

*Stakeholder Input Report for*

***Central Lee***  
***Community School***  
***District***  
***Donnellson, Iowa***

*submitted by*

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**Central Lee Community School District**  
**Donnellson, Iowa**  
**District Stakeholders Report, November 2025**

**Executive Summary - Focus Groups**

On March 25, 2026, consultant Stephen Murley conducted a series of meetings with district stakeholders representing students, support staff, teachers, administrators, and community members connected to the Central Lee Community School District to gather input regarding the selection of the next superintendent. A total of 142 individuals participated in the in-person meetings. In addition, an electronic input portal was open from March 19–25, 2026, generating responses from 103 additional stakeholders.

Stakeholder feedback reflects a district with a strong foundation built on relationships, pride, and a shared commitment to student success. Participants consistently described Central Lee as a place where staff are deeply invested, students are well known and supported, and the community is actively engaged in the life of the schools. The district is widely viewed as offering exceptional opportunities for its size, combining strong academic performance, high levels of student engagement, and a focus on developing the whole child.

At the same time, stakeholders expressed a clear expectation that the next superintendent will build upon these strengths while guiding the district forward. There is strong alignment around the importance of a visible, relationship-driven leader who listens with intention, communicates with transparency, and fosters trust across multiple communities. Equally important is the expectation that the next leader will provide clarity in decision-making, maintain high standards for performance, and follow through consistently on commitments.

Stakeholders emphasized the importance of leadership that balances collaboration with decisiveness. A leader who values input while maintaining clear direction and sound judgment. There is also a strong desire for a leader who approaches change thoughtfully: taking time to understand the district's strengths, culture, and systems before initiating significant shifts, and ensuring that future improvements are grounded in both community values and a clear vision for continued growth.

Overall, Central Lee is a district with a strong and positive culture, a high level of community confidence, and a shared commitment to continuous improvement. The next superintendent will have the opportunity to build on this solid foundation by strengthening relationships, sustaining trust, and leading with both clarity and care to ensure continued success for all students.

*Tell us the good things about your school district:*

- **Strong, Caring, and Committed Staff Culture:** A team across all roles that is deeply invested in students, supports one another, and takes pride in the district and its work.
- **Relationships at the Center of the Student Experience:** Students are known, supported, and connected in meaningful ways, creating a strong sense of belonging across K–12.
- **Positive, Student-Centered Culture Focused on the Whole Child:** A culture that prioritizes character, leadership, and life skills alongside academic success through programs such as Leader in Me/SOAR.
- **Empowered and Collaborative Teaching Environment:** Teachers are trusted professionals with the autonomy to meet student needs, supported by a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement.
- **Exceptional Opportunities in a Small-School Setting:** A district that offers a wide range of academic, extracurricular, fine arts, CTE, and leadership opportunities typically found in larger systems.
- **High Levels of Student Engagement and Participation:** Students are actively involved across programs and activities, with opportunities to explore interests, lead, and find their place.
- **Strong Academic Performance and College/Career Readiness:** Students benefit from solid outcomes and access to advanced coursework, dual credit, and career-connected learning experiences.
- **One-Campus Structure that Strengthens Connection and Efficiency:** A centralized campus that enhances collaboration, communication, and a unified K–12 experience.
- **Balance of Tradition and Continuous Improvement:** A district that honors its rural roots while consistently evolving through new programs, instructional practices, and innovation.
- **Strong Reputation and Community Confidence:** A district viewed as a destination for families, with high levels of pride, open enrollment, and alumni returning to work or enroll their children.

*Tell us the good things about your community:*

- **Strong Community Pride and Support for Schools:** The school district is at the heart of the community, with high levels of engagement, attendance, and ongoing financial and volunteer support.
- **Close-Knit, Relationship-Driven Communities:** A connected, family-oriented environment where people know one another, support each other, and take pride in their shared identity.
- **Safe, Welcoming, and Supportive Environment:** A community widely viewed as a safe place to live and raise a family, where newcomers are welcomed, and neighbors look out for one another.
- **High Levels of Parent and Community Involvement:** Families and community members

are actively engaged in school life and consistently show up to support students, programs, and district initiatives.

- **Multiple Communities United Around a Common Purpose:** Distinct communities working together with a shared commitment to the success of the district and its students.
- **Strong Work Ethic and Deep Community Roots:** A community that values hard work, responsibility, and resilience, reflected in both its culture and its students.
- **Strong Connections Between Schools, Businesses, and Community Organizations:** Local partnerships provide meaningful opportunities for students, including career exploration and real-world learning experiences.
- **Affordable Living with Access to Regional Amenities:** A community that offers a high quality of life with affordability, while remaining within a reasonable distance of larger cities, healthcare, and entertainment.
- **Opportunities for Outdoor Recreation and Quality of Life:** An area that offers a variety of outdoor activities and a pace of life that supports overall well-being.
- **A Community Where People Stay, Return, and Invest:** Many graduates return to raise families, creating strong multi-generational connections and long-term stability.

*What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?*

- **Strong Relationship Builder Who Values People First:** A leader who genuinely knows, cares for, and connects with staff, students, and community members.
- **Visible, Accessible, and Engaged Leader:** A superintendent who is present in schools and the community, building trust through consistent visibility and authentic engagement.
- **Active Listener Who Translates Input into Action:** A leader who seeks feedback, listens with intention, and uses input to inform decisions and drive improvement.
- **Transparent and Trustworthy Communicator:** A communicator who builds confidence through honesty, clarity, and openness, and is comfortable addressing complex or challenging topics.
- **Collaborative Leader Who Engages Others While Maintaining Clear Direction:** A leader who values shared input while ensuring decisions are made with clarity, consistency, and strong judgment.
- **Consistent, Fair, and Trust-Building Leader:** A leader who provides stability, follows through on commitments, and ensures all voices are treated with respect.
- **Student-Centered Decision Maker Focused on the Whole Child:** A leader who prioritizes both academic success and personal development for all students.
- **Leader Who Balances Accountability with Empathy and Professional Excellence:** A leader who holds self and others to high standards, addresses performance with clarity and fairness, and supports continuous growth across the organization.

- **Strategic and Forward-Thinking Leader Who Builds on Existing Strengths:** A leader who provides direction for the future while taking time to learn the system, honoring the district's strengths, and pacing change thoughtfully.
- **Courageous Decision-Maker with Sound Judgment:** A leader who is willing to make difficult decisions, remains grounded and consistent, and leads with confidence and integrity.

*What are the issues the new superintendent should be aware of to be able to “hit the ground running”?*

- **Navigating Multiple Communities Within One District:** The need to unify perspectives and ensure fairness across communities with strong individual identities.
- **Balancing Community Voice with Clear and Decisive Leadership:** The importance of listening and engaging stakeholders while also setting direction, maintaining role clarity, and making timely decisions.
- **Maintaining and Building Trust Across Stakeholder Groups:** Continuing to strengthen trust through transparency, consistency, and follow-through in both communication and actions.
- **Aligning Communication and Decision-Making Processes:** Ensuring clarity in how information is shared, how decisions are made, and how roles and responsibilities are understood across the system.
- **Sustaining a Positive Culture While Continuing to Improve:** Building on a strong, student-centered culture while maintaining momentum for growth and continuous improvement.
- **Pacing Change While Honoring Traditions:** Taking time to learn and understand the system while thoughtfully introducing change that builds on existing strengths.
- **Staff Recruitment, Retention, and Support:** Continuing to attract, develop, and retain high-quality staff in a competitive environment.
- **Financial Stewardship and Resource Allocation:** Managing resources responsibly while maintaining strong programming and opportunities for students.
- **Maximizing the Strengths of a Centralized Campus:** Leveraging the benefits of a one-campus model while addressing logistical and operational considerations.
- **Meeting Diverse Student Needs in a Changing Environment:** Ensuring all students are supported academically, socially, and emotionally in an evolving educational landscape.

