knit, and takes pride in its schools. Families value education, extracurricular involvement, and strong relationships between schools and the community. There is a strong sense of school spirit and community attendance at school events. The area offers a safe environment, outdoor recreation, and a welcoming small-town feel while still encouraging growth and progress.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
120	Spearfish is a safe town to raise a family. It has been my home since attending Spearfish high School. Overall, I feel the community is fairly inclusive and supportive. I do feel that there are a significant number of retirees moving into the community and the focus has been shifted to their demographic rather than school age kids. School age kids should also be a priority as they are a vital part of our community. Spearfish is a clean City and has a prestigious feel to it.	1/21/2026 11:51 AM
121	Amazing weather, great being in a community that loves and supports the arts, lots of enrichment possibilities around the hills, close to a great airport, no traffic	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
122	Our community is respectful, kind, and generous to a fault. Most people genuinely care about others. People take time to get to know one another in an easy, laid-back, but interested way.	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
123	Our community is close-knit, supportive, and invested in its schools. People value	1/21/2026 11:41 AM

relationships, show up for students, and take pride in creating a safe, welcoming place to live and learn. There is strong community support for education and a shared desire to see students succeed both academically and personally

124	Family and community oriented	1/21/2026 11:40 AM
125	I think the community is aware of the lack of things for our youth to do outside of school or sports. I think there is a shift happening in the community to provide positive and engaging activities for the youth of the community	1/21/2026 11:37 AM
126	Good people willing to help their neighbors	1/21/2026 11:32 AM
127	We are very connected and the town supports the high school in a healthy way!	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
128	Community: personal people, caring, hard work ethics, devoted, respectful.	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
129	Our sports, school, and cleanliness.	1/21/2026 11:17 AM
130	Bunch of older people. uh yeah, they're all blue collars so if you need some sort of physical labor they gotcha.	1/21/2026 11:14 AM
131	Spearfish is very tight-knit. We have great identity alignment between the school and college. You can see this in parades, first day of school celebrations, etc.	1/21/2026 11:11 AM
132	-Supportive towards Public Education -Clean -Strives to make the community stronger	1/21/2026 11:10 AM
133	Community is very helpful and kind	1/21/2026 11:09 AM
134	they mind their own but very helpful	1/21/2026 11:03 AM
135	The people who live in Spearfish LOVE Spearfish. Our community members are dedicated to supporting locals - including businesses, our schools, and our activities.	1/21/2026 11:02 AM
136	Rapidly growing and developing community with unsurpassed natural beauty and outdoor sports mecca.	1/21/2026 10:56 AM
137	Small and close community	1/21/2026 10:52 AM
138	This community shows up for those in crisis/tragedy. They also support education at the local level.	1/21/2026 10:48 AM
139	Spearfish is a great place to live and raise a family. It is the most beautiful city in SD and it has a lot to offer for recreation such as anything outdoors...hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, water sports, snow skiing, etc.	1/21/2026 10:40 AM
140	Safe, family oriented, community members support one another.	1/21/2026 10:39 AM
141	Great supportive local businesses. Many opportunities.	1/21/2026 10:36 AM
142	It is a tight community that revolves around small town beliefs and values. We are currently struggling a touch with the growth in our area, but I am seeing a great deal of involvement from the community to respond to these challenges.	1/21/2026 10:36 AM
143	Safe, strong sense of community pride	1/21/2026 10:29 AM
144	feel safe and included in my community	1/21/2026 10:26 AM
145	Low crime Reputation of quality education compared to neighboring school districts Large enough for quality amenities but small enough to keep the small town feel Endless outdoors activities	1/21/2026 10:25 AM
146	Wealth and resources within community. BHSU including student teachers.	1/21/2026 10:22 AM
147	We support our community and the children who attend our school system. Dedicated school staff and teachers. College community that supports our education system (with BHSU having students going into education degrees). This provides ongoing school support along with responsibility of educating the future teachers and our students.	1/21/2026 10:20 AM
148	Active, engaged community with great family atmosphere and incredible location.	1/21/2026 10:19 AM
149	The parks and path system, numerous community events such as downtown Friday nights, wednesdays in the park. University and the activities it brings.	1/21/2026 10:09 AM

150	I think Spearfish is a very tight knit community that takes care of others! I also love that there is a big emphasis on outdoor recreation!	1/21/2026 10:07 AM
151	Spearfish is a safe community. We are small yet resourceful.	1/21/2026 10:04 AM
152	Good people and clean town, lots of outdoor things to do.	1/21/2026 10:03 AM
153	There are many good things about our community. Our community allows for better advantages to be outside as well as diverse areas to go. I think it is important to get the community involved.	1/21/2026 10:02 AM
154	One of the greatest strengths of our community is how willing people are to step in and help—no matter the situation. There is a genuine sense of teamwork and care for one another. As a school, we are always looking for ways to involve the community, and that support is consistently returned. Our families, businesses, and community members show up for our students and staff in meaningful ways, creating a strong partnership that truly benefits our schools.	1/21/2026 9:56 AM
155	recreation opportunities	1/21/2026 9:52 AM
156	Strong families Strong support for education Good healthcare	1/21/2026 9:44 AM
157	Professional ideas with a small-town feel. We like to be up-to-date, but still be a small community. This ideal is very important.	1/21/2026 9:43 AM
158	Spearfish is a beautiful town with a vibrant community. There are so many great activities for families to take part in, including outdoor activities like hiking, biking, camping, and exploring the hills, and community events like the Canyon Acoustic Series, Downtown Friday Nights, and Chinook Days. Being in a college town offers additional opportunities to enjoy sporting events, music, theater, and other events on campus.	1/21/2026 9:42 AM
159	If you forget something somewhere, most of the time it will be where you left it when you get back or in a lost-and-found.	1/21/2026 9:40 AM
160	They really care about the kids in this community.	1/21/2026 9:39 AM
161	We have so much availability to nature and outdoor pursuits. There are many options for people to be involved in what they like.	1/21/2026 9:38 AM
162	Spearfish is a friendly and caring town full of good hearted people but its also growing fast and changing with the growth.	1/21/2026 9:36 AM
163	Great people live here, there's lots to do and enjoy.	1/21/2026 9:34 AM
164	The environment is usually safe and clean.	1/21/2026 9:33 AM
165	I think that our community takes great care in our environment- i.e keeping trash off of roads/ditches, no vandalization of properties and the scenery is beautiful. I also think that everyone here is so friendly and kind- especially in our business in our community.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
166	Our Community is close knit and supportive. The community takes pride in a beautiful town and a safe place to live.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
167	Spearfish is a conservative environment with like minded individuals with hometown values. Crime is low and the people are friendly.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
168	Community is great always something going on for the kids and the improvements around the area with a softball field. The soccer fields and the area for the flag football has been great.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
169	Safe, beautiful. Small town feel with many entertainment activities.	1/21/2026 9:24 AM
170	Great place to raise a family. Numerous outdoor activities.	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
171	Small town, but access to culture- BHSU and Matthew's Opera House. Beautiful scenery.	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
172	We are small enough to be connected, but big enough that we have privacy. There is always something fun going on. There is art, athletics, outdoor events, gardening, reading, you name a hobby, we've got it. We can do literally anything here because our seasons and location allow it.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
173	The Spearfish community is amazing. There are a lot of good people here who care about community and family.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM

174	It is beautiful with many outdoor opportunities	1/21/2026 9:12 AM
175	The Spearfish community is extremely welcoming and inviting. As a new teacher and a new community member, I have been treated wonderfully by everyone I have met. I was able to find community within the school, but also through different events that the town has to offer. The community has events consistently, which make plugging into a new town seamless. I was also able to find volunteer opportunities and ways to serve in the community which was extremely beneficial.	1/21/2026 9:12 AM
176	The Spearfish community is welcoming and supportive of our schools. We have a vibrant business community. It's a wonderful area surrounded by a beautiful landscape.	1/21/2026 9:11 AM
177	Close, familiarity, and lots of involvement..	1/21/2026 9:10 AM
178	Our community supports our schools. We live in a beautiful area.	1/21/2026 9:09 AM
179	Spearfish is growing but remains tight knit. The community is a great place to raise a family.	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
180	beautiful setting	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
181	The community is thriving economically and is just the right size. It's nestled in some gorgeous scenery.	1/21/2026 9:06 AM
182	Perfect size town, great parks, lots of outdoor things to do.	1/21/2026 9:05 AM
183	The good things about this community is how the majority of the people support the schools.	1/21/2026 9:01 AM
184	The community is nestled in the northern part of the beautiful Black Hills. Spearfish is an affluent community that values education.	1/21/2026 8:16 AM
185	The best things about Spearfish are the people. We step up when needed, support each other, and stand together. If you make an effort, the community will welcome you. Plus it is so beautiful here!	1/21/2026 6:58 AM
186	--	1/21/2026 5:40 AM

Q2 Tell us the good things about your schools. (This information is used to help us recruit quality candidates.)

Answered: 189 Skipped: 12

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The community but also the teachers they all are there to help and make learning for fun or helping me learn	1/26/2026 10:23 PM
2	We currently have a superintendent who leads the charge with integrity, high expectations, kindness and is exceptionally fiscally responsible, as are the others in administrative positions. We have dedicated teachers and support staff. The quality of the education opens doors for any student to excel and reach his/her goals - whether those are to immediately join the workforce or attend a technical school after graduation (Career and Technical Education options), or to pursue four-year and/or pre-professional degrees (options for Advanced Placement Courses and dual credit enrollment with universities).	1/26/2026 12:48 PM
3	My experience with the Creekside principals has been phenomenal, they are wonderful to work with when issues arise. Very communicative.	1/26/2026 12:00 PM
4	High quality staff that put children first. Strong arts programs and libraries. Reading for personal enjoyment is encouraged.	1/26/2026 11:36 AM
5	I would say the schools do hold a common theme: teachers that want and make a change for the community. I have experienced a few high quality teachers in the school system.	1/26/2026 5:13 AM
6	The school's put their students first. They are good at adapting to the needs of the students.	1/25/2026 9:39 PM
7	Our teachers are incredible. They are passionate and caring.	1/25/2026 9:34 PM
8	safe	1/25/2026 6:40 PM
9	Spearfish public schools have a strong tradition of academic success and well-rounded student outcomes. Graduates are well prepared for college, career, military service, and community leadership. The district has historically emphasized high expectations, strong teaching, and meaningful relationships between educators, students, and families. Teachers and staff are deeply committed to their students and to continuous improvement. There is visible pride in the schools, reflected in community support for academic programs, extracurricular activities, athletics, and the arts. The district benefits from engaged parents and community partners who view education as a shared responsibility rather than solely the role of schools. This is particularly evident in the development and ongoing growth of Spearfish Foundation for Public Education, a volunteer organization dedicated to academic enrichment for public school students. Importantly, the schools strive to educate the whole child—academically, socially, and ethically—while maintaining a culture of respect, accountability, and opportunity.	1/25/2026 6:09 PM
10	Spearfish schools have many people that care about kids. Generally, the community is happy with what the schools are doing.	1/25/2026 6:00 PM
11	The current building administrators and the teachers	1/24/2026 8:28 PM
12	We have wonderful teachers and administrators. Some buildings are very outdated.	1/24/2026 11:29 AM
13	Our schools do a great job at disciplining the children so that we can all excel at the next level in life. The grading scale is rigorous to insure all students are putting in full effort	1/23/2026 9:14 PM
14	Our schools have an amazing staff. The teaches and administrators are wonderful.	1/23/2026 6:35 PM
15	Caring staff Foundation support Great students	1/23/2026 5:40 PM
16	We have a very dedicated staff. Student/teacher connection is valued.	1/23/2026 3:12 PM
17	The teachers and staff are all very dedicated to their students.	1/23/2026 2:52 PM