## *Consolidated in-person comments*

### **Tell us the good things about your schools**

Staff

We have good people

People are caring

In and out of school

Whole person

Continuity

Most have been here a long time

Not a revolving door

Everybody wants to do their best

Nobody laissez faire

Lots of pride

Take our jobs seriously

Very invested

Three things

Trust

Team transparency

Three admins here for 18 years

District-level work is very team-oriented

All on one campus helps

Predecessor to Andy had really long board meetings

Wanted to make sure everybody had all the information

Collaboration

Everything from bond issues to curriculum to community events

Never one person doing it alone

Everybody steps in

Example recent show choir event brought the school and community together

Custodial to it to hs staff

Decision making process is more efficient because of the team's focus

Not as many chains to go through because we are centralized

Great board support

No real controversies

When we know what's right, we do it

You can meet with someone you need to right away, and not have to wait

Everyone brings different strengths and opportunities to the team

Some of us are people before policy, some of us are policy before people ... and we get to succeed based on our strengths

Celebrating success and each other's strengths  
Build each other up  
We are not complacent  
We know we are not good enough  
We do not slow down enough sometimes!  
Tradition with innovation  
We have a bubble around us that allows us to maintain some old-school traditions, but still focus on progress  
Not holding back on opportunities  
Balance pen and paper with technology  
Teachers have lots of autonomy  
We are data-driven, but it does not force our hand  
Teachers are always looking for something new  
Never think this is the only way to do it  
Focus on using your special abilities to make it really work  
We do have a curriculum, but it is not the only way to do things  
This is how we retain teachers  
Still vertically and horizontally aligned  
We have a very open-door policy  
Encourages a lot of input ... not always the helpful kind  
Great comprehensive opportunities for kids ... both college-bound and CTE-type tracks  
So many opportunities based on student interest  
So many opportunities for sports, both in the school and in the community  
Same with fine arts and FFA .... Lots of choices  
Depth of programming  
One of a small number of small schools with band AND show choir, and both are thriving  
Kids have a well-rounded experience  
Lots of supportive religious communities  
We are a good-sized district to have the community support we need  
Great feeling between students and staff  
Small enough but not too small  
I can still keep track of my elementary students when they are in high school  
I know the kids K-12  
We know each other  
Open enrollment has very high numbers  
People come here because they feel that they have personal attention  
Awesome and amazing staff  
We don't have complaints about our district  
We like working here

We have lots of alumni who have come back  
The students are great here  
Our kids are not a challenge  
We don't have overwhelming, challenging behavior  
We have kids who come with great behavioral challenges, but they do well  
We have high expectations  
Leader In Me makes a difference  
We are a lighthouse  
The associates are a key part of our success  
They work with the kids in a way that builds great relationships  
This makes sure that a firm hand can guide them back  
Opportunities for our kids exceed most 2A schools  
High school has a lot of extracurricular opportunities  
Kids can find their niche group  
Not an alumnus, and when I came here, I was welcomed and fit; I fit right in  
Being on one campus is really unique  
Our data is very good  
Making academic progress  
Staff support kids out of school  
We have the freedom to teach content that meets my students' needs and where they are, which is aligned with state standards  
I have creativity  
Expectations are high for staff, as well as staff having high expectations for students  
That culture that is pushed top to bottom is second to none  
We really are focused on doing what is best for kids  
Support staff is fantastic  
Everyone in every role really enjoys being here  
Admin is supportive of us learning and growing  
We have support to go seek outside POD  
There is a lot of trust in the system from board to admin to teacher to students  
Family based  
Can be double edged sword  
Love the rural aspect  
Pulling in and seeing tractors in the parking lot  
Love being able to talk to the kids about life on the farm  
Kids have a well-rounded focus - academically, music, athletics  
Try really hard to help our students grow  
Above the state average on so many metrics  
Building relationships with kids  
Small enough that we can forge real relationships

Everybody knows everybody  
So many opportunities for the kids  
Lots of extracurriculars  
Lots to choose from  
Choosing to send my kids here  
Really good education in Southeast Iowa  
I grew up in the area, and my daughter goes here now ... so much better than the  
experience I had  
Small enough for her to participate  
Big enough for her to make lots of friends  
Hear from our substitutes how great this district is compared to other places they sub  
Smaller class sizes than some of our neighbors  
My kids, who graduated from here, had a more advanced set of courses than some of  
their geographic peers  
Love my co-workers  
We are close to each other  
Very supportive of anything that we need  
We have great teachers  
Makes our jobs easier on hard days  
Can be hard for our admin to see that sometimes and be prepared to support them  
Significant involvement  
Everyone is involved with everything, including people who don't have kids here  
Example ... few bus riders at away events because family members are driving to all  
those away events and transporting their kids  
Award winning  
Great reputation  
Big family  
Sense of community  
Welcoming  
Very positive  
Everyone has been super supportive in my first year  
Top workplace awards  
All levels at all buildings are encouraging  
Everyone you talk to is encouraging your student, and you  
Very affirmative  
Makes you feel like they want you  
Everyone is willing to help out  
Doesn't have to be your area of responsibility  
Positivity and communication are really good  
Leader in me

Soar

Really helps the students to be actively engaged

Like how much we get our students involved

Students take pride

“We let the kids drive”

We are raising young adults

The new leader needs to hear their input

Open minded

Principals support this way

Love the spirit of the school

We follow our kids everywhere

We go with them whether they win or lose

This place is so welcoming

The cliques know when to stop being cliquey

We are here for the students

It is really different from when I graduated ... way better

We are multiple communities that come together

Attendance ... we have kids who have issues like harvest time

Some of our students are adults in their own homes

Some of our kids work because their families need them to

We have great CTE programs

The new supt needs to appreciate all kids

We are a lighthouse district for the Leader in Me

We have opportunities for everyone

Showchoir, arts, and gaming

We are inspiring

Proud of who we are and what we do

Proud of our alumni

Proud of who we grow

Reflected in the number of people who come back here to work for the district, or want to send their kids here

Lots of clubs and activities to be

Good atmosphere

People enjoy being here

Easy to make friends

Lots of choices in things to do

Lots of opportunities for everyone

So many opportunities

Be yourself without people judging you

Like all the different classes

Lots of electives  
Lots of dual credit  
Lots of preparation for what's next  
Many people are taking dual credit  
Many electives to choose from  
The music department does not require auditions  
If you are not understanding, you get help  
Staff and teachers bond with students  
Not just there to be your teacher  
Know a lot about you  
No matter what level you are at, there is a path to follow  
Our school focuses on education  
Not on sports  
That is a good thing  
Students are passionate about what they do  
I can walk into school and be me and don't have to change  
Lots of opportunities to help the community  
The last district didn't have as many opportunities  
Easy to build relationships with students and staff  
We are very safe  
Relaxed and laid back  
Great facilities  
Work on building life and people skills ... not just academics  
Lots of events to participate in, classes focused on being prepared for the future  
Taking college classes on campus  
Trying out new things in a safe environment  
Soar program  
Nationally recognized  
Let students be involved in decision-making  
Even if you're going through rough times, the middle school counselor is awesome at listening to you  
The FFA chapter is really successful  
Lots of students who do multiple clubs and extracurriculars  
Small schools allow you to be involved in multiple things  
Great reputation both in the community and across the state  
Very safe  
No craziness in the hallways  
People move here for that reason  
Several manufacturing sites recommend that their management staff live in Central Lee  
Realtors recommend Central Lee

They often encourage open enrollment  
Optimal class sizes  
Generational  
Lots of families that have stayed or come back  
Graduates want to come back to start families  
Family participation  
Parents are really engaged  
Past experience was in a big district  
Moved here and knew he wanted to send his kids here  
Did physician recruiting  
This was the school to send kids to  
Education is equally important as sports  
Top Iowa workplace  
Academics are really high  
Searching online for test scores, we look really good  
This is the obvious choice to send your kids based on things like FRL and academics  
The income of families, on average, is higher  
Especially important for people moving into management roles  
People are very welcoming  
Even though there is a generational connection, there is a lot of openness  
Just moved back  
Communication from the admin office is so much better than in a larger district  
Very welcoming and immediate when we moved in  
Very much focused on integrating kids  
Glass half full outlook from throughout the district  
People have a positive affinity with the district  
Parents engage both in time and finance through things like funding and referenda  
The initial thought is that we are going to support  
A diverse range of opportunities to get involved  
Lots of activities for students to choose from  
Ag, music, sports, electronic gaming, and culinary  
If you don't have it here, you can usually find an opportunity nearby  
Academics, fine arts, CTE, lots of focus on preparing them for what they may want to do  
Perception that as a rural area, we don't have that ... not true  
Bring businesses in to learn careers  
Leadership opportunities for kids  
Staff really love and support the kids  
They are very intentional about putting staff in the right place to help the kids  
Work closely with other districts to partner to find other opportunities for kids  
As a n alumni i have had kids in other districts ... see that

Do a really great job getting students to be kind to each other and the staff  
Career development is really good  
We are in good shape financially  
We have a great reputation  
Parent interaction here is outstanding  
Apathy is not a problem  
Leadership skills that kids learn are way more than they get in other districts  
We care  
Our science fair and FFA program is a big part of that  
Focus on college and career readiness  
We lead the state in that area  
We are preparing students for life, not graduation  
The teachers here, the admin, and the staff care about our kids  
This is K-12  
Custodians, bus drivers, and EVERYONE are proud to be Central Lee  
In the past 5 years, we have done a lot of facility improvement  
Taxpayers supported that  
Special needs are very strong  
We aren't just the little country school  
We have more programs than many of our bigger neighbors  
You either grow or die ... and we are growing in the right places  
The board has really worked hard to spend our money well  
Our tax rates are competitive, but we are doing more with it  
Prior to our bond referendum, we were able to maintain facilities without bonding  
Culture here is really positive  
People want to come to Central Lee  
We produce really well-rounded students  
We need to create an environment where students are engaged in as many  
extracurricular activities as possible to be connected with the school  
We have so many opportunities for our kids  
If we don't have that opportunity, we partner with other districts  
Our kids have an opportunity to do anything!  
We want graduates who are sought after  
We are good at recognizing our kids  
Teacher retention is really high  
Our students carry a reputation in state universities due to the academic experience  
The staff is what makes our district  
We need someone who can recruit and retain our great staff  
And hold them accountable

## **Tell us the good things about your community**

Donnelson is a suburb of Iowa City

You can get to any big city in a couple of hours

You may not have it here every day, but you can get wherever you want to in a short drive

The community pride is really connected to the rural nature of the communities we serve

Lots of family values that may not exist everywhere else

Families are heavily invested

This is a “family thing” kind of place

Your social scene centers around your family

We have been consolidated back in 62, so we are well along the integrated pathway

The school is the center of our community

Lots of great places to eat and great live entertainment all within 30-45 minutes

More to do than people think ... we just don't have a theme park

On a Friday night, you will see the bleachers filled at our events

We have fairs and festivals

We are Middle America

We are really safe

If you are worried that you will be included ... absolutely ... we are really welcoming

We can be cliquey, but it is often based on tight-knit families

It doesn't matter what we do as a school ... everything is well attended because everybody feels that they are a part of everything we do

There is extraordinary pride in our community

Our community is really supportive financially

Our school is our community

Everyone rallies around our schools

Community makes people feel welcome

We are ready and willing to help our neighbors

I'm a transplant ... after the storms this summer, all my neighbors came over to help clean up the downed trees

Community is really welcoming

Have more community now than my last district, where I worked for 10 years

The community welcomes you and your family

Everyone can find a place where they can fit

Our businesses take pride in our schools

All the communities and their businesses support our schools

No matter what you want to do ... you can do that in 45 minute drive

Lots of outdoor opportunities

There is some great fried chicken here  
We do have some opinionated people in our community  
Sometimes our community goes straight to the top  
So much intertwining between the businesses and the schools  
Our kids are out doing career exploration  
This is really important for post-secondary plans  
The community offers lots of "input" but it is will well intentioned  
They are not afraid to talk to us  
There are a lot of festivals here  
We are a short drive to lots of other places  
The cost of living is low here  
The community is a "good time"  
We know how to have fun  
We can be isolated from the "rest of Iowa"  
Lots of family things that are only a 30-minute drive  
Lots of outdoor places to swim and hike  
Mississippi is right here  
Kids can do their own thing because it is safe  
We are super affordable, especially for housing  
Quiet  
Great that you are in a triangle between major cities  
Driving distance to big cities  
Close to Amtrak  
Lots of outdoor opportunities  
Very natural  
Overall feeling of neighborliness  
People will smile at you in the grocery store  
You can slow down here  
The people are willing to adopt you  
If you want to grow your family, this is the place  
Everyone will look out for your kid  
We are a big little school  
A big little rural school  
Easy to start with a clean slate  
Even though my kids aren't sports kids, there are so many opportunities for kids  
The community is always looking to grow  
Friendships in school translate to out of school, everybody knows everybody  
Feel safe  
Especially when outside  
Even if you don't know people, they are kind

Very friend  
Very welcoming  
very diverse culture  
Even though it is small, there are lots of things to do  
Restaurants, entertainment  
Outdoor stuff like fishing  
Make our own fun  
People are supportive of you and your goals, and what you want to do  
The small businesses are good  
People are welcoming  
Everyone is nice to everybody  
Don't have to worry about traffic  
Only an hour drive to Iowa City  
Close to other big cities  
Great for outdoor activities  
Hunting, fishing, hiking  
So much county and state property  
Lowest cost of living in the state  
Some people look at city tax rates, but we are still really low  
Very tight and connected community  
Lots of support  
Even though it is tight very welcoming of people moving in  
Welcoming  
People will say hello  
Even though it is very rural  
Big cities are within easy driving distance  
There are still a lot of community options here  
A lot more than you might think  
We just had a harvest dinner that was chef-created  
You may have to drive further, but the timing is not much different than the time in a big city  
Robust health care  
Ambulance and fire are very strong  
Hospital in Fort Madison  
Low crime rate  
Employment for your spouse is definitely a possibility  
Whether in management, teaching, or healthcare, there are lots of options  
Very affordable child care  
Many opportunities to join things if you want to join  
The community is focusing on activities for kids

Lots of new things are getting started all the time  
Especially for the younger kids  
Always thinking about how to get kids involved  
Very entrepreneurial  
Lots of support for that  
Like shopping local  
People here try to support those things when they start up  
There are resources ... just need to reach out  
You can see the sky  
Iowa City is only 1.5 hours  
Airports in Quincy and Burlington have lots of connections  
Rail depot in Fort Madison  
Very direct access to major cities  
Slower pace of life  
Don't have the noise of the city, but ready access  
The people  
We are out in the country, but we look after our neighbors  
We have lots of alumni who live here  
We went away, and then we came back  
It wasn't our plan to come back, but we did  
We all look after each other  
It is a great place to raise our kids  
We have three communities that have truly come together as one  
We still have Argyle, Donnellson, and Montrose, but we still feel as one  
There are some choices when people move here  
Low crime  
We are safe  
Our cost of living is low  
You don't have to go far to see it go up  
We may not have all the amenities, but if you don't mind driving 45 minutes, you can  
find them everywhere  
Planes and trains are just a short hop from here  
Central Lee is the heart of this community  
We are the center of the community  
I can go to work 8-10 hours a day and not have to worry about my kiddos  
I know that if anything happens, they will take care of them as one of their own  
I have a student with medical needs, and the staff just stepped right in and took care of  
it.  
We have a really good board  
They are good listeners

They will take that input and consider it in their decisions

We have the leg up on our neighbors

Our geography has an impact ... you have to realize that we have a central campus which has pro's and cons

A central campus gives us a different set of financial issues

Especially for transportation

We have a really strong FFA community, and we need to recognize

We have had a turnover of staff that will allow the new leader to help drive the new staff innovation

We are more innovative than many people give us credit for

We were one of the first districts to introduce laptops

# What skills, qualities or characteristics should the new superintendent possess to be successful here?

Kindness

Compassion

Support

Support

Encouragement

Pressure to be the best I can be

The board has said we want better

That is because we are always challenging ourselves

Listener

Need to know that we want to improve

Understanding

Need a level of consistency

That can be hard in a small community

Accountability

Sense of humor

Visible

Checking in with the staff

Perceptive of our individual needs

Knowing and caring about each person

Not always series

Taking feedback from people, especially to understand when and where resources need to be allocated

Need to take feedback and translate it into action

Open to making adjustments when they are needed

Open to feedback from everyone in the system and in the community

Need to know the staff as staff and as people

Needs to collaborate with the admin and teachers

Needs to understand boundaries

Needs to understand the chain of command/ communication

Trust is so important

Needs to give and receive trust

There is give and take in all areas

Honesty

Values collaboration

Transparent with questions and answers

Need someone who needs to be aligned with the Leader in Me paradigm

Need someone to hear you and back you up, or push back with a reflective question  
Technology aware and maybe savvy  
We are all on the same system - we are an Apple district  
We don't want to switch to Chromebooks  
We know everyone's jobs are hard  
But we also know how to celebrate together, and that means everybody!  
Need to be able to gather as adults  
Need to promote and support PD for staff and admin  
Need to invest in our staff  
We want to help them grow as much as we want them to help us grow  
Open minded  
Don't always have to agree  
A "tell me more" attitude  
Transparency  
Trusting the professionalism of the staff  
Approachable  
Not have to worry about talking to them  
To be known in the building  
Being present  
Being involved  
Need to be able to see the supt  
Need to be visible  
Smart with financial decisions  
Make decisions that are best for the district, but need to have the backs of staff and students  
If they don't do that, we can lose kids and staff  
Include staff in decision-making  
Clear vision  
Where does the candidate want the district to go in the next 5-10 years  
Where do we go from here  
Be invested in your staff  
Know the students  
Know the staff  
Know what people are involved in  
See the staff and students as a whole person beyond those roles  
Consistency  
Accountability  
Sense of humor  
A supt with kids needs to send their kids here  
Needs to think highly enough of our district to

Need to know you are invested  
We are not a business ... we are a school district  
A different kind of culture than you might experience in a big city  
We are more laid back  
Different kinds of behavior issues  
Not as severe as you might see in a more urban environment  
If I need help i can get help  
Community steps in  
Doesn't matter whether that is personal or professional  
Like the small town feel  
My kid rides her bike around town unsupervised  
True small-town America  
Those neighbors help watch out for my kids  
We are a family-type community - we know everyone, and we all look out for each other  
We have a much slower pace of life  
Down here, we make our own entertainment  
There isn't as much organized entertainment  
But now so small you can't do anything  
Businesses are really supportive  
Even though we are not in a town  
Families with business connections help this  
Great at networking with the communities we serve  
Approachable  
Important for staff and parents  
No person is superior to anyone else  
Everyone's opinion should matter  
Not showing favoritism  
Humility  
Humble  
Kind  
Caring  
Open-door policy  
More present in each building  
Visibility  
You want to connect with them  
Not just sitting in an office  
Need to be out in the classrooms, seeing what is happening  
Need to be present during the school day, after school, and on the weekends  
Need to show up for activities  
Need someone who is here for the long haul