18	Dedicated and caring staff (e.g. teachers, administrators, para-professionals), smaller class sizes.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM
19	The teachers truly care for students.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM
20	Schools offer a very wide variety of activities outside of the regular school activities (i.e. golf).	1/23/2026 10:43 AM
21	Student performance is above both state and national averages. The CTE Center was a great addition to the schools. Graduation rates are high. Our schools are safe.	1/23/2026 10:21 AM
22	There is a lot of them	1/23/2026 9:46 AM
23	Teachers are very knowledgeable and caring. The school has great systems put into place.	1/23/2026 9:44 AM
24	The teachers communicate well through parent portal. School grades and assignments are readily available.	1/23/2026 9:25 AM
25	Good facilities and forward thinking programs (CTE, etc.)	1/23/2026 6:14 AM
26	In the whole, parents hold their children to a high standard and are very supportive of our schools! There is an exceptional community but I. To the arts in public school	1/22/2026 8:52 PM
27	Our school district readily looks for ways to support both staff and learners. There is still room to grow in this area, but there are people and systems in place that are actively looking towards continual improvement in it. There are a great deal of activities, programs, and events available for learners to hopefully find a group of peers and adults that they can feel and have positive connections with. And the majority of staff I interact with genuinely want to do what is best for the learners. Yes, there are times when ideas of how to do that conflict, but more often than not, we all have the same end goal in mind.	1/22/2026 4:10 PM
28	Spearfish schools have wonderful staff, and students. Some of the buildings are getting aged and need attention.	1/22/2026 3:21 PM
29	Highly qualified teachers, and a great school environment across all schools in the district.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
30	Most teachers are supportive and make life far less stressful.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
31	The teachers are very nice and understanding	1/22/2026 2:09 PM
32	Not enough support for the kids. Not enough room for growth. Not enough teachers.	1/22/2026 1:23 PM
33	Spearfish schools are a safe space for kids to learn and grow. I went to Spearfish schools K-12, and was inspired to become an educator myself. After teaching in several states, I'm back in Spearfish where my own kids are now attending school. I believe our educators and stakeholders want what's best for kids and the community. It is a really special place where often times friends from school become family.	1/22/2026 1:20 PM
34	Art and music classes are funded.	1/22/2026 1:14 PM
35	generous stakeholders, great school staff, conservative board (for now)- think this is imperative. The woke ideology is ruining schools in WA, CO, CA and thinking it won't is a great mistake.	1/22/2026 1:12 PM
36	Teachers are dedicated to students success.	1/22/2026 12:25 PM
37	Our schools are a safe place, where everyone is respected and shown kindness.	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
38	Everyone is nice to everyone, I don't feel left out.	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
39	very nice and good classes	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
40	The teachers here are highly informed and teach well.	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
41	The school has great teachers and a good grading scale.	1/22/2026 12:11 PM
42	The new classes have been added for us.	1/22/2026 12:08 PM
43	I have been very impressed with the Kindergarten. All of the teachers and staff are passionate about working with children!	1/22/2026 11:14 AM
44	Nice teachers	1/22/2026 11:12 AM
45	High quality of education especially in high school, some think they are too strict but it is what	1/22/2026 11:02 AM

	kids need to be successful in life	
46	Some of productive characteristics about the institutions I attended: 1. They sort the outliers from the heard and dedicate additional resources accordingly. Students in the bottom 70% belong to larger classes and move at their own pace. The next 25% have smaller class sizes, get more opportunities for electives, move faster and further. The top 5% have the smallest classes, move at an advanced pace, have opportunities to study abroad and often get visits from subject matter experts and access to college courses.	1/22/2026 11:01 AM
47	Not much violence or gang activity compared to the school district I grew up in. The new CTE building	1/22/2026 10:56 AM
48	Parking lots are always clean and the best in the state	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
49	I get a good education from my teachers	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
50	Active and promotes education	1/22/2026 10:44 AM
51	its a good enviroment	1/22/2026 10:41 AM
52	Small town feel, smaller class sizes. Lots of caring and detected staff. In comparison to other closer districts, it feels like there are less "behaviors". Students typically come from a higher SES. PBIS is a major strong suit! Mt. View, Creekside, and the middle school have very strong tier 1/PBIS expectations for students.	1/22/2026 10:37 AM
53	Our schools all have many strengths. Teachers are supportive of each other and administration is very easy to work with and for.	1/22/2026 10:28 AM
54	the teachers are the only good thing but only SOME are good some of them are just rude	1/22/2026 10:26 AM
55	I like some of the teachers.	1/22/2026 10:26 AM
56	good community letting people with good grades leave spartan time.	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
57	Being able to leave for lunch Letting goof grade students leave	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
58	friends	1/22/2026 10:24 AM
59	They help me to navigate my day at school.	1/22/2026 10:22 AM
60	Class sizes seem small. They are clean. They seem pretty safe to me.	1/22/2026 10:04 AM
61	Great core group of teachers who are good and what they do and truly value to growth and education of our children.	1/22/2026 10:01 AM
62	the teachers are mostly all cool	1/22/2026 9:39 AM
63	Distance from my house,	1/22/2026 9:38 AM
64	How school is constantly expanding and growing not only in numbers but opportunities.	1/22/2026 9:35 AM
65	It is located in a safer community. Overall I believe students have higher standards in their study	1/22/2026 9:34 AM
66	Teachers are incredible and truly love their children. Properly prepare them for upcoming grade. Challenging work, but offer many options to not leave the kids high and dry.	1/22/2026 9:25 AM
67	good communication	1/22/2026 9:20 AM
68	Stress on reading scores	1/22/2026 9:15 AM
69	I believe the school district cares about our students primarily. There is always room for change and growth but we have had some very good years here. Growing up through the school system, I wouldn't change a thing about my education. I love my job with my students.	1/22/2026 9:11 AM
70	Teachers care for kids and help them beyond in the classroom.	1/22/2026 8:59 AM
71	Strong staff members; good facilities; good community support	1/22/2026 8:27 AM
72	Finally have good leadership at all our schools Sports are being competitive to the point we need to get out of the Dakota Conference	1/22/2026 8:02 AM
73	The best part of Spearfish School District is high achievements in academics, CTE, fine arts	1/22/2026 7:11 AM

	and sports. If competitiveness isn't strived for then it isn't worthy of taxpayers funding.	
74	Our schools are our own community within the school; like (mostly) everyone is familiar with each other.	1/22/2026 12:24 AM
75	Good kids, good teachers (mostly), good athletics	1/21/2026 11:32 PM
76	Big enough to offer students more learning and recreational opportunities but small enough to minimize the safety risks and overcrowding associated with larger school districts.	1/21/2026 11:18 PM
77	Quality teachers. Good communication from the schools to parents, I feel safe sending my child to school	1/21/2026 9:36 PM
78	Our schools genuinely care about one another and want everyone to succeed. Most of teachers are supportive and willing to help, the staff creates a welcoming environment, and there are plenty of opportunities to get involved through activities, sports, and community events. It encourages hard work, respect, and personal growth, while also building strong friendships and a sense of pride in being part of the school.	1/21/2026 9:24 PM
79	Teaching staff cares about students and families, quality programs that support student learning, supported by the community, and students who value learning	1/21/2026 8:27 PM
80	The teachers in the Spearfish School District are dedicated, lifelong learners, and enjoy all types of activities in Spearfish from biking, hiking, crafting, volunteering, and more.	1/21/2026 8:01 PM
81	my teachers and my schedule and free time	1/21/2026 7:11 PM
82	Creekside has such a warm and welcoming environment and the staff are all supportive and ready to collaborate with each other.	1/21/2026 5:31 PM
83	I believe we have some of the highest quality teachers and staff in this area. Our teachers work so hard and have a passion for students, it is an honor to be a part of that process. We have teachers that go above and beyond for students on a daily basis. The truly go beyond the educational process to help students and families.	1/21/2026 5:21 PM
84	Adaptable to change, very much a school family.	1/21/2026 5:19 PM
85	Our schools have highly educated teachers and pretty much any school activity to fit every need. We also have an amazing, supportive community with parents and businesses that help us greatly.	1/21/2026 4:44 PM
86	The teachers are amazing and hardworking. They are truly invested in the students.	1/21/2026 4:37 PM
87	They strive to make sure each student gets the resosurces they need to excell in school.	1/21/2026 4:02 PM
88	Pretty high community support. High-quality teachers.	1/21/2026 3:44 PM
89	Our schools are full of caring, hardworking staff who genuinely want what's best for students. Teachers go above and beyond, and there's a strong sense of teamwork across buildings. Kids are known, supported, and encouraged, not just academically but socially and emotionally too.	1/21/2026 3:30 PM
90	great teachers fun safe	1/21/2026 3:13 PM
91	dudeee dont get me started rn frfr	1/21/2026 3:12 PM
92	The students are very nice, easy to work with. Our faculty is excellent and easy to work with and they care about students and relate well with them.	1/21/2026 2:47 PM
93	The teachers are very comforting and make people feel safe and always help students.	1/21/2026 2:34 PM
94	Our teachers are very close, many of whom have taught together for years. We have a close partnership with BHSU which helps us attain young, quality educators. We have leaders in place who are highly respected and are good at their job.	1/21/2026 2:30 PM
95	Outstanding music, drama, and arts	1/21/2026 2:05 PM
96	dedicated staff members, mostly supportive parents, team work mentality	1/21/2026 2:02 PM
97	Awesome staff Innovative Good supports in place	1/21/2026 1:59 PM
98	Highly qualified teachers, strong partnerships with BHSU, strong community involvement in schools, wonderful support from Spearfish Foundation for Public Edu; decent facilities	1/21/2026 1:58 PM

99	Most of the teachers are very helpful when reaching out to them. There's a sense of understanding among them	1/21/2026 1:50 PM
100	High quality education	1/21/2026 1:42 PM
101	My child has nothing but amazing things to share about her social studies teacher, and his very human approach to teaching.	1/21/2026 1:23 PM
102	Schools have high expectations for students and quality teachers who love the kids.	1/21/2026 1:15 PM
103	The schools have great teachers. I am friends with many of them and they truly care about the kids. Our class sizes are big but not huge. I only wish we were class A as we are the little school in a big class when it comes to sports and activities. We don't have the numbers like SF or RC. We need more ██████████ in this world and our schools. She is an amazing teacher, mentor, cheerleader. Our school board knows what is important and not important (like the new track, that was needed! Excited for this new resource) Active parental engagement with the teacher conferences. Can email a teacher and you will get a response (at least from the ones my child has had in HS that I have had to deal with)	1/21/2026 1:13 PM
104	Despite the rapid growth of the area the schools have genuinely wonderful educators. Most are willing to meet children where they are, and that is huge.	1/21/2026 1:01 PM
105	They are clean and well taken care of. I am proud that my kids go to this school district.	1/21/2026 12:58 PM
106	We have good teachers.	1/21/2026 12:57 PM
107	Some of the teachers are great, you can tell they have a passion for teaching	1/21/2026 12:55 PM
108	Some kind and caring teachers and the high school principal is amazing	1/21/2026 12:40 PM
109	Our schools are full of dedicated teachers. Teachers show their dedication over and over again while working hard for students. We have been working to increase test scores without losing sight of forming relationships and meeting needs of the whole child.	1/21/2026 12:37 PM
110	The teachers genuinely care about their students.	1/21/2026 12:25 PM
111	The teachers, janitors, lunch ladies, secretaries, and other employees are all very friendly and helpful. We also have a great debate team.	1/21/2026 12:24 PM
112	We have the best schools. Our schools are safe and offer wonderful opportunities for our kids. Our kids are happy here and are prepared for the next step in life after high school. Whether it's college or a career.	1/21/2026 12:12 PM
113	Being ranked in the state for both education and budgeting disciplines are major qualities that we use to brag to friends and family outside of Sparfish.	1/21/2026 12:08 PM
114	The good things about our schools are that they have a pretty nice environment with pretty nice people. Our schools have some really good teachers who mostly care about their job.	1/21/2026 12:04 PM
115	There heated and cooled	1/21/2026 12:03 PM
116	Teachers are the core of our schools. Majority of them are wonderful and caring individuals and our community is lucky to have them! The school set up is very unique to Spearfish where we have a kindergarten	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
117	From what I have experienced so far, is teachers and staff making school fun and enjoyable. Bad behavior is addressed and the communication has been good.	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
118	Teachers care and build great relationships with students. Good variety of courses. New CTE building.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
119	Our schools have dedicated staff who care deeply about students and their success. Class sizes allow for strong relationships and individualized support. Students are involved in academics, activities, and athletics, with growing participation across programs. There is pride in our schools and a desire to continue improving opportunities for students while maintaining high standards.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
120	Our children excel in the Spearfish School district. We have had a majority of amazing educators for our children. The class sizes seem appropriate. The class offerings seem appropriate, for the most part. The structures of the schools seem adequate from an appearance standpoint.	1/21/2026 11:51 AM

121	Community supported, small enough that it feels like a family, you actually can get office time with teachers or the principal if needed	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
122	We have teachers who genuinely care about their students, respect that they have lives outside of school, and are gracious when unexpected challenges arise. Our schools also have a sense of community.	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
123	Our schools are committed to growth and improvement. There is an opportunity to strengthen transparency and student voice while supporting both academic success and, importantly, personal development.	1/21/2026 11:41 AM
124	We have teachers who care	1/21/2026 11:40 AM
125	We do a great job giving children opportunities to explore diverse interests. Between academic clubs, sports, music, special interest clubs our kids have great opportunities to find what drives them. I believe that most teachers and staff are truly there to support the kids they guide, whether in the classroom, or on the field or stage.	1/21/2026 11:37 AM
126	There are many good teachers trying to make a difference in the kids lives.	1/21/2026 11:32 AM
127	We didn't have really any snow days so YAY	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
128	Implementation of the new tech building / program. Expand the programs and create a middle school to high school program for success in life outside of a college degree. Teach classes on money management, home ownership, business ownership. Bring back more home economics classes. Attending college is not required to be successful in life. Its an additional cost with limited benefits when everyone has a college degree. Work experience is now the sought after quality.	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
129	The teachers, the environment, and the cleanliness.	1/21/2026 11:17 AM
130	The teachers are pretty dang good. [REDACTED] is the G.O.A.T. So is [REDACTED] and yeah, they're pretty fire. The food stinks though.	1/21/2026 11:14 AM
131	Our schools are doing a great job. The separation of students by grades (i.e. - all 1st and 2nd together at West) instead of by neighborhood is awesome. You see a lot of income-level segregation in other communities when schools are by neighborhood that doesn't happen as much here.	1/21/2026 11:11 AM
132	-The Administrators at each building are supportive and strive to collaborate to make out district more cohesive. -The schools for the most part have strong teachers who are doing their best to meet the needs of their students. -Since implementing PLC's K-12, it seems to be a positive change of direction for most of the staff members. -The district has committees formed to look at every aspect of the district (ie- District data team, Certified and Classified advisory boards, District Improvement Team to name a few).	1/21/2026 11:10 AM
133	N/A	1/21/2026 11:09 AM
134	Staff is good to work with	1/21/2026 11:03 AM
135	At the high school level, we have a strong teaching staff with high retention rates. Our staff strives to challenge our students and find creative and effective ways to improve student learning. We have strong activity programs with traditions of success from debate to theater to basketball to marching band.	1/21/2026 11:02 AM
136	Accademic excellence, supportive of challenged students	1/21/2026 10:56 AM
137	teachers are good quality and seem to sincerely care for each student	1/21/2026 10:52 AM
138	Teachers genuinely care about kids. Teachers are highly qualified with a variety of opportunities for all kids.	1/21/2026 10:48 AM
139	Elementary- good communication, High School-Course offerings specifically CTE, dual and concurrent courses,	1/21/2026 10:40 AM
140	The teachers we have encountered are wonderful. The availability and variety of before/after school clubs are a huge asset.	1/21/2026 10:39 AM
141	Amazing teachers at the elementary level. Schools work together and include others. Ex. High school basketball including elementary kids, high schooler coming to teach a lesson to	1/21/2026 10:36 AM