Need to put students and staff first  
Focus on the people, not the stuff  
We need to be here for the kids  
Personality  
Friendly  
Approachable  
Can be a workhorse, but needs to be present  
Someone who is looking to come in and get involved  
Can't just sit in the central office  
Need to know the kids  
Need to know the staff  
Can't forget the underdogs  
Take the time to say hi in the hallway  
Want them to come to events in the evening/ weekends  
Someone who is not afraid to lift a finger to help  
Willing to help out regardless of the task  
Jackie of all trades  
Need to be human  
Need to be focused on the people in the district  
Compassionate  
Need to feel you can walk up to them regardless of the issue  
need to have a backbone  
Need to be able to make a tough call  
Need to be here long enough to make a difference  
Technology skills  
Dual focus ... Apple and other  
Good communication skills  
Very involved  
Want them to attend lots of things  
Not just certain things  
Need to have understanding  
Set goals for the future  
Good at problem-solving  
Willing to take advice from others  
Willing to work with the staff  
Not peer pressure into doing things  
Understanding of people's goals, even if they are not traditional  
Experience with kids  
Humility  
Acceptance when you are wrong

Being here for the right reasons, improving the school  
Not working just for the money  
Creating relationships  
Want to be connected and liked in the school  
Compassionate and understanding  
Integrity'  
Doing the right thing even when nobody is looking  
Manga our money well  
Intelligent  
Knowing what they are doing  
Being willing to take risks  
Having initiative  
Trustworth  
Outgoing  
Visible  
Being out in the schools and classrooms  
Self reflection  
Motivated  
Listens to everyone  
Need to be flexible enough to allow kids to do lots of things  
Courageous  
Create new opportunities  
be supportive of both existing and new opportunities  
Outgoing  
Approachable  
Attention to detail  
Accountable  
Focused on employees  
Take care of the employees so they can take care of the kids  
Straight forward  
Good listener  
Open minded  
Big picture thinker  
Optimistic  
Willing to invest in the community  
Invest in the future of the community  
Not just a job  
Involvement with things in the school and community  
Because the community is important, they need to be visible  
They need to believe in Central Lee

Not a stepping stone  
Looking for someone who will stay, but someone who is a learner  
Need to get outside of the district and learn from others  
Need to avoid the status quo  
Need to be focused on getting better  
Need to cooperate with the other districts  
Need a catalyst for change  
Need to recognize that there are places we need to address  
Need someone with a backbone because we have lots of familial ties that can hold us back  
Change ruffles feathers  
Need to be able to stand up to that  
Embrace the change  
Lead people through change  
Need to recognize how to work with the long-time residents and alumni  
Be prepared to say no and explain how that works and why it is a no  
This is a great school district  
Great school district  
Budget minded  
Know the value of the work that we do and our programs  
Be able  
Great communicator  
Tact  
Lee County has a lot of passionate “groups” ... north and south, urban and rural, etc.  
Open enrollment has brought the “haves” to Central Lee  
Losing open enrollment could be a huge problem  
Need to be able to maintain that enrollment  
Need to be able to build good relationships with those districts that are sending their kids to us  
The more unified we could be, the better off we could be  
An example would be shared facilities  
Being a good neighbor is good for the county  
A rising tide can float all boats  
Our districts have spent more time driving wedges between the districts  
Superintendent represents us all  
Want them to be a good example  
Need people to look up to and feel proud about  
Also need to be competitive  
Need to have an ability to connect with politicians locally and at the state level  
Be a leader amongst the other superintendents

Need to be focused on academics  
Need to push our high achievers  
Need to make sure that those with accommodations are met  
But don't forget the middle  
Need to have a global vision when they come in ... needs to be able to focus on everything simultaneously  
This is where we are at now ... this is where we want to be in 5 years  
Not just doing one thing at a time  
Can't ignore some things while fixing other things  
Can't afford to go backward  
Don't be afraid to say this is what we are doing  
Need to remember that we are a big FFA school  
Big benefit to be on one campus  
Get to see the connections between the grade levels  
Need to be able to connect that and keep it moving forward  
Need to have financial acumen  
We need someone who is committed to school and community  
A driver  
A leader  
A servant leader, not a director  
Someone who puts central Lee first  
We need someone who understands the role of the superintendent  
Need a superintendent who can stand behind their convictions  
If the supt has a position that they think is correct, they need to stand up for what they believe in  
Need to have a set of core values that align with us  
Life-long learner  
That is part of our mission statement  
Need to be attuned to what is happening around the state and nation  
Visionary  
Forward thinker  
Someone who is receptive to change  
Ok ruffling some feathers  
Someone who is ok not being liked  
Need to be thinking 5-10 years down the road  
Commitment to the activities and athletics  
We have some strong activities, but some are not ... some may be weak  
Need to make sure that we have a commitment to the programs that have great significance for the community  
Supt needs to support every activity

Needs to be present and visible  
Need to be really cognizant of the importance of things like FFA  
Safety focus for the kids  
Knowing the numbers  
Need to really know school finance  
Need to be aware of where we are and where we are going financially  
Ability to delegate to the admin team successfully  
We need someone to trust the district and building leaders  
Need to express their expectations to the administrators  
Need to be willing and able to hold them accountable  
Need to be careful that the mindset is that once someone is here, we have to keep them, regardless of performance  
Need to have high expectations  
This is applicable for athletics, extracurriculars, and curricular programs  
Need to be able to focus on multiple things at once  
Everything needs to move forward simultaneously  
Supt needs to be a good boss  
Needs to build relationships with the staff  
That includes reinforcing a great culture and holding people to high standards  
And this applies to all staff  
They are a go-between for the board and the staff  
They need to facilitate the messages in a way that the staff can get that work done  
Supt should think of these as our schools, not their schools  
Supt needs to be in the school during the day when kids are in session  
Parents see him at lots of activities  
The kids know him  
They feel comfortable connecting with him  
The kids feel like  
Need to lead the communication  
If you don't, it will lead you  
Need to tell our story  
Need to lead those efforts  
We are proud of what we do  
We are in the press because we are good at what we do!  
We are an agricultural community  
We need someone who can communicate with our farm base  
We are a district built on hard-working families and anything that kids are doing they work hard at, and this sometimes includes things outside of school  
We are a school of overachievers  
Honest

Transparent

Integrity

Backbone

They need to be able to carry out the board's directives

Need to be able to manage community involvement productively

Someone willing to rock the boat appropriately

Someone who wants to be a part of the community

Someone who really wants to drive in and be one of us

Need to be cool and level-headed

Needs to be able to communicate effectively with all levels of the organization

Can't be an im up here, and you're down there

Need to care for all levels of the staff

Need to hear the concerns brought to their staff

Need to explain the "why" and answer the questions of all demographic groups in the district

That needs to translate to the vision

Need to benefit current and future kids

We need to keep our forward momentum

We understand that change is needed, but not just change for change's sake

We do a good job of growing and exporting our kids

We need to make sure that we are promoting advanced manufacturing for our kids

# What are the issues the new superintendent should be aware of to be able to “hit the ground running?”

Having a small-town feel is good, but it can be a challenge

You live in a fishbowl

Need to be sure that your communication is very effective and efficient

Absent that, gossip can quickly fill gaps

Need a strong relationship with CELA

Hear from other neighboring districts that those relationships cause breakdowns in staff relationships

We don't know where enrollment is going

Need to hope for the best and plan for the worst

We may have seen our glory days???

Lots of uncontrollable variables

Numbers may drive the reality

Need to be involved in the county's economic development across the area

Need to help drive community growth because it drives enrollment

Need to be a steward of the community and school

The projects have really helped improve our district

There are some in the community that are “enough”

We will need someone who can continue to champion CTE for our kids

Logistics - positive to have one campus, negative that we are a drive from anywhere

Can be a significant barrier for parents who have to transport their kids

Some logistics challenges for parents

Every kid is bused

Need to be aware of the impact of the weather

We had one year where we didn't have a teacher leave

We didn't have to replace anyone

Need to know how important the community is

We have a good working relationship with the union

Current supt is really open

Tough to make decisions when crunching numbers, but the current supt has supported us

The district has built a solid three-sided triangle with the board, sup, and teachers

Work well with the good and take

Continued focus on facilities

High school classrooms need some TLC

Need to keep an eye on the academic spaces

Be aware of potential needs for new HS students

Middle school feels a bit forgotten  
Have to use classrooms for academic spaces  
When the five section elementaries get to ms we will have a huge crunch  
We had an addition that got sidetracked  
Growth is good, but we need to be prepared for  
There will be lots of loud voices asking for their needs to be met  
This person will need to be able to understand that, help guide us through that, and then be able to explain it to the staff and community  
Needs for students are changing  
What can we do with the staff to be prepared for that  
We know that our high test scores are connected to quality staff and appropriate class sizes  
Our open enrollment numbers are often connected to those small class sizes  
When looking at open enrollment, those students often bring baggage with them, and we need to have more attention directed to them  
This is because for some of those kids, we don't have the programming to support  
We see that impacting transportation  
It's a fine line ... we want kids to want to come here, but we need to balance that  
The supt needs to know that sometimes they have to be the bad guy  
We are a large 2a school, and what if we get stuck in 3a  
What will that mean for our students, schools, and communities  
We don't have a lot of housing options  
We have different leadership styles in our building leaders  
Can be a challenge to find a doctor  
Everybody is related to everybody  
In the bible belt  
Lots of faith-based focus  
Lots of mental health issues  
Kind of unique to our rural area  
Related to low-income families who are struggling  
Don't be nosy  
Agricultural community  
Lots of small businesses  
Be yourself  
People are outgoing  
The oldest county fair in Iowa  
Be open to new ideas  
"We're different"  
Lots of deer  
Flexible with all of the different things going on that people are involved in

The weather down here can be different  
Housing could be a challenge  
Family ties  
Need to be aware of alumni family tie cliqueness  
Sometimes there is a double standard for locals versus newcomers  
Can seem like preferential treatment for locals  
Need to have a good perspective, which includes both insiders and outsiders  
Set boundaries quickly so they don't get sucked into that  
Budget challenges  
Worry that we will just rest on our laurels  
Facility improvements have been great  
So many opportunities for kids now  
But when we ask questions, sometimes we are told that we just don't have those options  
Don't always have the mindset that we are settling rather than recruiting  
Seems like acceptance  
Need to focus on the why you want to come here  
Can't accept that we will settle for less than the best  
Parents can be very vocal  
Coaches sometimes appease those loud voices  
Need to help lead through that challenge  
See the same kind of culture and behavior in arts and music  
Need to make sure that we are working with coaches and advisors to encourage multi-sport and multi-activity students  
Specialization seems to be happening too early  
Big emphasis on academics  
Need to have the same emphasis on extracurriculars and athletics  
It doesn't feel like we have a good reputation for those things  
Feels like we are behind  
Behind on the idea that travel sports are here to stay  
Not integrated between school and travel sports  
Need to figure out how to share our facilities  
Not as much emphasis on girls' sports vs boys' sports  
Need to make sure that the girls have the support that they need to succeed  
Need to know what they think about their 1- 5- 10-year plan  
Without them could be overly influenced by those local power brokers  
Need enough vision to guide the district  
Need to focus on staff ... listen, respond ...they are on the ground doing the work  
This includes teachers and support staff  
Want them to be invested in the community

Be aware that there is a bit of a north-south split between Montrose and Donnellson  
Lots of passionate parents ... need to see that as a good thing  
Need to be able to figure out how to leverage and activate that  
Need to be a good listener and then help prioritize what is right for all of our kids  
Remember that we are rural and that sometimes there are different things that happen here ... hunting, planting  
Need to be aware of our open enrollment  
Those students generate dollars for our district  
Need to keep an eye on the balance between the expenses and our income  
We are passionate and proud to be Central Lee  
But we are going to engage and be involved  
They need to be receptive  
And they need to be able to deal with that input in a receptive and responsive manner  
The supt needs to be prepared for that  
We have been spoiled because Andy was from here  
We know that there will be a learning curve  
Our friends and family piece can be overwhelming  
We have a LOT of alum but that can be a bit of a challenge to address "the way things have always been done"  
We are a really tight-knit group, which is a good thing, but can be a challenge  
There is a bit of the "good ol' boys club"  
A lot of the active and involved community who have been involved for generations  
Concern that if you are not in the right family, you may not get a fair shake  
That is probably the biggest negative that you will hear  
Not a good or bad thing ... but it is a thing  
There is a learning curve  
Once you get here and know how much the community cares and loves its community, then you understand it  
The community is very kind  
It is a lovely community  
You will need some thick skin  
They are genuine and tell you how it is  
Need to be aware of how diverse we are  
Need someone to understand the breadth of the industry here and how that impacts our diversity  
Need to be connected to the people in town who don't have kids in school  
One challenge may be finding housing  
The board needs to hear from the teachers

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

Answered: 91 Skipped: 7

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Safe, small towns(s) family feel, when tragedy or hardship arise this school community is compassionate and shows up to support and help ALL regardless of who you are. Not high maintenance. Blue collar hardworking people. Genuine people. It's a blessing that doesn't always get recognition.	3/25/2026 10:36 PM
2	Small town values.	3/25/2026 9:26 PM
3	People are really good about spreading word when it comes to needing help or volunteers, working to promote something important, and making sure everyone is aware to be able to fix something or making something better than it already is.	3/25/2026 7:04 PM
4	For the most part, they are really supportive of the school system and caring people. We are a rural school. I like the size of our school because we can offer many things, but it is still small enough you get to know all students.	3/25/2026 3:27 PM
5	We are small, which makes it easier to form relationships and get to know the families of our students. Our school is well supported in the community.	3/25/2026 11:59 AM
6	There are some kind people.	3/25/2026 11:43 AM
7	One of the greatest strengths of the Central Lee community is that people genuinely care about the school and step forward when needed. Across our communities, many leaders and volunteers are willing to help move initiatives forward and support students. I saw this firsthand during COVID when multiple towns opened their community buildings to host off-campus classrooms so students could continue learning. That kind of commitment says a lot about who we are. There is also strong collaboration between the school and local organizations to create opportunities for students. Through community partnerships, students have access to work-study and career exploration experiences that many districts our size simply cannot offer. My own family is an example of the long-term impact of Central Lee. My parents were teachers in this district, and they dedicated their careers to helping students succeed. My husband and I are both Central Lee graduates. We chose to return to this area in large part because of the education Central Lee provides. He is a physician, and I am a pharmacist, and we specifically wanted our children to have access to the same strong educational foundation and opportunities that helped shape our own paths. That speaks to the trust many families have in this district.	3/25/2026 8:34 AM
8	Very family oriented. Each small community has something special to offer and that needs to be celebrated. Each little town is unique in it's own way and gives residents and students something to be proud of.	3/25/2026 8:14 AM
9	We are tight knit, we look after each other. For the most part our students needs are met at home. Our school families are always willing to help our school out, whether it be volunteering or donating supplies.	3/24/2026 4:28 PM
10	I think that everyone that works here helps everyone and if you are a new! Everyone is welcoming!	3/24/2026 4:25 PM
11	We are a tight knit community. We look after one and another, and are quick to help each other when needed.	3/24/2026 4:24 PM
12	As a teacher, I feel that our families really show up for the school! The parents are great supporters of education and participate in school events! The community supports our schools!	3/24/2026 4:20 PM
13	Even though we are small I feel we are very innovative and try to keep up with current events and trends.	3/24/2026 11:52 AM

14	Our community has a small-town feel, relationships are a priority and everyone is known and valued. They show up to support school events, extracurricular activities, and student achievements, making education a shared priority.	3/24/2026 11:40 AM
15	This community is small, but always trying to better our school in any ways that they can. Small town lifestyle here and very much laid back.	3/24/2026 10:05 AM
16	Clean, quiet, lots of outdoor activities from walking park trails, biking over 20+ miles of paved trails, hunting. Family friendly.	3/24/2026 9:45 AM
17	From what I've noticed so far, the community is very prideful and involved.	3/24/2026 9:01 AM
18	Rural Iowa with tons of potential in our students. A place where you can breathe and discover yourself. Natural resources that feed your soul	3/24/2026 8:55 AM
19	Friendly Helpful Beautiful scenery	3/24/2026 8:43 AM
20	It is a close knit community. Many great families that truly care about the school, educators, and the students.	3/24/2026 8:12 AM
21	Heavy community involvement.	3/24/2026 7:47 AM
22	It's quiet and safe. Children can be outside.	3/24/2026 12:42 AM
23	Our school is the hub of our community, which keeps our community family-centered.	3/23/2026 9:28 PM
24	Multiple generations of passionate and hard working individuals that are highly engaged with the district. Community embrace our "Proud to Be Central Lee" motto.	3/23/2026 3:55 PM
25	Everyone is supportive	3/23/2026 3:21 PM
26	Our community encompasses 3 small towns. The community is a huge support network for our school district. The community support helps provide our district with so many things. It will be very important to include the community with communications about what is happening in the school. We are a small community but mighty in our support of our teachers and students.	3/23/2026 2:27 PM
27	Hard working/a lot of graduates stay here to work in the school or agriculture or blue collar jobs/proud of our 3 towns making up Central Lee -each town used to support their own school back in the day	3/23/2026 1:57 PM
28	Community is caring but can be self centered on what helps themselves as well as others. Need someone who can create boundaries and equality. Be caring and considerate of all not just a select few. A lot of older hard working farmers that have lost faith in recent generations work ethic and community mindedness.	3/23/2026 11:41 AM
29	Central Lee Schools serves as the cornerstone of our community. Our community stakeholders are highly supportive of Central Lee Schools and all of our programs, including academics, athletics, music, technology, science fair, alumni, after-school activities, PTO and many others.	3/23/2026 11:31 AM
30	Our community is very family oriented, which provides a basis for acceptance and the feeling of belonging.	3/23/2026 11:09 AM
31	Our community creates kids who are resilient and multifaceted. I think the strengths of Lee county include: work ethic, kindness, and resilience. I hope to see an increased desire for education throughout our young people, as I feel like our older generations have held education highly.	3/23/2026 11:04 AM
32	Laid back but also many involved students and parents	3/23/2026 10:50 AM
33	The district is small enough to have a small town feel, while being big enough to support a variety of sports and activities for students.	3/23/2026 9:53 AM
34	Amazing small town and community pride.	3/23/2026 9:19 AM
35	One of the greatest strengths of our community is that it is deeply rooted in and centered around our strong school system. Central Lee is a place where education truly matters—families intentionally choose to live here because of our district, and that speaks volumes about the value placed on our schools. Our community consistently shows up for our students. On any given Friday night, you'll find people gathered on bleachers or sitting in lawn chairs, cheering on our teams and supporting our activities. That same support extends beyond	3/22/2026 3:24 PM