	elementary classes.	
142	The schools do a great job of touching the top and the bottom of abilities while teaching the middle. I feel the support and opportunities for high achievers is available and pushed to them. I also felt they did a wonderful job helping my daughter in areas that she struggled, and she is now excelling in.	1/21/2026 10:36 AM
143	Easy to communicate with, responsive when in need, value students	1/21/2026 10:29 AM
144	we want kids to feel valued and cared for so that they will take risks in their learning-our staff works together as a team with parents and other members of the community	1/21/2026 10:26 AM
145	Challenging high school curriculum prepares students for college rigors Caring teachers	1/21/2026 10:25 AM
146	Small class sizes and high quality teachers.	1/21/2026 10:22 AM
147	Our current teachers I think are excellent in what they accomplish. Some of our best teachers are retiring soon and this will mean replacing new teachers will be a high priority for continuing our students success in their education. As a parent, I want high quality teachers that will educate my child along with enjoying the learning process. I want my child to have fun in education and still have opportunities in extracurricular activities like sports, band, and college classes while in high school.	1/21/2026 10:20 AM
148	Quality school infrastructure with great staff and administrators. The board is conservatively progressive and community support is strong. Strong tax base for solid capital outlay expenditures.	1/21/2026 10:19 AM
149	Teachers genuinely care about student's, lots of extra activities for students to partake in at elementary and HS level.	1/21/2026 10:09 AM
150	Our schools have very caring educators and administration. I also think we have good parental and student involvement and care.	1/21/2026 10:07 AM
151	The teachers and staff are very caring and dedicated to their work.	1/21/2026 10:04 AM
152	Work together to provide the best opportunity for students success, friendly staff.	1/21/2026 10:03 AM
153	Our school offers many different clubs with many hobbies and interests that students and teachers can enjoy and be apart of.	1/21/2026 10:02 AM
154	There are so many wonderful things about our schools, beginning with our teachers. With a little bias, I truly believe we have the best. They go above and beyond every day to ensure each student is supported, valued, and has their individual needs met. I would also be remiss not to highlight the strong leadership within our schools. There is a culture of trust, collaboration, and mutual respect. The rapport among staff is strong, and everyone works together as a team to do what is best for students.	1/21/2026 9:56 AM
155	nice facilities	1/21/2026 9:52 AM
156	High quality staff People want to be here Great students walking in the door Positive community connections	1/21/2026 9:44 AM
157	Having state of the art technology and new ideas, but still being down to earth is a big deal. We love our specials classes and after school activities - keeping those are very important. We do a great job of bringing our different grades together. The high schoolers go to the elementary schools and vice versa. We have parades and senior walk-throughs. We get the elementary students involved with the high school (and college) sports. Keeping these traditions is very important.	1/21/2026 9:43 AM
158	The teachers are terrific! My children have had fantastic teachers who have supported their academic and social growth. Teachers need to be supported and recognized for their hard work.	1/21/2026 9:42 AM
159	Teachers are helpful.	1/21/2026 9:40 AM
160	The staff are always growing and learning new ways to teach and care for the students.	1/21/2026 9:39 AM
161	We have professional freedom to work. We are treated as professionals and given space and freedom to work on our practice.	1/21/2026 9:38 AM
162	All of the teachers I have met have seemed so kind and loving. The communication is there	1/21/2026 9:36 AM

	and I enjoy the class dojo app to keep up to date on my children's school info.	
163	The majority of the teachers are caring and in estes in our students.	1/21/2026 9:35 AM
164	We work together to problem solve student needs. We all care about each and every student.	1/21/2026 9:34 AM
165	The environment is much better than most schools.	1/21/2026 9:33 AM
166	I think that our school district has great ways of communication to parents - i.e about school closures, emergencies, etc. It's very easy to communicate with teachers & staff.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
167	Our district, in the past few years, has really been working on creating a positive and hard working community. We focus on Spartan Pride and that must continue. All success is built on the idea that we are all Spartans and we need to act with good character in all we do.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
168	I saw a group of high school students standing outside the school one morning, gathered in a circle holding hands and praying together. It was amazing and I was so happy to see students bringing God into the school publicly.	1/21/2026 9:27 AM
169	They still offer fine arts (band, choir, drama). The new building offering hands-on real world skill building is fantastic.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
170	The school system is great. We have three kids that go to Spearfish and eighth grader fifth grader and the third grader. It's our first year in the elementary. Our kids come home happy and have had a great experience adjusting.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
171	Engaged staff create a great learning environment. Diverse options for extra curricular activities.	1/21/2026 9:24 AM
172	Excellent staff.	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
173	Many options for students of all ages and abilities. Dedicated teachers- most live in the community.	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
174	We care about students. We have a CTE building and program. The elementary schools are amazing with teaching and taking care of the whole child.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
175	Hands down, our teachers and our para educators. The make everything happen. It is not an easy job and we have extremely dedicated professionals in our district.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
176	Great teachers and environment to work in	1/21/2026 9:12 AM
177	The school I teach at has been so welcoming. This is my first year teaching and I have had tremendous amounts of support from my coworkers and my administration. My principal has been there for any needs I have had while also promoting taking care of myself. I have never felt like I was being monitored too closely, but just the right amount. Feedback on observations has been very beneficial and my administration makes me feel like I am a valued part of a team. My coworkers have been very gracious with me as I navigate my first year of teaching. They are always willing to help me, answer questions, and share resources with me which has made my transition much easier!	1/21/2026 9:12 AM
178	We have excellent teachers, a robust selection of clubs and activities for students, and top notch academic programs.	1/21/2026 9:11 AM
179	schools are friendly, clean, and nice. We have high expectations and constantly strive to get better.	1/21/2026 9:10 AM
180	We have systems/people in place to ensure we are focused on the right things- student safety & progress.	1/21/2026 9:09 AM
181	We have the best staff in the state from top to bottom. They care deeply about the success of our students. Additionally, we have great students!	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
182	Excellent teachers, supportive parents	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
183	dedicated professionals who are willing to collaborate	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
184	Small class sizes and fiscally sound.	1/21/2026 9:06 AM
185	Teachers and admin really care!	1/21/2026 9:05 AM
186	The schools are staffed with qualified individuals who care about the students and love what	1/21/2026 9:01 AM

	they do.	
187	Thanks to the business manager, the district is properly positioned financially to support the needs of the students.	1/21/2026 8:16 AM
188	Great facilities, good staff, and successful students after graduation.	1/21/2026 6:58 AM
189	--	1/21/2026 5:40 AM

Q3 What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district? (This information is shared with the final candidates.)

Answered: 182 Skipped: 19

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	vape use (though i think its gone down)	1/26/2026 10:23 PM
2	Loud voices of political extremists and their thoughts on public school education and their attempts to persuade community leaders in inappropriate/harassing ways; high cost to own a home; fight for public dollars to continue to improve educational opportunities and wages for teachers.	1/26/2026 12:48 PM
3	There seems to be a lot of gossip/clicks amongst teaching staff.	1/26/2026 12:00 PM
4	How political public education has become.	1/26/2026 11:36 AM
5	Budget is one of the biggest issues that the superintendent should be made aware of.	1/26/2026 5:13 AM
6	Sports activities seem to trump a lot of other activities' needs and play too big of a role in the financial system.	1/25/2026 9:39 PM
7	There is legislation to grant state funding to private schools, which would have an impact on our district.	1/25/2026 9:34 PM
8	Like many districts, Spearfish is navigating modern challenges related to technology, student well-being, and rapidly changing societal expectations. Smart phone access, social media use, and artificial intelligence present both opportunities and significant concerns for student focus, mental health, academic integrity, and social development. Clear, consistent, and developmentally appropriate guidelines will be increasingly necessary to limit smart phone and social media use during the school day, while also partnering with families to reinforce shared expectations. The superintendent will need to help lead thoughtful conversations around responsible technology use. As a parent in the community, I look forward to further development in this area for our school district. In addition, the district must thoughtfully integrate AI into education—leveraging its instructional benefits while setting firm standards around ethics, originality, and critical thinking. Maintaining the district's strong outcomes while adapting to these emerging realities will require intentional leadership, transparency, and community engagement.	1/25/2026 6:09 PM
9	Attendance, attendance, attendance. All of the different stakeholders do not have a shared vision. Lack of communication and a lack of trust are big concerns	1/25/2026 6:00 PM
10	Maintaining and supporting culture in a declining budget. The leader will need to be a positive communicator to support and maintain a culture in difficult times.	1/24/2026 11:29 AM
11	I think a lot of people are stuck up and don't want to work hard. I think a lot of people get things handed to them in life instead of working for it and I think the superintendent needs to be aware of this to push students to their full potential	1/23/2026 9:14 PM
12	Teacher retention Support for all students not just top and bottom	1/23/2026 5:40 PM
13	Financial situation and homeschool rates	1/23/2026 3:12 PM
14	Paraprofessionals are poorly paid and it's hard to keep high quality employees in these spots since the pay/raises do no reflect cost of living in Spearfish area. Some of the buildings are in need of update and repairs for the elementary schools.	1/23/2026 2:52 PM
15	Weak principals/leadership in the buildings. Too many students transitioning to home school and/or BHOL.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM
16	We have a problem with a large amount of students leaving for homeschool, teacher burnout, and a problem finding quality and qualified new teachers. I believe a 4 day school week would help solve all of these issues.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM

17	<p>That the education system in the state of SD is really being challenged by our legislature. There seems to be a lot of finger pointing going on regarding spending and student performance. The biggest challenge is that the entire system is designed to spread limited resources thinner and thinner while the legislature refuses to adequately fund public schools serving 84% of all SD students. Schools can't control enrollment losses through open enrollment or alternative instruction, can't reduce fixed costs proportionally, and can't count on predictable funding increases. That is a hard nut to crack and the legislature has set up schools to fail. I am a former school administrator at Spearfish. In 2001 or 2002 the legislature and "No Child Left Behind" mandated we provide 4 years of English, Math, Science and Social Studies for all students. At the time we didn't have staffing to meet those requirements so we cut many electives like auto shop, home economics, carpentry, some art, etc. 20 years later when nobody can get a plumber or a carpenter to do repairs at their home we "suddenly" have a crisis in the building trades so what do we do - build the CTE Center to meet those needs and start producing some skilled labor in the trades. When I took a tour of the new CTE Center and saw what was added I just kept thinking "yup, cut that 20 years ago and now it's back". The school district did not create that problem. The legislators and congress did. We just reacted to their requirements. We need a leader who is willing to tell that story and start standing up to the legislators who keep bashing public education and trying to "creatively" find funding to fix the problem they won't admit they caused.</p>	1/23/2026 10:21 AM
18	our school is very sad its all brown and depressed looking	1/23/2026 9:46 AM
19	Staff Pay, staff shortages, options for students that do not succeed in the regular academic setting	1/23/2026 9:44 AM
20	We have not ran into it, but middle school kids are relentless, and bullying is a very real issue in the area. And should not be tolerated at all.	1/23/2026 9:25 AM
21	BHSU is a terrible partner in the community. Watch yourself when dealing with them.	1/23/2026 6:49 AM
22	Cost of homes has gotten out of control. Depending on credentials of family members, high paying jobs are difficult to come by.	1/23/2026 6:14 AM
23	Large population grow that will impact schools. That the community, which can be a reflection of the state, has "conservative values" which impacts curriculum, teacher pay, funding , etc. makes public education in South Dakota a challenge	1/22/2026 8:52 PM
24	When comparing my 4 years here to my 5 years at other school districts, our district puts more energy and resources in maintaining a quality education for learners and staff, compared to looking for ways to expand, innovate, or grow in these fields for both learners and staff.	1/22/2026 4:10 PM
25	Declining enrollment. Local politics. Diverse community values that clash in the school. Disconnect between school and community.	1/22/2026 3:21 PM
26	Teacher retention and dropping school enrollment while maintaining our high standards for students..	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
27	There is a lack of available information that is vital for being successful.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
28	im not sure	1/22/2026 2:09 PM
29	Curriculum needs to be addressed and corrected. We need to teach the kids the truth about history and what exactly is going on in the nation and the world	1/22/2026 1:23 PM
30	An issue in Spearfish (schools) is the lack of diversity and exposure/authentic practice for educators and students to accept and embrace differences. We want our children to be empathetic, but sometimes in a smaller community the social circles are obvious and not as accepting of others outside their circle. There seems to be an increase in homeschool families which may be an issue for our schools, but I'm not entirely sure.	1/22/2026 1:20 PM
31	Continual defunding and underfunding of the schools by the state and feds. We need a person the can stand up and fight for funding and teacher pay. We need someone who will fight to maintain the extracurriculars and art/music education. We need someone who will fight to maintain the truth in history education and maintain separation of church and state and the separation of politicians rewriting what our children learn about. Our children need climate change education. Our children need extracurriculars comparative to large cities to remain competitive. The candidate needs to understand the wealth, gap inequality, and continue free and reduce lunch and breakfast programs. The schools need to continue anti-bullying campaigns and continue with school counselors to address mental health concerns. Lastly, the	1/22/2026 1:14 PM

candidate needs to prioritize nutrition in schools and make sure our kids are getting high-quality fruits and vegetables and minimally processed foods for school lunches. We need to eliminate sugary beverages and junk food in our vending machines. We need a candidate who will work with the city to analyze sidewalks and street crossings to improve safety when getting to school.

32	You have a very diverse group of staff with different ideology. I think we recruit a lot of new teachers from BHSU and because of cost of living we don't always hang on to good teachers. I don't know that all levels of admin see eye to eye but that is probably anywhere they go.	1/22/2026 1:12 PM
33	The ability for students to miss school or leave on their own (mostly high school) is out of control. If a student is not engaged in their school work, alternative school is offered rather than holding the student accountable. High school should have a closed campus.	1/22/2026 12:25 PM
34	Bullying/fat shaming	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
35	Bad drivers in the high school parking lot.	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
36	bad students and bad drivers	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
37	Be aware of absences.	1/22/2026 12:11 PM
38	Spearfish schools are a lot different than school districts around the area.	1/22/2026 12:08 PM
39	None that I'm aware of.	1/22/2026 11:14 AM
40	It can be loud	1/22/2026 11:12 AM
41	Parents in the community want to try and run the schools without going through proper channels, in high school and sports especially the last couple years. We have a rep for running off good coaches because of parents that are not given parameters.	1/22/2026 11:02 AM
42	For far too long, an unreasonable share of Spearfish public schools' budget has been misdirected towards new facilities and athletics, while arts and academics languish. Despite this, several students have made it into Ivy or Ivy-adjacent colleges. Meanwhile, I don't know that we've ever produced notable athletes on a national stage. Money into athletics is an expense. Money into academics and the arts is an investment. Build a school system that can boast its AP offerings, small class sizes, SAT scores, and elite institution matriculation. Right now, we're sacrificing all of this just to chase a dead-end goal of "placing at state", which probably will never happen and even if it does, who cares. Being the greatest high school sports team in South Dakota means nothing and pays no dividends.	1/22/2026 11:01 AM
43	Vaping/drug prevention. Being a community that relies a lot on retirement and tourism, there can be the appearance of affluence, while many young working families struggle with necessary expenses.	1/22/2026 10:56 AM
44	We never have fights	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
45	I don't know	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
46	Unsure	1/22/2026 10:44 AM
47	idk	1/22/2026 10:41 AM
48	Sometimes overall involved and combative parents. Good intentions but lack of professionalism from some families which makes it difficult for staff like teachers. There is an undercurrent of mental health issues in our community that due to lack of resources and stigma sometime go unaddressed. This can also be said for increases in behaviors as well. I also think RTI/MTSS (in our district it's TAT) should be more a focus with changes in state funding for schools. Additionally, the state wide trend in homeschooling is hitting our community as well. Lastly, the district has a safety plan/crisis plan but key stakeholders (like a majority of our building admins) do not understand and/or undertrained in concepts like CSTAG and PREPARE. This leaves holes in our overall building and district safety and ability to respond quickly if the worst case scenario were to happen.	1/22/2026 10:37 AM
49	In my particular role, I can't think of any "issues" but being a team player is very vital to the role of superintendent.	1/22/2026 10:28 AM
50		1/22/2026 10:26 AM
51	Bad teachers that don't teach you.	1/22/2026 10:26 AM

52	Boys need paper towels in the restroom	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
53	Need paper towels for boys in bathroom	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
54	4 day school week	1/22/2026 10:24 AM
55	N/A	1/22/2026 10:22 AM
56	We don't make up snow days so don't be afraid to use them!!	1/22/2026 10:04 AM
57	Our spending per student is too low comparatively, so Superintendent needs to be able to get the most bang for the buck.	1/22/2026 10:04 AM
58	Growing trends of "woke" agendas such as gender identity, transgenderism, and anti law enforcement mindsets are prevalent in surrounding community and states. It is not what this community or school district will tolerate in any potential candidate.	1/22/2026 10:01 AM
59	put up dividers between urinals in the boys bathroom please its weird we dont already have them	1/22/2026 9:39 AM
60	The digital posted maps for student use are in need of revision.	1/22/2026 9:38 AM
61	How theater needs some upgrades and our superintendent taught a class.	1/22/2026 9:35 AM
62	They do not value in the importance of taking time to do the essential in our daily lives such as take time to eat, go to the bathroom as needed, and give students opportunities and time to wash their hands. Lunch time is cut so short that most kids don't have time to finish their meals, considering waiting in line takes half of lunch time. (although I do agree that they should not be chatting thru lunch.) Students are often told to hold to go to their bathrooms. They do not have time to wash their hands when they come back from outside or before lunch. Also, there is no soap provided at Middle school PE bathroom for a long period of time. I believe these are the minimal/essential needs in our daily life.	1/22/2026 9:34 AM
63	Lack of disciplinary action at West Elementary. Children aren't properly reprimanded and communication with parents is lacking. My child was asking about school shootings- I think implementing training for teachers or upping security would be a good thing.	1/22/2026 9:25 AM
64	more communication	1/22/2026 9:20 AM
65	Decreasing enrollment, decreasing funding from state	1/22/2026 9:15 AM
66	The explicit language, drug use, and sexual acts on school property/in cars needs a better system for these young children. There needs to be consequences for vaping in school etc. We need to help kids see the adult leaders be allowed to take some sort of action when they see these things. There should be monitoring to a safe degree. There shouldn't be a bathroom that needs to be avoided because that's where kids go to vape. I understand teachers' hands are tied and people are scared to be sued if they even discipline children these days, but there has to be a way to make it better. Kids shouldn't feel like addressing something illegal makes them a snitch and outcasted so they stay silent. These are kids and it starts in lower elementary with disrespect for authority being allowed over and over. I love these kids and want to see them all get a healthy education. Everyone works so hard at all the schools! We have amazing staff!!! I pray we find a strong candidate who can find the way to an even better school system. These kids are our future leaders, so we need to do our best! Teach them their worth and they won't undersell themselves. Sorry to go on and on. ;-)	1/22/2026 8:59 AM
67	Funding is a major problem. Staffing will be a problem. The new CTE building is nice, but was essentially something that was not needed and will be hard to fund as time moves forward. The lack of communication from the high school principal needs to be addressed. Teachers, staff and parents have no idea what is going on and what direction will be taken in the next few years. Many veteran high school teachers are frustrated and will be taking early retirement.	1/22/2026 8:27 AM
68	The teacher who have been teaching 25 years are all retiring. Making sure we hire the best candidate and someone who will stay a long time. We need to get out of the Dakota Conference No more playing B schools Updating west elementary	1/22/2026 8:02 AM
69	1. The Spearfish School District Superintendent has charge of students that are only enrolled in the public school. The students that parents have chosen to enroll in private or alternative education (homeschool) are not the School District's prerogative. Education for minors is a parental choice and is in the jurisdiction of family. So, don't go bothering the homeschool kids	1/22/2026 7:11 AM

with academic testing. It's the family choice for the student's outcome. Not the Superintendent.
2. Never ever asked the taxpayers for an property tax opt- out. However, keep supporting the Spearfish Education Foundation and find ways to get extra funding through them.

70	Adults say that they will help with bullying and what not but they never really do. Also the workload for kids can be too intense.	1/22/2026 12:24 AM
71	There is a teacher at the high school whose last name starts with [REDACTED] that should be looked into, but my wife says I can't put [REDACTED] name on here...	1/21/2026 11:32 PM
72	Status of people can be unfortunate in how the politics play out and where favoritism is shown.	1/21/2026 9:36 PM
73	Student support and well-being: Ensuring adequate mental health resources, counseling services, and support for students with diverse needs. Staffing and morale: Teacher recruitment and retention, workload, burnout, and making sure staff feel heard and supported. Academic consistency and achievement gaps: Addressing disparities in learning outcomes and ensuring all students have access to strong instructional programs. Communication and transparency: Improving communication between district leadership, schools, families, and the community to build trust. Facilities and resources: Aging buildings, classroom resources, technology needs, and safety concerns. Behavior and discipline: Clear, consistent policies that support learning while maintaining a safe and respectful school environment. Community expectations: Understanding local values, traditions, and concerns so decisions align with the community the district serves. Being aware of these areas early will help him/her prioritize effectively and build strong relationships across the district.	1/21/2026 9:24 PM
74	High competitive nature within the community. Consistency in K-12 programming needs accountability to support student learning.	1/21/2026 8:27 PM
75	This is a unique district with diverse families from all walks of life and this brings unique advantages and challenges such as access and resources. Communication, innovativeness, flexibility, and being a systems thinker are ideal skills for this candidate!	1/21/2026 8:01 PM
76	give us a longer lunch and do more fun stuff also the nurses are understaffed we need more	1/21/2026 7:11 PM
77	Staff is needing more support when dealing with disruptive students. Unfortunately, this is becoming a more common issue than it should.	1/21/2026 5:31 PM
78	Having a committed community also means they expect to be a part of the process and expect high levels of communication.	1/21/2026 5:21 PM
79	Lack of community support, retirement town atmosphere where it feels as though a majority of the community has no vested interest in public education.	1/21/2026 5:19 PM
80	Our issue is a declining population of students, so we need to work on that. This new person should be aware that he/she has big shoes to fill, as we are saying goodbye to an amazing Supt.	1/21/2026 4:44 PM
81	While the district has made many improvements to be forward-moving and system aligned, the dynamics of each school building make for different challenges.	1/21/2026 4:37 PM
82	Seems like less support for the school district from people who moved here from out of state in the last 6+ years. Post-covid increase in online/home schooling.	1/21/2026 3:44 PM
83	We're juggling high expectations with limited time and resources. Staff morale, workload, and communication are areas that need attention. Ongoing support for students with diverse needs and better consistency across the district will be key.	1/21/2026 3:30 PM
84	I can't think of any issues	1/21/2026 3:13 PM
85	pls be good person, pls fix problems, a new marching felid would be awesome	1/21/2026 3:12 PM
86	Decrease in funding due to the state and due to declining enrollment.	1/21/2026 2:47 PM
87	I am not really sure. The way our school is ran right now seems to be doing good and not have many issues.	1/21/2026 2:34 PM
88	We have a TAT system in place that's struggling to give elementary students that services that they so desperately need both academically and behaviorally. We have multiple behaviors per grade level that are driving great teachers out of the profession because we don't give teachers the necessary supports to adequately meet the needs of their students. We also have a large	1/21/2026 2:30 PM

number of students who should be on the radar for special education services but are not. If we truly want to do what's best for kids we need go to the teachers first. Ask them what they need and do what we can to give them the supports they seek. With the cost of living being so high, it's extremely hard for teachers to move into our district if they don't already live here or have a spouse making a significant wage. We also have a growing popularity of micro schools in the area.