athletics—there is a genuine sense of pride in all that our students accomplish. What makes our community especially unique is the lasting relationships. Graduates return to visit teachers and coaches because of the meaningful connections they built during their time here. Those relationships are not just part of the experience—they are the foundation of it. Central Lee is a tight-knit, caring, and safe community where people look out for one another. While we may not offer all the amenities of a large metro area, that simplicity brings its own set of blessings—strong relationships, a slower pace, and a high quality of life. At the same time, larger cities are within a reasonable driving distance, offering the best of both worlds. Overall, our community is one that values people, supports its schools, and creates an environment where both students and educators can thrive.

36	Supportive, rural, conservative, safe, active	3/21/2026 12:32 PM
37	Tight knit and look out, care for each other	3/21/2026 10:38 AM
38	Low cost of living, healthcare, recreation areas, proximity to larger cities.	3/21/2026 8:29 AM
39	Community businesses are very supportive of school. Local libraries are doing great things to support the school.	3/21/2026 7:42 AM
40	Very tight nit like family. Always helping others.	3/20/2026 11:55 AM
41	We have a lovely small town feel but are not far from bigger metros.	3/20/2026 8:54 AM
42	It's a great community full of support and understanding for the future generations to come	3/20/2026 8:49 AM
43	Good hard working people. Strong school system	3/20/2026 8:16 AM
44	Close knit community. People care about others.	3/19/2026 8:16 PM
45	Folks know each other here. We are a smaller community and with that comes connection and unity.	3/19/2026 7:34 PM
46	Small, but with big hearts.	3/19/2026 6:28 PM
47	I feel that we have a strong sense of pride in our community, willingness to help each other out, and common understanding of what it takes to keep a small town strong.	3/19/2026 4:33 PM
48	Our community CARES about our school. PK-12 education is a priority to our stakeholders and they step up when needed. You will never find an event at Central Lee where families are invited that isn't well attended. Our families show up, whether it is a music concert, science fair, or sporting event, people care and people come.	3/19/2026 4:25 PM
49	Small quiet community, everyone knows everyone and looks out for each other.	3/19/2026 2:51 PM
50	The community that comprises Central Lee School District is lucky to have such caring individuals who are truly motivated to make our town and community successful and keep it thriving for all ages. You get rural living and hometown feels with access to many larger cities within an hour from here. I love that many people are invested in youth programs, and the community is invested in making improvements like the library and the pool.	3/19/2026 12:31 PM
51	The community and Parents of the students are very supportive of this school. They always want to help in many ways and in any way they can, when they can.	3/19/2026 11:06 AM
52	Our community invests in the school and its programs.	3/19/2026 11:03 AM
53	Close community, Community involvement/support, Slower pace	3/19/2026 10:49 AM
54	Friendly community where everybody knows everybody.	3/19/2026 9:48 AM
55	Its nice and boring the way we like it with good family values. Not alot of city type influences	3/19/2026 9:17 AM
56	People care about it and each other. The school is the cornerstone. It brings everyone together.	3/19/2026 8:58 AM
57	Everyone is ready and willing to lend a hand when the time comes.	3/19/2026 8:54 AM
58	Everyone knows everyone. Cares about the success of their school and community. Local pride.	3/19/2026 8:30 AM
59	Central Lee is a close-knit, supportive community where people value education and take pride in their schools. Residents are friendly and engaged, with many local organizations and	3/19/2026 8:04 AM

	businesses that support students and families. The community offers a safe, welcoming environment and a strong sense of collaboration among families, staff, and local leaders.	
60	It's a safe place to raise children or grow old where community continues to be shared among us - one neighbor helping keep track of another.	3/19/2026 6:57 AM
61	When volunteers are needed our community members stand up. The recent music event proved this when not only parents showed up but also grandparents, friends, and community members showed up to help.	3/19/2026 6:40 AM
62	Small towns, safe place to live, access to numerous locations (within driving distance)	3/19/2026 6:00 AM
63	Peaceful caring communities that come together to support each other and our school district.	3/19/2026 1:17 AM
64	Good wholesome living. Availability for spousal employment. Affordable living.	3/19/2026 1:11 AM
65	It is a community that is generally supportive of a good education and Central Lee's part in that education.	3/18/2026 11:48 PM
66	How family oriented the community is.	3/18/2026 11:21 PM
67	Our community is comprised of three small communities. We need to be careful and not hire someone that shows biases towards one community versus the others. A hire from outside our community would probably serve us better as a whole.	3/18/2026 11:14 PM
68	Our community supports the school and the children. You will always see volunteers when needed. On the flip side of that we expect our administrators to also support the parents and the children. Even those who struggle the most.	3/18/2026 11:04 PM
69	Each of the communities has a group/s working towards the betterment of their community.. Much of this involvemeent is youth oriented.	3/18/2026 10:37 PM
70	Our communities are family oriented, safe and have the culture of small town atmospheres that foster inclusion and neighborhood relationships. People look out for each other without being intrusive.	3/18/2026 10:09 PM
71	██████████ will be gone. He was an ██████████ that spent tax payers money carelessly. I have lost respect for our school system and board because of him.	3/18/2026 9:50 PM
72	Very supportive of the school.	3/18/2026 9:43 PM
73	People are kind and caring	3/18/2026 9:37 PM
74	Small and local feel everyone helps out in the community.	3/18/2026 9:34 PM
75	The community is very involved within the school district, volunteering, donating, allowing children to grow and succeed in their future following graduation.	3/18/2026 9:29 PM
76	The community has high expectations for student academic success and is generally supportive of teachers. It is spread out and represents a large physical footprint	3/18/2026 9:28 PM
77	Our community comes together in support of each other and works together.	3/18/2026 9:08 PM
78	The community is really tight with the money and don't want to waste it on things that aren't needed.	3/18/2026 8:51 PM
79	Our community is small and close-knit, where people know and support each other. Many have lived here their entire lives or have returned to raise their families because it is safe and family-focused. Neighbors look out for one another. You'll see young people helping others and older residents supporting kids in their activities. The community welcomes newcomers with open arms and is eager to see more great families become a part of it.	3/18/2026 8:50 PM
80	Close knit, great community support	3/18/2026 8:47 PM
81	Small, supportive community where everyone wants to see the school / kids succeed.	3/18/2026 8:46 PM
82	The children are the heart of our community. We try to instill a creative environment where each child can find their passion and have support to nurture it. We need our educators to be supported and happy so that they can cultivate an environment that our students want to learn in.	3/18/2026 8:44 PM
83	Great small town vibe. You can be as involved as you want or not at all. No judgement.	3/18/2026 8:39 PM

84	Central Lee is made up of many different towns. We are all able to work together for our children. The community stretches throughout many generations that continue to support our school.	3/18/2026 8:35 PM
85	Our community is passionate about the school and its students' success in academics, athletics, and in the community. We take pride in our little corner of Iowa, trying to put a positive outlook on it and make Lee County a place people want to be a part of.	3/18/2026 8:32 PM
86	Parent involvement	3/18/2026 8:26 PM
87	Nice, family oriented	3/18/2026 8:23 PM
88	Close knit community that supports one another. Education and family focused. Supportive of families or children in need.	3/18/2026 8:22 PM
89	Small town living with larger communities nearby	3/18/2026 8:19 PM
90	Close knit community willing to help out neighbors.	3/18/2026 8:07 PM
91	Small, close knit, involved with the school district, very supportive	3/18/2026 8:05 PM