89	The property tax pressure the people feel and the lieproficiency of the students.	1/21/2026 2:17 PM
90	Bullying, drug use	1/21/2026 2:05 PM
91	teacher and staff burnout, overcrowded classrooms in the elementary levels	1/21/2026 2:02 PM
92	Weather concerns overall calendar issue	1/21/2026 1:59 PM
93	The funding for any general ed position to help with significant behaviors in classrooms is not there and the hoops required to go the SpEd route to help students with behaviors is ridiculous. The rights of the other students to an appropriate education are being ignored to protect the rights of the one child who is disruptive, disrespectful, and potentially dangerous. This is an increasing problem.	1/21/2026 1:58 PM
94	There's an unnecessary amount of bullying and targeting of students that aren't in the "in crowd".	1/21/2026 1:50 PM
95	Lots of neurodivergence and kids with difficult home lives.	1/21/2026 1:42 PM
96	Need more conflict resolution skills. My child has experienced and has been the target of very violent bullying. I am extremely disappointed in the lack of accountability and consequences regarding children instigating this type of behavior which has only given them the power to repeat these terrible choices. I would like to see more professionals utilized in these matters not just the discretion of the school counselor and administration taking hear say. It is very apparent that Spearfish School district is extremely cliquy, and this is destructive to our children's well being.	1/21/2026 1:23 PM
97	There is a culture of "snobbery" in Spearfish compared to surrounding districts.	1/21/2026 1:15 PM
98	Teacher and staff recruitment and retention, Managing workload, burnout, and morale, competitive compensation and benefits. Not an issue now but want to make sure it is not one in the future. The district should be clear and consistent about athletic participation policies maintaining girls' sports as opportunities specifically for biological females.	1/21/2026 1:13 PM
99	With rapid growth comes problems the district hasn't had to face before. More students may be assigned to classrooms and that can offset the educator to student ratio. Additionally behavioral issues may increase, keeping educators and students safe should be the priority.	1/21/2026 1:01 PM
100	The superintendent always keeps the public informed as well as the community as to what is going on with the school system.	1/21/2026 12:58 PM
101	You should've started this search a month ago. Seems like a waste of time to not immediately move on this. Sending out a survey that does little to inform a search or select candidates. This search could've been done more timely and efficiently.	1/21/2026 12:57 PM
102	People who have never left the area have kids and grandkids, they always get favoritism over people who just moved here	1/21/2026 12:55 PM
103	The bullying that continues to take place in our district is out of control and it never seems to end. More and more families choosing to homeschool because of kids being so mean to each other for no reason.	1/21/2026 12:40 PM
104	We, as do all districts, have some teachers who are less dedicated than others. We are struggling with decreasing enrollment and therefore decreasing funding. We don't always have the monetary and staff to provide supports that students need.	1/21/2026 12:37 PM
105	Budget and making the spending seem fair across the district. Increasing number of behavior related issues that seem to be starting at an early age.	1/21/2026 12:25 PM
106	We may be lacking in money for certain things. The auditorium needs too be completely redone in the high school.	1/21/2026 12:24 PM
107	We are facing declining enrollment right now. We are in a good financial position right now, but	1/21/2026 12:12 PM

	it could change if it's not handled properly.	
108	Issues? They seem to be address quickly enough that they don't really linger. For example the creekside traffic. Please continue to respond with solutions; like you always have.	1/21/2026 12:08 PM
109	As a parent I would like to see the schools remain agnostic to politics	1/21/2026 12:07 PM
110	Some possible issues the superintendent should be aware of is the kids. They can be alot.	1/21/2026 12:04 PM
111	We is wild	1/21/2026 12:03 PM
112	I don't think mental health is focused on as much and could be improved.	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
113	Budget concerns, shrinking, small bubble that's going through. High cost of living. Large income gap.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
114	The district is in a stable position with strong staff retention and community support. As the district continues to grow and evolve, maintaining clear communication, consistency in expectations, and alignment across schools will be important. There is an opportunity to continue strengthening programs and ensuring resources are used effectively to support both students and staff while preserving the positive culture already in place.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
115	I feel the new superintendent should be made aware the power of a name in the community and the influence that name has on making decisions and directions. A school takes that may benefit a minority rather than the majority. I feel some classes are outdated and may not be required, or may need an overhaul. World geography in the freshman course level is all information that can be found using an internet search. Rather than identifying mountain ranges, lakes, streams, physical features in foreign countries and testing only on this information, I feel the class could be better utilized. The amount of illegal substances being used within the schools is concerning. My children speak of the bathrooms. Being a common place where a legal substances are being used. My children often speak the bathrooms being difficult to use because of cleanliness and other students trashing the restroom, making it unusable for others, or unpleasant for others. The amount of trash left in the high school parking lot at the end of a school day is absurd. It reflects the school and student reputation within the community.	1/21/2026 11:51 AM
116	The [REDACTED] principal is unprofessional and pushing out good staff. Staff who have been there for years with great track records. He openly talks poorly about staff members and is more worried about the kids liking him than his job.	1/21/2026 11:43 AM
117	The lack of support for kiddos that need behavioral issues addressed. I unfortunately think there are a few kids that do not belong in class (dangerous and disruptive) but they are still there everyday making others uncomfortable. I believe the teachers are spread a bit thin and would benefit with some shared paras for their benefit. However, there are problems all schools are having	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
118	Some students struggle with addictions to vapes, marijuana, alcohol, and other drugs.	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
119	The superintendent should be aware of concerns around student safety, particularly within the transportation system. There are also perceptions of inconsistency in discipline enforcement and challenges related to supporting students with behavioral or special needs in general education classrooms in ways that work well for all students.	1/21/2026 11:41 AM
120	We are losing our best staff due to poor administration. Especially at the high school level. [REDACTED] in that school cares more about fitting in with the kids than doing what is right and education focused. He speaks poorly about staff members in front of other staff and does not seem to care.	1/21/2026 11:40 AM
121	There are a lot of big personalities with very large opinions. Dealing with these folks will take skill. Especially when those opinions do not do justice for our schools and serve a personal agenda. Money should not drive our decisions, our children's future and proper education experience should be the driving factors.	1/21/2026 11:37 AM
122	Any big city/university ideas like DEI and gay trans stuff are dead on arrival here. Any candidate not ok with traditional American values and 100% focus on academics should stay far away.	1/21/2026 11:34 AM
123	There are too many adults turning a blind eye to problems. Assuming the problem is too big or these kids are too far gone is only allowing it to get worse.	1/21/2026 11:32 AM

124	racism	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
125	Maintain a student to teacher ratio of 18:1 not 24:1. Annexing the Whitewood school into the Spearfish school district is imperative for housing growth at the exit 17 development. Consider if President Trump allows funding to follow the child to choice of school, teachers will start up private micro schools and the public system will be left with a high concentration of IEP students rejected by private schools. The school system as we know it would change drastically with a shift to micro schools.	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
126	Bad scheduling in the school.	1/21/2026 11:17 AM
127	There are way too many bunches of vaping neanderthals and none of them are ever caught-nor do they get in trouble.	1/21/2026 11:14 AM
128	Teacher pay, pushing the state for better pay while also finding ways to create community endowments to recruit and retain great talent	1/21/2026 11:11 AM
129	-Since we started implementing PLC's K-12, it would be great to have a superintendent that will continue the framework, as it is crucial that we continue to grow in teams, schools, and as a district.	1/21/2026 11:10 AM
130	Bullying is a huge issue in the schools.	1/21/2026 11:09 AM
131	Tardiness and behavior	1/21/2026 11:03 AM
132	From a high school fine arts perspective, our theater has major problems that are in progress to be fixed in the upcoming years (bats, hole in ceiling, leaks, electric). The incoming superintendent needs to understand the importance of continuing these projects. The theater is not only used by the high school but also the middle school, Creekside, district meetings, and various community groups. At the high school level, several teachers are interested in looking into potential schedule changes that may be more effective than alternating block days.	1/21/2026 11:02 AM
133	Declining enrollment. Need for a schools program promotion officer to attract/recruit home school and online students back into the public schools classroom.	1/21/2026 10:56 AM
134	The school district is not offering new opportunities for students to grow and prepare for the competitive business world post HS and College. We need to prepare students for AI and how to apply it and use it effectively, teach foreign language starting in Kindergarten and require it through HS. These will open up more opportunities for our future students to compete and innovate in a hyper competitive world.	1/21/2026 10:52 AM
135	The political climate has made it's way into our community. It is important to invite community members to the schools to see first hand what is actually going on in our school system.	1/21/2026 10:48 AM
136	Teacher recruitment challenges due to high cost of living and low teacher salaries, resources are limited, enrollment is decreasing,	1/21/2026 10:40 AM
137	I think allowing kids to dress up as animals on school property is distracting and confusing for students. I think enforcing a dress code and more strict and enforced code of conduct for students would be helpful in allowing kids and parents to feel that they are safe while at school. I think separation of high school and elementary students on buses is vital, even just separate seating sections.	1/21/2026 10:39 AM
138	Please treat the teachers well so that they stay. In so many districts the superintendent is putting such a tight grip on personal leave/curriculum/daily schedules that teachers are not staying as they aren't enjoying the micromanaging.	1/21/2026 10:36 AM
139	The lack of accountability and support from the top. In my opinion, I feel we are not supporting the staff in a way that allows them to hold students accountable for their behaviors. This starts at the lower levels and continues on through their graduation. Small problems become bigger problems, so handle the smaller problems.	1/21/2026 10:36 AM
140	That parents care about quality curriculum in reading at early ages. That we ensure that children with disabilities have equal access to education that is supported through technology, resources, and advocacy	1/21/2026 10:29 AM
141	student behavioral issues and how to best support those students and staff that works directly with them-not all students require specialized instruction-the district could benefit from general ed. behavioral supports/learning environments	1/21/2026 10:26 AM

142	Need for better special ed identification and services Need for gifted program Teachers should not be dealing with behavior issues. They should be teaching Unbalanced classrooms. Some teachers have most of the special ed kids or low kids	1/21/2026 10:25 AM
143	Addressing teacher performance especially in stem classes, math especially at high school level to ensure student success.	1/21/2026 10:22 AM
144	Financial/budget cuts that will impact our school system and potentially loose classes that student currently enjoy and possibly support staff. It is expensive to live in Spearfish and this can deter new hires.	1/21/2026 10:20 AM
145	Expansion of alternative learning sources is occurring in the area.	1/21/2026 10:19 AM
146	There is not a lot of communication between parents and teachers. Especially at the high school level. Counselors are not very helpful when issues arise.	1/21/2026 10:14 AM
147	We need to do a much better job of supporting the needs of the MANY kids with neurodivergence (ADHD, autism, sensory disorders) and special needs. We do not have NEARLY enough resources and staff to support our kids in these areas. The primary teachers are expected to handle any and ALL behaviors and needs in their classroom. Kids are then not having their needs met, and this increases behaviors and creates a huge challenge to their (and their classmates) learning environment. We boast about our "talented students and athletes, but what are we doing to support those who have challenges? Very little, in my opinion. Thankfully, we have amazing teachers. But they are underpaid and overworked. We will actually be transitioning to a micro school next year, because of this. We have had to remove my son from the classroom on a weekly basis, to get treatment outside of the school, to keep him regulated and functioning inside the classroom. And then we are chastised for not having perfect attendance. We need to have smaller class sizes, and more support staff within the classroom. LET'S TAILOR EDUCATION TO EACH KID'S UNIQUE NEEDS AND STOP EXPECTING THEM TO CONFORM TO A RIGOROUS SET OF STANDARDS FOR THE NEUROTYPICAL, TALENTED KIDS.	1/21/2026 10:04 AM
148	limited budget and open enrollment (student coming from different areas)	1/21/2026 10:03 AM
149	There are issues with student body inclusion. Its important for students to socialize and it tends to not happen when people get isolated with online school with no reason.	1/21/2026 10:02 AM
150	In our district, some of the most pressing challenges include balancing budgets and improving teacher retention. As student needs continue to grow and become more complex, it is also critical to closely monitor mental health supports and ensure students are truly receiving what they need to be successful. All of this must be done while still honoring and preserving the unique culture and values of our community.	1/21/2026 9:56 AM
151	more discipline, more consequences, and substance use monitorization need to improve	1/21/2026 9:52 AM
152	Strong staff Education based community Fiscally responsible People want to be here	1/21/2026 9:44 AM
153	Covid era kids are rough in the social skills department. Basic etiquette is lost and we need to find a way to get it back.	1/21/2026 9:43 AM
154	The superintendent should seriously consider how rapid changes in technology affect learning. Keeping up to date on research that considers how phones, social media, AI, and increasing screen time affects student learning and well being is critical and should inform policy decisions (such as phone bans, laptops for every middle school student, use of tablets in elementary school classrooms).	1/21/2026 9:42 AM
155	Reckless drivers in the parking lot.	1/21/2026 9:40 AM
156	That like all places this place is not perfect. It is also a very small town so news travels fast no matter how hard you try to hold on to it.	1/21/2026 9:39 AM
157	Our school system is changing. There may need to be a modification to "the system" if we want to reduce students leaving for homeschool options.	1/21/2026 9:38 AM
158	A couple months ago, my nephew had a head injury at the school before lunch and my sister was not notified of this until after school. I worked for Head Start and our policy was always to call the parent or guardian on a head injury no matter how little within a 15 minute time frame. I feel like if there isnt a policy in place for injuries such as that that there should be. I understand that the nurse is split between schools so if she isnt there, a teacher should or	1/21/2026 9:36 AM

	should have someone call. Let the parent decide if they should be seen or not rather than just hope for the best and wait on it.	
159	There are older teachers who lack compassion for students who are struggling, for a number of reasons. We have a zero tolerance policy for bullying that isn't followed and bullying continues or gets worse after being reported. We also have a dress code, and I am not sure why, because it is also not followed.	1/21/2026 9:35 AM
160	We have had some parents that are not kind to teachers and some think they know more than teachers about curriculum.	1/21/2026 9:34 AM
161	Bullying, prejudice, dangers, etc.	1/21/2026 9:33 AM
162	I think that there needs to be better job training for classified staff members like secretaries. There were many new Secretaries for FY 25-26 and there wasn't a lot of in-depth training for these positions. Some things you learn as you go, but staff shouldn't come into a new position without proper training measures set in place.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
163	All the schools have been working toward working together more instead of on our own. We would like a leader who continues this process. Also, the New CTE center has had huge positive feedback from our community. We need a new superintendent who values this and wants it to continue and grow.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
164	Bullying in this school district has always been atrocious and never been addressed properly. There has been very little effort to bringing unity among the kids and the kind of language that children in the middle school especially use is completely inappropriate while on school grounds. The "Docs" that the kids are allowed to use does not seem to be effective at all and it seems that any language is allowed within that system with no monitoring at all. Also, the programs and websites the kids have access to on the school laptops is not appropriate at all. It seems the security on the school system needs to be drastically improved. They should not be allowed to use YouTube nor should they be allowed to use any kind of AI that gives them the answers to the things that should be taught in class. They are there for 7 hours 5 days a week and yet the laptops are doing the work rather than encouraging the kids to use their brain, just encouraging laziness and not preparing them for the real world after they graduate at all. There are some teachers that need improvement in helping the kids that ask for help instead of marking the assignments as missing when they are not making the time to help those students with questions.	1/21/2026 9:27 AM
165	There apparently is a problem with youth vaping in school restrooms that is not being handled to the point where my child avoids using the restrooms at the high school the entire day.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
166	Socioeconomic diversity is vast, thus creating differing needs both inside and outside the classroom.	1/21/2026 9:24 AM
167	Bullying at every grade level is a huge issue that is well known and documented but the staff aren't given the tools or the support to correct it.	1/21/2026 9:24 AM
168	I'm not sure	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
169	Special Education needs to be beefed up. Tighten the goals and service times. Also provide more services to students who need services - we are under identified in the district.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
170	At times, it feels like there is a lack of cohesiveness, especially between general education and special education. I also believe that our RTI framework needs a little bit of re-structuring.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
171	There are some pre-established groups of people that can be hard to make connections with throughout the school. I also think that teamwork is something that is not extremely strong across every grade level. There have been times where I feel as though my classroom is an island rather than part of a team. I know there is also a lot of negativity centered around teaching that I have noticed with some coworkers as well.	1/21/2026 9:12 AM
172	Our district, like many, is facing declining enrollment. This, along with limited state funding, presents budgeting challenges for our district.	1/21/2026 9:11 AM
173	cost of living for teachers and staff. Continuous improvement cycle. Community is involved and cares about the schools.	1/21/2026 9:10 AM
174	-budgeting -lack of consistency between buildings	1/21/2026 9:09 AM
175	Political pressures from the state and federal level, continued pressure on school	1/21/2026 9:08 AM

	vouchers/push for public dollars being used for private.	
176	High cost of living and general push to defund, divert money from school districts at the state and national level	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
177	I sometimes question the talent of the principal group.	1/21/2026 9:06 AM
178	Vaping, drugs in the high school bathrooms.	1/21/2026 9:05 AM
179	N/A	1/21/2026 9:01 AM
180	The principal group needs almost constant direction.	1/21/2026 8:16 AM
181	Funding is the biggest issue. Need some ideas on how to attract and maintain amazing teachers too.	1/21/2026 6:58 AM
182	<p>When schools were planted across the Midwest by enterprising, forward thinking educators, the race was on to populate the minds of our children with the good old (and some newer) cherished ideas. At that time, information traveled at the speed of hoof, then rail, then air, now light. To bridge the gap while preserving and protecting the homestead, children were sent away to grant access to precious words and instruction and materials only available at certain geographic locations. Since the Internet's decentralization of humanity's knowledge base, what can we now do conservatively and non destructively to add to the American family through changes in the structure of education to accommodate our newfound communications abilities? Automation of the most difficult and dangerous means of production of the necessities of human life promise to free people from the slavery of existence, if only for long enough to peer into the universe, contemplate, and contribute to our understanding of our place within. Secular education can be accomplished at home with great success, even greater with more support for such an obvious and empowering opportunity for American education.</p> <p>Sincerely, [REDACTED], Parent, Home School Teacher/Administrator</p>	1/21/2026 5:40 AM

Q4 What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here? (This information is used as we screen potential candidates.)

Answered: 192 Skipped: 9

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Fun, supportive, active in the school, and understanding	1/26/2026 10:23 PM
2	Involved in the community - both professionally and personally; "lead by walking around" - be visible to all staff and students (don't dwell excessively in admin office). Our current superintendent is the gold standard of this and has set a high bar for the next.	1/26/2026 12:48 PM
3	Open-mindedness, moral compass, non-judgmental, true care for the students and families in the school district, wiling to address the bullying straight on and right away.	1/26/2026 12:00 PM
4	Listen first. Support the staff...burnout is real. Follow policy.	1/26/2026 11:36 AM
5	I appreciate how the superintendent has worked with and listened to teachers to provide a strong working relationship which translates to a positive culture.	1/26/2026 8:44 AM
6	The new superintendent should possess strong leadership skills, non biased opinions regarding political, religious or cultural subject matters, open mind, timeliness on emergency issues, prior experience in teaching and educational leadership positions, and how to ideas to keep the children and schools current with the ever changing times.	1/26/2026 5:13 AM
7	Be a people person who is approachable. Have a team mind set. Have humility and integrity. Put the interests of the students and their families first.	1/25/2026 9:39 PM
8	Ability to work with all types of people, both income- wise and politically, and strength in leadership	1/25/2026 9:34 PM
9	kindness	1/25/2026 6:40 PM
10	The ideal superintendent for Spearfish should be a collaborative, values-driven leader who respects the district's strong traditions while guiding it confidently into the future. Strong communication skills are essential, particularly the ability to listen, build trust, and engage meaningfully with students, staff, parents, and community members. A successful superintendent will actively support teachers, administrators, librarians, and other school professionals as they make informed, ethical, and developmentally appropriate decisions in the best interest of students. Just as importantly, the superintendent should clearly and consistently communicate to parents and the broader community that these professionals are well trained, dedicated, and deserving of trust when it comes to educating and supporting children. The superintendent should demonstrate sound judgment, strategic thinking, and the ability to lead through complexity—especially around technology, student well-being, and instructional innovation. A calm, steady leadership style, paired with decisiveness and integrity, will be critical. Finally, the superintendent should genuinely believe in the power of community-supported public education and be committed to preserving Spearfish's culture of shared investment in its youth while preparing students to thrive in an increasingly complex world.	1/25/2026 6:09 PM
11	Needs to have strong communication skills. Needs to represent the teaching staff as well as the Board Needs to ensure that those they are in direct control of are doing there job without micro managing. They will be given the title of Superintendent they need to work hard to gain the label as Leader.	1/25/2026 6:00 PM
12	The same ones as [REDACTED] and someone with a local awareness. I think you probably have a current principal that could fill this void if I'm thinking correctly.	1/24/2026 8:28 PM
13	The superintendent needs to understand our community and have relationships with the business community and partners that support schools. The district leader needs to be visible, approachable, and involved in community events. They need to understand what makes	1/24/2026 11:29 AM

Spearfish special and be dedicated to the community. Not just come here for a pay raise or to retire. I think we have this person - I hope you look hard at hiring them and not think we need to bring someone in that doesn't understand the community and our needs. We can learn from the recent issues in hiring City leadership and the problems of disconnected leadership.

14	Puts the students first, makes smart decisions, seeks out the best teachers.	1/23/2026 9:14 PM
15	We need someone who understands the people of our community. We need someone who understands the values of our people. We need someone with strong communication and personal skills. We need someone who truly cares about our teachers and kids. We need someone who has a constant drive to help us get better. Don't we already have this person? I hope we don't overlook a really good person who I am told may want the job.	1/23/2026 6:35 PM
16	Willingness to listen to teachers Honesty Clarity in decisions be made Ability to make and uphold hard decisions including personal issues	1/23/2026 5:40 PM
17	Relationships with staff, students and community. Support of the staff.	1/23/2026 3:12 PM
18	The superintendent should be able to make judgment calls for what's best for the school district without showing favoritism, not only think of the high school and middle school but the elementary schools when looking into how to allocate funds/support staff.	1/23/2026 2:52 PM
19	Previous experience, leadership, good communication skills, professionalism.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM
20	Be open to change and new ideas. Many people in the community are in favor of a 4-day school week but administration has been opposed for years. A superintendent should be willing to support teachers and students above all.	1/23/2026 12:30 PM
21	Adaptable. Firm decision making.	1/23/2026 10:43 AM
22	We really need a strong leader who is not afraid to make hard decisions and willing to take on some of our state level politicians. The property tax issue is real and since much of that money goes to schools it is going to be a challenge and a fight to hold onto that money. We need someone who understands the state's funding relationship to schools and the challenges schools will face. So, a critical thinker with the ability and courage to stand up for our school district is key. In addition, someone who has an understanding of finances since the school district may have to be creative if funding is cut and uses data to determine funding allocations. I believe we also need a leader who understands school culture and can continue to improve staff and student morale. We need someone who will represent all the kids that come to school every day and do as they are asked. It seems we spend so much time and effort on the 1% of students who have behavior issues it takes away from the educational process for others. A superintendent needs to support teachers and administrators so the 99% get the education they deserve. Finally, it's great the school's performance is ahead of the state and national average but we can do better. We need leader who will continue to set the bar high and challenge staff and students to do better.	1/23/2026 10:21 AM
23	Be able to have and understand kids instead of being on the opposing side of them	1/23/2026 9:46 AM
24	Observant, active in the schools, willing to be seen in and around the schools and community.	1/23/2026 9:44 AM
25	They should be passionate for their job, caring, yet firm with policy, and open minded.	1/23/2026 9:25 AM
26	Ability to work with community members. Understand the importance of the school and make sound decisions knowing the far reaching impact of decisions made.	1/23/2026 6:14 AM
27	The superintendent should be a visible employee in the schools, supporting teaching and learning IN PERSON They should be an instructional leader helping find resources and best practices for our teachers and students They should be a VOCAL ADVOCATE for our school district at the district and state level!	1/22/2026 8:52 PM
28	To be a skilled communicator, and at times mediator, of information, requests, goals, and visions between the school board and the school district staff.	1/22/2026 4:10 PM
29	The schools need a leader that understand the community and schools. The person needs to be an excellent communicator and make decisions that are best for kids. They need to be a fair leader. I don't think we don't need to bring someone in from out of state or out of the community. I hope you are considering an internal candidate. I have experienced and heard nothing but great things about one of our administrators that I'm told may be interested in the superintendent job. Don't lose him to another school. We will be lucky to have him.	1/22/2026 3:21 PM

30	I believe they need to maintain our school environments across the district, which is arguably the best thing about our district. Also allow the best part of our district, which are our teachers, to do their job with as little interference as possible.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
31	Reasonable and open minded.	1/22/2026 3:06 PM
32	not sure	1/22/2026 2:09 PM
33	Non-Islamic ideals	1/22/2026 1:23 PM
34	Our superintendent must be a strong leader that communicates clearly and transparently. Someone that cares, builds relationships, makes collaborative decisions, and is open minded and adaptable. Someone that is not too far removed from teaching/the classroom and what is happening everyday within classrooms and schools!	1/22/2026 1:20 PM
35	Work with city government. Be apolitical and secular. Be kind and approachable, stand up for teacher pay and benefits, fight for students to get the best and truthful education possible understanding the impact of mental health and physical health as an important part of children's education.	1/22/2026 1:14 PM
36	Decisive, but also takes time to come up with thoughtful responses. No knee jerk reactions or people pleasing. Always playing devils advocate does not make for a strong leader. Any leader in this role would need thick skin because you're answering to so many stakeholders.	1/22/2026 1:12 PM
37	Excellent communication skills. Ability to be transparent. Ability to have difficult conversations without guilt--not here to make friends but rather TOGETHER grow and create good individuals/students who WANT to contribute to society.	1/22/2026 12:25 PM
38	The superintend should be kind, compassionate, caring, empathic	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
39	Confidence	1/22/2026 12:13 PM
40	confidence	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
41	They should be educated and have determination to get things done and make relationships with students and staff.	1/22/2026 12:12 PM
42	Be kind, and talkative, try to understand students. enforce all the rules	1/22/2026 12:11 PM
43	Good decisions are made for the betterment of all students.	1/22/2026 12:08 PM
44	I would like to see someone forward thinking who has worked with districts or schools that have gone zero waste, had gardens on site, etc.	1/22/2026 11:14 AM
45	Hopefully you aren't sensitive to loud noises	1/22/2026 11:12 AM
46	Needs to be able to control the financial aspect better than in the past, have a good community relationship but don't always listen to the squeaky wheel when they have their own agenda and don't fix what isn't broken.	1/22/2026 11:02 AM
47	Vision and backbone	1/22/2026 11:01 AM
48	Peaceableness. It's easy to accidentally make people mad here, because spearfish is a bit of a liberal community in a conservative state. Also, it is small enough that people often have dual relationships, ie. you are more likely to encounter/interact with care providers of various kinds in other capacities in the community and know multiple family members.	1/22/2026 10:56 AM
49	Always have a smile on your face	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
50	Kind but direct	1/22/2026 10:46 AM
51	Productive	1/22/2026 10:44 AM
52	-Humility (willingness to ask questions and not be a know it all) -Leadership (does what he expects his admin to do - stay late if needed etc.) -Communication (clear and to all relevant stake holders) -Background in SPED or is knowledgeable on different types of staff and their roles from teachers, to counselors, to SROs, to School Psychs, etc. -Openness - is willing to listen and explore other ideas or ways of doing things. The one downfall of this district and of potential candidates is the "my way or the highway" mindset. Lack of openness isolates stake holders and truly does not make our district better, it is holding us back. -Professionalism - Has expectations for his staff and holds themselves and others to those expectations. -	1/22/2026 10:37 AM

Previous experience as a superintendent - we are too large of a district to have someone with no prior experience. -Someone not from this district - I hate to say it, but I feel the district needs new blood/ideas. It feels like at times we are in an echo chamber of our own thoughts. It's not beneficial to the district anymore to keep hiring within our district.