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

Answered: 94 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Strong educators, kind, lots of choices for our size of school, lots of accolades tied to student achievement, science reputation, academic excellence, safe, afterschool and summer program, positive reputation	3/25/2026 10:36 PM
2	A lot of programming and opportunities for students for a school our size. We have good educators who genuinely care about doing what's best for students.	3/25/2026 9:26 PM
3	The community between staff and family. Smaller towns have the advantage to get to know many people which allows us to help and work together easier.	3/25/2026 7:04 PM
4	Our teachers work really hard for students. Our decisions are, for the most part, student-focused when possible.	3/25/2026 3:27 PM
5	Multiple generations of families have gone to school here. We are located on one campus. Many of our employees have worked here quite a few years. Many of our teachers truly care about the students.	3/25/2026 11:59 AM
6	Many of the teacher try to build empathy with their students.	3/25/2026 11:43 AM
7	Central Lee stands out as a high-achieving district and a school of choice in the area: about one-third of students open-enroll because of its strong reputation. From my perspective as a parent, one of the district's biggest strengths is its willingness to provide higher-level academic opportunities, including AP and honors coursework, and to encourage students to challenge themselves. I have seen this impact through my own children's experiences, particularly in the science research program. Central Lee provides opportunities for students to engage in authentic research and compete at high levels, including state and international competitions. These are the kinds of experiences that truly change students' trajectories and prepare them for competitive college and career paths. Continued support for these advanced academic opportunities is essential because they are a major reason families like mine choose Central Lee. I also appreciate our strong extracurricular programs, including music, academics, and athletics, and the booster support that helps sustain them. When you look at the accomplishments of Central Lee graduates and our Hall of Fame inductees, it becomes clear that this district consistently produces students who go on to succeed. That is not accidental, it comes from a culture that encourages students to aim high.	3/25/2026 8:34 AM
8	Many of our staff are alumni of our school. It is a great place to work and offers lots of opportunities for our staff to contribute to our students' success. We are a very tight group of people.	3/25/2026 8:14 AM
9	We put our students needs first and we are willing to put in extra work. We are a community that helps our school. We stay up with current practices in education. our students have strong morals.	3/24/2026 4:28 PM
10	Advanced in technology or keeping up with the times! Feel like a family! Very family oriented!	3/24/2026 4:25 PM
11	We put our students needs first, and are willing to go the extra mile for any of them. We stay up with the level of learning and are a leadership school.	3/24/2026 4:24 PM
12	We truly feel like a family! Every one will help you out if needed and every student is every teachers students, not just the ones in their classroom!	3/24/2026 4:20 PM
13	Over the past few years, we have had several initiatives focused on teamwork and PLC collaboration. I feel these goals have truly helped us work together to support all students, rather than focusing only on the students in our individual classrooms.	3/24/2026 11:52 AM
14	We offer a strong academic foundation while also providing a variety of extracurricular opportunities, allowing students to explore their interests in athletics, the arts, and other	3/24/2026 11:40 AM

activities. This helps create well-rounded students and keeps engagement high. One of our greatest strengths is the relationships within our schools. Students are known by name, supported as individuals, and encouraged to reach their full potential. There is a strong sense of belonging and school spirit that makes our schools a positive place to learn and grow.

15	Education is top notch!!! Teachers here are always willing to help students anytime and most all are good listeners. Teachers here are looking out for the betterment of our kids and their futures.	3/24/2026 10:05 AM
16	Progressive, great teachers	3/24/2026 9:45 AM
17	We just moved into the CL district this week. I've watched CL grow and thrive for the past 5 years specifically. What I've noticed so far is that CL has a lot of pride and ownership over their schools. We've transferred from a district in Illinois who once was strong and sought-after. Because of lack of leadership, administration, and pride, that district is failing terribly. There are stong expectations at CL and it shows in the results of the students it produces.	3/24/2026 9:01 AM
18	Community networking where our citizens know people across the state and travel the world. A place where students can find their strengths and tackle their limitations. A school where doors are opened and not simply shut before they have a chance to see what's on the other side	3/24/2026 8:55 AM
19	Really prepares the kids for future life outside of Central. Teachers are usually willing to help kids on their level. Very safety conscious	3/24/2026 8:43 AM
20	Great educators. Great school board. Great students. So many local businesses are very generous towards the schools and classrooms. Families are involved. Class sizes are on the smaller end.	3/24/2026 8:12 AM
21	A plurality of the teaching staff are passionate, effective, and care deeply about what they do.	3/24/2026 7:47 AM
22	Student focused for the most part. A variety of extracurricular offerings as the students get older, it's a supportive culture which can continue to grow stronger.	3/24/2026 12:42 AM
23	Our schools are the perfect size -- big enough to offer strong programs yet small enough to feel like every single person matters.	3/23/2026 9:28 PM
24	Top notch facilities and programs, highly dedicated administrators, and strong current financial position.	3/23/2026 3:55 PM
25	The school is very well rounded in many aspects with the SOAR program	3/23/2026 3:21 PM
26	We have excellent teachers and staff. We have a beautiful campus. Administrators that truly care for students education and well being. A community that supports the school district.	3/23/2026 2:27 PM
27	Good community support as well as grandparents & extended family too-small class sizes-staff from bus drivers to cooks & janitors get to Know the students	3/23/2026 1:57 PM
28	Schools are solid for most part and we have some great teachers and staff. Maybe could be more open and inviting to outside communities.	3/23/2026 11:41 AM
29	Central Lee is recognized as an Apple Distinguished District; one of only 17 districts in the United States to receive this designation (as of 2025). The majority of our administrative leadership positions are filled by Central Lee alumni, which reflects the strong commitment of our stakeholders and significantly contributes to our school's success. Our staff has a balanced mix of experience and youthful enthusiasn. Additionally, we receive amazing support from our parents and we have an outstanding, supportive school board.	3/23/2026 11:31 AM
30	The Central Lee School District is set apart from other districts in its ability to provide services as needed. The atmosphere of the school is one of professionalism and also acceptance and welcoming. The amount of services, groups, events, and extracurriculars is sure to provide an interest for anyone.	3/23/2026 11:09 AM
31	Central Lee taught me to be a prepared problem solver. I think that the goal of education is to create discipline and the foundation for students to ask questions and to use critical thinking skills and while I went to school I believe Central Lee did a great job of creating the foundation for a great education. Creating opportunities for students to get out of their comfort zone and try new things was also helpful during my education.	3/23/2026 11:04 AM
32	Community minded	3/23/2026 10:50 AM

33	We have good curriculum and staff who push the students to continually improve.	3/23/2026 9:53 AM
34	We are like a family who strives in school and community involvement. We strive to see all students succeed in many things.	3/23/2026 9:19 AM
35	Central Lee Community School is a place where relationships, purpose, and growth are at the center of everything we do. We are proud of the culture we have built—one where students are known, supported, and challenged, and where staff are deeply committed to both their craft and to each other. One of the greatest strengths of our schools is our focus on developing the whole student. Through structures like LiM/SOAR, leadership opportunities, and a strong emphasis on character, we intentionally teach skills such as responsibility, organization, accountability, and respect. Our goal is not just to prepare students academically, but to prepare them for life. We also have a staff that is highly invested in continuous improvement. Our teachers collaborate, reflect, and work to align instruction with best practices, always with student learning at the forefront. There is a shared understanding that we are part of something bigger than our individual classrooms, and that collective effort is what drives our success. Another defining strength is our student leadership culture. Students at Central Lee are given real opportunities to lead, serve, and make an impact—both within the school and in the community. They take ownership of their growth, their goals, and their contributions, which creates a strong sense of pride and belonging. At Central Lee, we often describe ourselves as grounded in tradition with innovation. We value the traditions that have shaped our identity—strong relationships, community pride, and high expectations—while continuing to grow and adapt to meet the needs of today's students. Above all, Central Lee is a place where people care. Staff care about students, students care about each other, and the community supports the work happening in our schools. That combination creates an environment where both students and educators can truly thrive.	3/22/2026 3:24 PM
36	Small, not involved in politics, communicative, involves parents/families	3/21/2026 12:32 PM
37	positive relationship building between staff and students/families, strive to serve whole student,	3/21/2026 10:38 AM
38	Culture, high academic performance, extracurricular activities, music program, district growth, updated facilities	3/21/2026 8:29 AM
39	High quality teachers are producing high quality students. Teachers work hard and long hours.	3/21/2026 7:42 AM
40	Strong programs to help bring behind students to level they need to be or person who care enough to take their private time to do this.	3/20/2026 11:55 AM
41	The current admin and staff are wonderful and live in and care for the whole community. A lot of them are graduates of Central Lee which says really good things to me as a parent.	3/20/2026 8:54 AM
42	The school is a wonderful place. Filled with team work on both staff and students. It truly is a wonderful place and committed to bettering our children.	3/20/2026 8:49 AM
43	Great school in academics.	3/20/2026 8:16 AM
44	Teachers and students work together to make the school what they want it to be.	3/19/2026 8:16 PM
45	We have supportive staff who are committed to student success both in the classroom and in the world outside of school. Teachers, office staff, administrators, building staff, they all know our kids and strive to do what is best for them on a daily basis. When a staff member sees our kids in public, they acknowledge them and interact with them as people. They support our kids in ways that aren't directly tied to education (i.e. coming to a theater performance in the summer). We have an amazing music department!	3/19/2026 7:34 PM
46	Great fine arts program.	3/19/2026 6:35 PM
47	Caring people. High achieving students. Newer high school facilities. Great staff.	3/19/2026 6:28 PM
48	I feel that our schools have an extremely positive culture. We work for the betterment of, not only our students, but of our community. Decisions are made, not just based on money or politics, but based on our it will affect our staff and community. We take care of each other!	3/19/2026 4:33 PM
49	We have a beautiful campus where the entire district is accessible, elementary, middle school, high school, central office, and bus lot is all right there. Our buildings are always kept up to date with maintenance and I frequently hear comments about the cleanliness and updates to our buildings.	3/19/2026 4:25 PM