53	Approachable, personable, good speaker, open-minded, not afraid of change if change is necessary, someone who likes to visit the schools and see the great things that are happening in our district.	1/22/2026 10:28 AM
54	just be a good person	1/22/2026 10:26 AM
55	Be nice to students.	1/22/2026 10:26 AM
56	be aware of whats going on	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
57	Just be chill	1/22/2026 10:25 AM
58	kid friendly	1/22/2026 10:24 AM
59	Be ready to deal with autistic students. The kids are going to complain a lot.	1/22/2026 10:22 AM
60	Good understanding of the community which is affected by the schools, not as much of the community members which don't directly affect the schools. compassionate.	1/22/2026 10:04 AM
61	Open minded, reasonable, AI savy, able to be non-partisan politically but still have the intellect/charm to convince parents that the radical left/right are not "most of us"	1/22/2026 10:04 AM
62	Be mindful of current issues in the community, such as how many people living in the area and what to expect for school sizes in coming years. Advocate for the children first and teachers as equally important. If you can't keep quality teachers then there is a failure of leadership. Be firm in decisions and fair in delivery. Do not push agendas that would harm or hinder what we currently have	1/22/2026 10:01 AM
63	they should be kind and listen to the kids	1/22/2026 9:39 AM
64	I'm indifferent on this question.	1/22/2026 9:38 AM
65	I think they need to be open to constructive criticism. I also think they need to be kind and engaging.	1/22/2026 9:35 AM
66	I do agree that students are provided the high standard of education, but I also hope that he/she encourages the importance of basis needs in our life (things I stated in the previous question). Also, I hope to see an extra support provided when asked. If a student is behind, and especially asked for an extra support or directions to get the support, students/parents should get adequate help. I have seen situations where the teachers don't know where to send them, so they are not well informed or they simply don't have any solutions. I hope to see some structures/system where we can go get the help.	1/22/2026 9:34 AM
67	communication	1/22/2026 9:20 AM
68	Understand and support special education	1/22/2026 9:15 AM
69	A problem solver who sees all staff as equally important to the development and education of our students. One who is willing to try and connect departments and schools more cohesively and positively.	1/22/2026 9:11 AM
70	I believe you need a God fearing person to lead this many people. Someone who stands up for what's right in all cases. No matter who the kids' parents are, what level of status their name holds in this town, or how much money they have or contribute to any organization. Kids notice when the rules are altered for different kids and they build loss of trust in the system being fair. Be ready to back up the principles when they hold a child accountable for their actions. Verbal warning, written warning, action taken. Parents can't argue with a system that is introduced, and followed. The system is there to help kids, not punish them. We need the ability to give more attention to some kids. It's not equal, it's fair. Every kid comes from a different starting line. The ability to have love for the kids and parents who are hard to love.	1/22/2026 8:59 AM
71	Successful conservative budgeting; able to communicate with all patrons, staff and teachers; able to make tough decisions as the district moves forward; ability to get rid of principals not meeting the standard of excellence.	1/22/2026 8:27 AM
72	They need to hold everyone accountable. This is the principle, AD, teachers, Administrators	1/22/2026 8:02 AM

██████ has done a great job of this and now we have the right people running the school district, schools and athletics Listen to the parents of the students. They are not ██████ to ██████ If they are going to the superintendent that means the issue didn't get resolved. There is more to the problem that meets the eye. Hold teachers and Coaches accountable don't protect them and sweep the problem under the rug.

73	A South Dakota local person with South Dakota values will work best. Not an import from another state.	1/22/2026 7:11 AM
74	They should be kind, organized, and respectful. They should be able to communicate well and have good leadership and problem solving skills. They should also want to see students (and staff) succeed.	1/22/2026 12:24 AM
75	Honest, Fair, Has Integrity - Conservative would be nice too	1/21/2026 11:32 PM
76	Must be educated and experienced in educating youth. Must be open minded and encourage critical thinking skills. Must approach issues in a nonpartisan fashion. Must show empathy and compassion for students in crises. Must be accepting of all students and be willing to meet the needs of student body. Ability to think outside the box to engage students and create an environment that is and feels safe to all students.	1/21/2026 11:18 PM
77	Ethically and morally upright, want to see our children thrive and succeed in their education, instill positive character and have high standards for educators and coaches.	1/21/2026 9:36 PM
78	To be successful here, the new superintendent should possess a combination of strong leadership skills and personal qualities, including: Strong communication skills: Able to listen openly, communicate clearly, and keep staff, families, and the community informed and involved. Approachability and visibility: Willing to be present in schools and community events, building trust through genuine relationships. Collaborative leadership: Values input from teachers, staff, students, and community members and uses that feedback in decision-making. Integrity and transparency: Makes honest, ethical decisions and explains the reasoning behind them. Student-centered focus: Keeps student learning, safety, and well-being at the heart of every decision. Support for staff: Understands classroom realities, supports professional growth, and works to improve morale and retention. Problem-solving and adaptability: Able to address challenges thoughtfully and adjust to change when needed. Respect for the community: Appreciates local values, traditions, and expectations while guiding the district forward. These qualities would help a superintendent lead effectively and build long-term success in the district.	1/21/2026 9:24 PM
79	Students first...their learning and success. Set expectations yet be a mindset that promotes positive growth. Strong communication along with a listening ear.	1/21/2026 8:27 PM
80	I would want the candidate to be a listener, asset-focused and ready to guide continuation of the great things in this district while preparing families, students, staff, and the community for improvements.	1/21/2026 8:01 PM
81	flexibility and adaptability	1/21/2026 7:11 PM
82	The superintendent should care about not just the business side of school, but also the students and the staff. They should be present in the buildings, popping into classrooms to read aloud or help students. The superintendent should be as transparent as possible and be honest and open-minded to all members of the school community.	1/21/2026 5:31 PM
83	A quality candidate needs to have strong communication skills in order to communicate their vision and lead effectively. This allows for a strong commitment for relationships and allows constituents to be heard and appreciated. In the current world of education you also need to be able to navigate crisis with a calm demeanor and with confidence.	1/21/2026 5:21 PM
84	Strong sense of self, not a people pleaser.	1/21/2026 5:19 PM
85	This new person should be firm, helpful, aware of what happens in all schools (good/not so good). He or she should also come visit classrooms to see the amazing things teachers and students are doing first hand. I hope this new person supports teachers, students and programs.	1/21/2026 4:44 PM
86	Communication is huge- trying to reach the many stakeholders. A leader who seeks innovative ways to engage the schools and the staff & students within.	1/21/2026 4:37 PM
87	Should be available for all staff and parents. Lead the school district with Spartan pride,	1/21/2026 4:02 PM

	intelligence, care and empathy.	
88	Fair to all buildings; not having (unfair) disparate expectations of staff in different buildings. An understanding of the unique needs of elementary versus middle school versus high school students and staff.	1/21/2026 3:44 PM
89	We need someone who listens, communicates clearly, and is visible in schools. A leader who values teachers, supports students, and makes thoughtful, student-centered decisions will do well here. Being approachable, steady, and willing to collaborate really matters in this district. Someone who is here because they want the best for our community and the live in the best community.	1/21/2026 3:30 PM
90	kindness, consider new ideas, be involved with students, good personality, organized	1/21/2026 3:13 PM
91	ACUALLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE SCHOOL ISSUES	1/21/2026 3:12 PM
92	A good listener.	1/21/2026 2:47 PM
93	I feel like the new superintendent should be more involved and be a nice and caring person.	1/21/2026 2:34 PM
94	Personable. Someone who knows teachers, can relate to the teachers and wants to be here for the long run. The candidate needs to have a plan on how we can hire and keep good teachers. How are you going to improve/market our school district so that it stands out among other local districts? Multiple schools in the area have higher salaries, have better/cheaper benefits, smaller class sizes, more support staff, a 4 day school week or a combination of all the above. Spearfish is still a more desirable 'town' but many cannot afford to live here so what makes this district the go-to district to teach in?	1/21/2026 2:30 PM
95	The ability to be tough on success for the students not making everyone happy. We a Cignetti and go for wins.	1/21/2026 2:17 PM
96	Should be dedicated to the growth of emotional intelligence in students Would like someone dedicated to serving our special needs students and those struggling with mental health concerns	1/21/2026 2:05 PM
97	ethical, impartial, honest, able to support all staff members equally, focus on student success collaboratively, lead with positivity	1/21/2026 2:02 PM
98	Positive, supportive, decisive, and creative.	1/21/2026 1:59 PM
99	Visibility in schools, ability to find common ground, willingness to listen to stakeholder input. [REDACTED] would be a great mentor:)	1/21/2026 1:58 PM
100	They should be a good listener, be a team player, be motivated, fair and care about both the teachers and students.	1/21/2026 1:50 PM
101	Patience and listening	1/21/2026 1:42 PM
102	Child psychology, conflict resolution, internet safety, back ground check	1/21/2026 1:23 PM
103	Be personable. Work with existing teachers and programs first before changing everything. Communicate well with the community.	1/21/2026 1:15 PM
104	You need to have fun with the kids and yet the kids need to know you will discipline them. I feel that was one quality [REDACTED] has - he will give the kids a high 5 in the hall but when it comes to discipline he is not afraid to bring a kid into the office.	1/21/2026 1:13 PM
105	Open and active listening, democratic or servant leadership qualities - innovative, communicative, supportive, and humble. Someone that isn't afraid to use hands on methods to learn and push forward.	1/21/2026 1:01 PM
106	It is going to be hard to replace the superintendent that you have now. [REDACTED] is a great guy and is caring for the community with extra work he does for this district.	1/21/2026 12:58 PM
107	Knowledgeable of the community. Existing relationships. Is involved in administrative organizations (SASD). Is open to partnering with the university.	1/21/2026 12:57 PM
108	Don't be from here	1/21/2026 12:55 PM
109	Get a grip on the bullying. I have witnessed bullying from kinder all the way through high school and kids are not making it through or going to homeschool. This is a huge problem in	1/21/2026 12:40 PM

	our school district.	
110	To be successful in Spearfish, a superintendent will need to be willing to serve the community. Spearfish steps up to help out when our administration and teachers are involved in the community. A new superintendent will also need to be supportive of teachers. They will need to back us and appreciate all that we give as staff members in the district. At the same time, the new superintendent will need to know when they have to "mandate" specific initiatives even when the staff is somewhat resistant. The new superintendent will also need to be ready and willing to help unify all the buildings/staff in the district as we can be somewhat isolated from each other.	1/21/2026 12:37 PM
111	I feel it is important to find a candidate who is, or will become, vested in the community and district. We need someone who is caring, intelligent and will work with and for the the teachers.	1/21/2026 12:25 PM
112	A knowledge that helps the teachers, students, and employees.	1/21/2026 12:24 PM
113	I would like to see someone with previous experience as a superintendent. Someone that is kind, honest, trustworthy, and ethical. Someone who puts students first and listens to staff. Someone who is visible and approachable. I would like someone who communicates well and has the same values as we do as a district. Someone just like Kirk!	1/21/2026 12:12 PM
114	██████████ Ok- if I have to give a weakness, maybe competing at sports in the state level. But even that has started to shift. Again, it's minuscule. I'm proud to have spartan grads and more coming through the system.	1/21/2026 12:08 PM
115	Keep the schools a learning environment and not political	1/21/2026 12:07 PM
116	Some skills qualities and characteristics the new superintendent should have to be successful here is Kindness, patience, respect, and a care for our school district.	1/21/2026 12:04 PM
117	Good decision making	1/21/2026 12:03 PM
118	Skills and qualities a superintendent should possess is one who leads with listening and genuinely values the voices of parents, teachers, and students when making decisions. It's important that this leader has a strong teaching background, with meaningful classroom experience that informs their understanding of students and educators. The ideal candidate will be visible and approachable, regularly attending school events, athletic activities, performances, and community gatherings. Building authentic relationships with students matters to us, and we value a superintendent who connects with kids beyond formal or disciplinary settings and shows genuine care. We are looking for a leader who balances confidence with humility—someone who is transparent, open to feedback, and willing to adapt when change is needed. Above all, we want a superintendent who is truly invested in our district and community and sees this role as more than a job, but as a commitment to the people they serve.	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
119	Open minded, ready to take action, resilient, understanding	1/21/2026 12:00 PM
120	Budgeting, recruiting and hiring. Staff retention. Postive mentality on sports clubs and extracurriculars.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
121	The new superintendent should be a strong communicator who values collaboration and transparency. Being visible, approachable, and respectful of the district's existing strengths will be key. The ability to lead with consistency, support staff, and thoughtfully guide growth while keeping students at the center of decision-making will ensure continued success.	1/21/2026 11:55 AM
122	Overall, I feel the skills, qualities and characteristics of ██████████ we're perfect for the Spearfish School district. He was extremely approachable at all times. He had a physical presence in the schools and within the community. He was seen at almost all activities sponsored by the school. His office and phone were always open for discussion of topics of concern. He never formed quick judgments and opinions, and always took the time to listen attentively and respectfully. Students respected ██████████ as well as many other parents and community leaders. It is the qualities of ██████████ that I feel could be replicated in the next Spearfish School district superintendent. I feel his overall approach to running the Spearfish School district was universal and not particular to a special group. We are extremely sad to see ██████████ leave the Spearfish School district. He has done amazing things for the school district, the schools, the students, the teachers, and the community.	1/21/2026 11:51 AM
123	Friendly and seen, not an office superintendent, someone who sets expectations and sticks to them, someone who makes staff as accountable as the students are expected to be	1/21/2026 11:42 AM

124	The new superintendent should be kind and friendly to students, fostering positive relationships throughout the school. The superintendent should also be generous, but firm. Being good at decision-making is also important too.	1/21/2026 11:42 AM
125	should be a strong, transparent leader who listens to students, staff, and families. Consistency, accountability, and a focus on both academic and personal growth are essential.	1/21/2026 11:41 AM
126	Education focused. Focus on keeping good people and being a leader. This is a business. Hire good people and let them do their jobs. But when they don't, remove them. Let your teachers teach. Put money in the right places.	1/21/2026 11:40 AM
127	Be able to work with staff, not just be in charge. A leader should be respected by the staff they serve, not just be a boss. They must be a forward thinker, especially where technology is concerned. Our children will be immersed in nothing but technology and we must prepare them for this.	1/21/2026 11:37 AM
128	Be available to listen to students, faculty, and parents. Courage to do right even when it's not popular.	1/21/2026 11:32 AM
129	I'd really like it to be a woman because feminism right?	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
130	Supporting teachers who struggle with IEP /behavioral students. Teachers are paid to teach not be counselors. Its not only about the budget, its about RETAINING quality teachers past 5 years. Teacher burn out happens due to parent conflicts and student behavioral issues. Safety of children comes first. Naughty children do not get to continue bad behavior disrupting class at the expense of well behaved children wanting to learn.	1/21/2026 11:31 AM
131	Kind, interactive and funny.	1/21/2026 11:17 AM
132	Give me \$20 every day. pls pls pls.	1/21/2026 11:14 AM
133	Ability to look big picture, up and out instead of down and in. Building advocacy at the state-level for better teacher pay is vital.	1/21/2026 11:11 AM
134	-Transparent -Advocates for the teachers and staff members -Continues to work well with the School Board -Is clear about the vision they have for the future of the Spearfish School District -Honest -Loyal to the community	1/21/2026 11:10 AM
135	Mindful and actually helpful with bullying. Pays attention. Makes frequent visits to the schools.	1/21/2026 11:09 AM
136	come visit the classrooms and spend time with teachers. The new superintendent should also be aware about culture and students learning English and the program at this school	1/21/2026 11:03 AM
137	The superintendent should have a willingness to learn about the district and take time to determine strengths and weaknesses before implementing new ideas or changes. The superintendent should listen to feedback before making decisions and make sure that changes follow the feedback versus a personal agenda.	1/21/2026 11:02 AM
138	Communications and critical plans implimentation.	1/21/2026 10:56 AM
139	Some one from outside the community that comes from a high quality and innovative school district and state. If we are to continue to prepare our students for the future it is best to bring in new, outside pespectives. Hiring within the community is not the best path forward.	1/21/2026 10:52 AM
140	Ability to work for ALL students and staff and remain impartial. This person needs to be able to handle stress well and the courage to stand up for what is right. They must also be approachable and be willing to spend time in the schools.	1/21/2026 10:48 AM
141	Someone who is trustworthy, has integrity, stays hungry, and remains humble...should be a person who is approachable and listens well. Character takes you further than degrees!	1/21/2026 10:40 AM
142	Experience, knowledge, passion for doing what is in the best interest of the kids and the community, communication skills.	1/21/2026 10:39 AM
143	Show up in your schools and classrooms. Be personable and meet and care about the staff in the buildings. We do not need more politicians, we need people who care about the people in the school.	1/21/2026 10:36 AM
144	Leadership, Ability to communicate, be compassionate, be seen/heard from the community and the staff from K-12, be involved, charismatic (A figure that people want to follow and be in	1/21/2026 10:36 AM

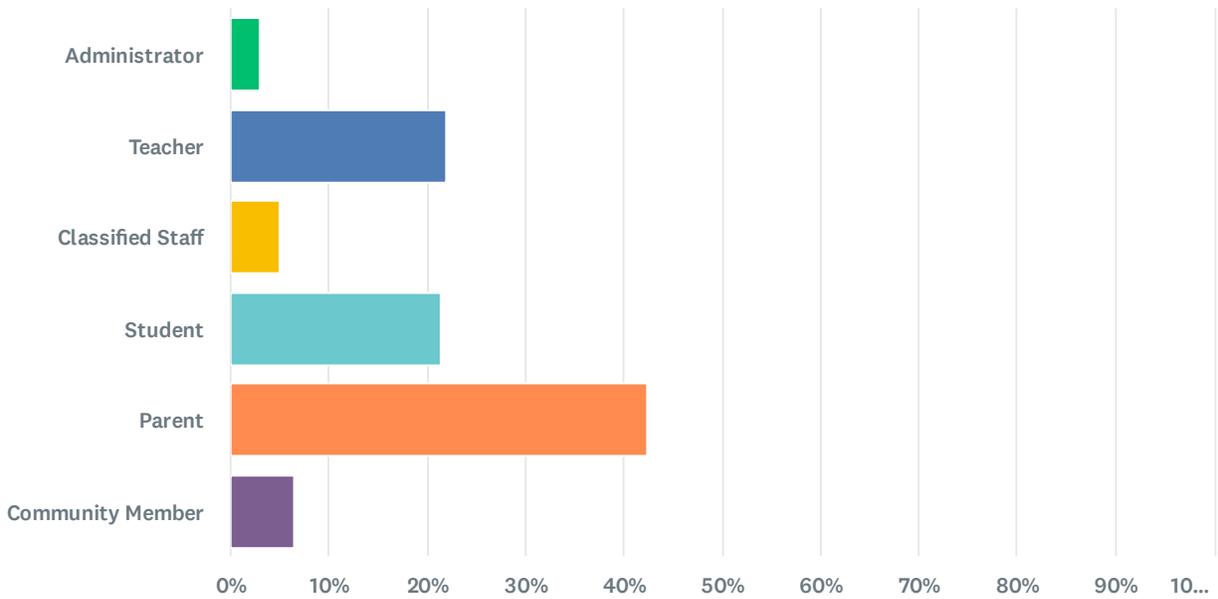
	the foxhole with)	
145	Strong advocate for students with disabilities	1/21/2026 10:29 AM
146	treat all staff fairly and equitably-take others' point of view and their expertise into consideration. We are only strong because of our team approach to education	1/21/2026 10:26 AM
147	I think the district should look to outside experience and hire someone from outside the state for new ideas. It absolutely should NOT promote from within the district. This is how a school district grows.	1/21/2026 10:25 AM
148	Great communication, ability to collaborate with stakeholders.	1/21/2026 10:22 AM
149	Someone who is educated in the legislature to continue to support education at all levels. Know our school systems, community, and what improvements that are needed to keep our children educated and safe. Someone who will support our staff, children, and community. Work with the college community to have teachers for future generations. Be able to look at all sides of a situation and the impact that will have on our school system/community. Good listener and ongoing educator to those that are in need of support in their position as teacher, janitor, administrator, community member, parent, disciplinarian.	1/21/2026 10:20 AM
150	Small town feel with large school and community vision.	1/21/2026 10:19 AM
151	Active school involvement. Knowing all that happens, all the good as well as the bad. Being able to provide information when asked by parents instead of pushing it back on the school.	1/21/2026 10:14 AM
152	Open minded as well as good listener of what the people want.	1/21/2026 10:09 AM
153	I think a successful superintendent would listen to educators in the community and be willing to work collaboratively with them.	1/21/2026 10:07 AM
154	SOmeone like Kirk, who listens to parent's concerns...and acts on them.	1/21/2026 10:04 AM
155	Level headed, good management skills, willing to take on a new challenge. Always striving to better students and staff success.	1/21/2026 10:03 AM
156	Informative a candidate needs to provide what is going on within the school. A candidate should also be sure to have good problem solving skills as well as allow for safety for the students as a whole.	1/21/2026 10:02 AM
157	To be successful in our district, the new superintendent should be a strong, transparent communicator who values collaboration and builds trust with staff, students, families, and the community. They should be approachable, willing to listen, and open to feedback. Strong leadership and decision-making skills are essential, along with the ability to manage budgets responsibly and advocate for teachers and students. A successful superintendent should also be adaptable, compassionate, and student-centered, with a clear vision for the future while still honoring the traditions and culture that make our community unique.	1/21/2026 9:56 AM
158	communication, discipline, accountability of teachers and students	1/21/2026 9:52 AM
159	*High ethical and moral standards. *Exudes a quiet confidence. *Humility. *Clear and concise communication style. *Open to constructive feedback/dialogue, ultimately making the decision that is in the best interest of the District. *Be approachable and a good listener. *Have a clear vision with goals and expectations for success that are clearly communicated; transparency. *Be genuine in interactions with staff, students, families and community members.	1/21/2026 9:50 AM
160	Focus on positive culture Listen to staff Work as a team Build a system	1/21/2026 9:44 AM
161	Allow discipline at all levels and back up teachers and principals. Have understanding of small towns, but be able to bring big ideas that benefit our school/community. Along with administrative experience, the candidate should have classroom experience in order to know what teachers and students really need.	1/21/2026 9:43 AM
162	A successful superintendent should have a willingness to listen to all stakeholders and keep an open mind. They should always keep in mind what is most important in every decision, which is what is best for the students.	1/21/2026 9:42 AM
163	patient, understanding, willing to listen	1/21/2026 9:40 AM
164	The will have big shoes to fill as I feel that Easton has all the best qualities and skills for the job. What other superintendent will teach a class and not get paid extra for it.	1/21/2026 9:39 AM

165	Visibility, to know the teachers and be seen in and around school buildings often. Approachability and vision.	1/21/2026 9:38 AM
166	Compassion, adaptability, reliability, and capability to make change where change should be made and have an understanding of safety/policies.	1/21/2026 9:36 AM
167	One who is compassionate and take every parental concern seriously and doesn't always just take admission word for everything, but who does his/her own research into situations.	1/21/2026 9:35 AM
168	Someone who treats all staff as equals, someone who supports staff in harder situations.	1/21/2026 9:34 AM
169	Openmindedness, responsible, and listening skills.	1/21/2026 9:33 AM
170	I think they should be optimistic, reliable, understanding/empathetic towards parent/student issues but maintaining professionalism. Towards staff/teachers, I think that the Superintendent should keep an appearance in all schools and also have an approachable demeanor so all faculty feel confident and comfortable speaking with the Superintendent.	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
171	Open to listening to all stakeholders Clear vision Not a micromanager Always does what is right Not afraid of confrontation Team builder	1/21/2026 9:29 AM
172	Be kind to the students, but discipline where it needs corrected effectively. It seems they need to be more involved with ALL students. Nevermind their name and what family they come from, seek the kids that are alone and don't have a crowd of friends around them. Be empathetic with all of the students, no matter what social status, you have no idea what is happening behind closed doors at any of the homes. There are families that have "high status", but are completely dismissive of their kids and not kind and could use that outside of their home. There is the other side as well so be empathetic to all and it might decrease the depression and anxiety among the young kids.	1/21/2026 9:27 AM
173	Be conservative, fair, security minded and "partner" with parents to be focused on providing students with the right teachers and environment to succeed.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
174	I would want a candidate that is calm, forward thinking person that is always looking for ways to improve the schools test scores but athletic teams. Possibly a younger candidate that will be here for a long time to grow with the great community and schools. Brit Portfield in Whitewood would be a great choice for at least an interview.	1/21/2026 9:25 AM
175	Being open to new ideas and opinions as well as being a strong communicator are imperative to this position.	1/21/2026 9:24 AM
176	Community involvement.	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
177	We need a superintendent who puts the students and schools before his/her ego. Also, a superintendent who is present- visits the schools regularly and does not just stay in office.	1/21/2026 9:21 AM
178	good listener. reflective. ability to inspire others to make changes.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
179	Someone who can lead, but also be personable. Well liked is a must to be respected.	1/21/2026 9:20 AM
180	I think a superintendent should be personable, kind, hardworking, and most importantly put the needs of the students first. I also think that being involved at the different grade levels would be beneficial for building relationships as well.	1/21/2026 9:12 AM
181	A successful superintendent will listen before acting, develop relationships within the school district and greater community, be committed to the success of our schools, and student-focused.	1/21/2026 9:11 AM
182	educational leader that is active in the community and has a HANDS ON approach with teachers and staff.	1/21/2026 9:10 AM
183	Candidates should be able to see the big picture and realize that it is the little details that add up to make that big picture.	1/21/2026 9:09 AM
184	Excellent communicator Visionary Leader with strategic planning skills Strong problem solver Ethical role model Community engagement	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
185	Consensus builder, able to work with all stakeholders, including local colleges to help students and staff schools	1/21/2026 9:08 AM

186	ability to listen and to compromise, but also be a confident decision maker	1/21/2026 9:08 AM
187	Must be able to manage people. Be honest and have integrity.	1/21/2026 9:06 AM
188	Great communication and public relation skills are a must! Advocate for school libraries and the arts	1/21/2026 9:05 AM
189	Friendly, involved in the community.	1/21/2026 9:01 AM
190	Very simply, the superintendent needs to have honesty and integrity like our current superintendent.	1/21/2026 8:16 AM
191	Listener, patience, community member, great speaker, open to trying things.	1/21/2026 6:58 AM
192	I think a good Administrator would successfully diffuse structured social warfare in our community occurring between hardened nonsecular religious factions making way for such a great educational opportunity. The strongest argument against true familial educational pedagogic empowerment is unfettered, unrestrained religious indoctrination of principles that do not withstand any reasonable scrutiny of secular knowledge.	1/21/2026 5:40 AM

Q5 Please indicate the stakeholder group you represent:

Answered: 201 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices ↓	Percentage ↓	Responses ↓	
● Administrator	2.99%	6	...
● Teacher	21.89%	44	...
● Classified Staff	4.98%	10	...
● Student	21.39%	43	...
● Parent	42.29%	85	...
● Community Member	6.47%	13	...
Total		201	