50	Small town values, they support whats best for our children regardless what agenda is trying to be pushed.	3/19/2026 2:51 PM
51	Our schools are led by a strong administrative team. Being a part of the team as a teacher and a parent, I feel that we are so lucky. We have staff and administrators who really go above and beyond for all students and for each other. We work so hard to take on new challenges. Currently we are waiting to hear our results on obtaining Leader In Me's lighthouse status! I really love the extracurricular actives that our school offers like STEM Night. In addition, I love that our school is so open to us attending new PD opportunities!	3/19/2026 12:31 PM
52	We are up to date on our technology for the kids and teachers. Which allows the school to stay up to speed with other schools. We have many teachers that care about their students and want to make sure they succeed in school.	3/19/2026 11:06 AM
53	Our district has several programs that are very active in the school community and general community. We constantly have students attending field trips and other events off campus bringing back new experiences.	3/19/2026 11:03 AM
54	Close community, Majority of teachers and staff are wonderful, Strong school pride	3/19/2026 10:49 AM
55	The staff is always looking to improve and help the district grow and thrive as a school and a community.	3/19/2026 9:48 AM
56	Career/college ready students. Diverse curriculum from college classes to construction trade classes.	3/19/2026 9:31 AM
57	Small town country school that has great kids.	3/19/2026 9:17 AM
58	The three schools are all amazing and unique in their own ways. All play integral parts in the growth and development of our students/children.	3/19/2026 8:58 AM
59	There's great teachers that sometimes go above and beyond to help the kids.	3/19/2026 8:54 AM
60	Teachers. Facilities. Multiple options to develop the whole student whether it being in sports, music, sciences, trades.	3/19/2026 8:30 AM
61	The schools in Central Lee have dedicated, caring staff who work hard to meet the needs of every student. There is a strong commitment to academic achievement and student development, with a variety of programs in academics, arts, and athletics. Teachers and administrators foster a supportive and inclusive environment, encouraging both personal growth and community involvement.	3/19/2026 8:04 AM
62	Our schools are filled with teachers who continue to care about developing young minds. It is the minority, only, that seeks to collect a paycheck until state-funded retirement.	3/19/2026 6:57 AM
63	The best evaluation of a school is to walk the halls and see happy children. Happy children learn better. Central lee has this in spades.	3/19/2026 6:40 AM
64	High quality staff and leadership, history of high academic achievement, great facilities	3/19/2026 6:00 AM
65	High standard for education, vision, growth. Awesome music program and a variety of sports opportunities. Great group of students! Awesome teachers, support staff and front staff.	3/19/2026 1:17 AM
66	High quality education. Minimal to no behavioral issues that require escalation.	3/19/2026 1:11 AM
67	CLSD has been a fantastic place to work at for the past couple of years. Administration is supportive and positive, co-workers are caring about the job they do and willing to collaborate, and I've felt welcomed here as an outsider.	3/18/2026 11:48 PM
68	Learning who the families are and knowing them as if they're there own family.	3/18/2026 11:21 PM
69	This school has die-hard loyalty, a higher standard for safety and education. It will procure itself, if the right person is hired. If not it could self-implode	3/18/2026 11:14 PM
70	We have the best principles in all of Iowa. You would have to go a long ways to find some who better relate to kids. We have the most supportive group of parents and community ever. When there is an event there is a huge turn out.	3/18/2026 11:04 PM
71	The schools invite, encourage, expect, and embrace community involvement. Many of those involved are Central Lee Alumni.	3/18/2026 10:37 PM

72	Our CL school is a beacon in this area for culture , inclusivity, leadership and educating all learners. We foster understanding and methods to help students with various learning , physical or trauma based disabilities . We plan to the student's needs.	3/18/2026 10:09 PM
73	Same as above	3/18/2026 9:50 PM
74	Great education and atmosphere for the most part.	3/18/2026 9:43 PM
75	Central lee has a family like culture	3/18/2026 9:37 PM
76	Top quality teachers. Extra curriculum options. Stem and athletics opportunities.	3/18/2026 9:34 PM
77	The many sports and extra curricular activities the students can be involved in. Before and after school programs for working parents.	3/18/2026 9:29 PM
78	Science and math are strong K-12 Students tend to be competitive with each other in a way that keeps grades as a focus High student involvement	3/18/2026 9:28 PM
79	Our school has been known to be fair, equal, student minded, and focused on small class sizes to ensure each student gets the education they deserve.	3/18/2026 9:08 PM
80	We have some caring teachers that are willing to go above and beyond to help the students but there are maybe a handful of those left.	3/18/2026 8:51 PM
81	Our school is welcoming and supportive, with teachers and staff who genuinely care about students. Students take pride in their school and have many opportunities to get involved in a wide range of activities. Central Lee does an excellent job offering opportunities in fine arts, athletics, academics, enrichment, arts, science, community service, leadership, and more. These experiences help students build valuable skills, explore interests, and develop a sense of purpose. Central Lee prepares students for the future by helping them discover their strengths and supporting their growth. Our school feels like a close-knit community where everyone is encouraged to learn, grow, succeed and enjoy their youth. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in students' academic experience, which is invaluable to all.	3/18/2026 8:50 PM
82	Updated facilities . Great music department and Agriculture Department.	3/18/2026 8:47 PM
83	Beautiful facilities, excellent teaching staff, extraordinary principals. Many extra curricular activities available for students.	3/18/2026 8:46 PM
84	We have strong academics and many outlets for arts and sports. We have some of the best teachers in the state.	3/18/2026 8:44 PM
85	The variety of programs offered to the students.	3/18/2026 8:39 PM
86	Our school has a small town vibes. Everyone knows Everyone.	3/18/2026 8:35 PM
87	Our school is a Leader in Me Lighthouse school. We are an Apple school. Our school looks at student development in a holistic approach, shaping young citizens not just test takers. Our facilities are continually improving and becoming top in our area. Our staff, from the janitors to the administration are kind, passionate about kids, and strive to create an effective and purposeful work environment that benefits students, staff, and community.	3/18/2026 8:32 PM
88	Quality of teachers with a wide diversity of age. Good leadership	3/18/2026 8:32 PM
89	Offers a wide curriculum and extracurriculars but in a very safe school	3/18/2026 8:26 PM
90	Nice, family oriented, understanding, helpful	3/18/2026 8:23 PM
91	High expectations and success. Quality educators.	3/18/2026 8:22 PM
92	Great teachers and families make up Central Lee	3/18/2026 8:19 PM
93	High quality staff and a desire for excellence	3/18/2026 8:07 PM
94	High quality staff, good family involvement, high academic performance	3/18/2026 8:05 PM

### 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: 90 Skipped: 8

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Lack of consistency with Principals in how they give consequences and hold students and staff accountable. The middle school does a phenomenal job of communicating and enforcing rules and policies that teach appropriate boundaries of mutual respect They are firm but it's clear and communicated consistently and fairly regardless of your last name. Abrupt transitions for students to high school because they have no boundaries and they don't give any consequences to students. There is a level of unprofessionalism in how adults, teachers and students are communicated and interacted with by the [REDACTED] Unfortunately [REDACTED] is polarized from other Principals in the district and it makes the district look inconsistent and disjointed. There is a lack of consistency in how the high school gives grades. It's vastly different from the high school. This is hard on students. Unfortunately the volleyball program continues to be at the center of conflict in the athletic department and amongst student athletes and families. There is a strong perception in the community that the [REDACTED] is protected because it is the [REDACTED] and she has a social connection to [REDACTED] Dishonesty, lack of technical knowledge and unprofessionalism are themes of many conversations in the public. This conflict is a recurring scenario year in and year out. Doesn't align with strong reputations and standards of other programs and areas.	3/25/2026 10:36 PM
2	It is important that they are aware of several ongoing concerns regarding leadership at the high school level that are impacting staff trust, student accountability, and overall school culture. There is a growing perception among staff and stakeholders that leadership practices are inconsistent and, at times, influenced by favoritism and personal relationships. Concerns have been raised about potential conflicts of interest, including situations that may reflect nepotism, particularly where decision-making involves family members or close associates. Additionally, there are patterns of micromanagement coupled with limited transparency. In some cases, information and situations appear to be controlled or withheld in ways that prevent issues from being addressed openly and effectively. This has contributed to a lack of trust and clarity among staff. Of particular concern is the inconsistency in applying student discipline and upholding established expectations. There is a belief that consequences are not always enforced, which undermines both student accountability and staff confidence in leadership decisions. Similarly, there are concerns regarding the handling of athletic code of conduct violations and coaching-related issues. We have had very poor leadership in this role for many years which has resulted in a very poor reputation for competitive teams. The standards of excellence that we find in academics through strong leadership in the curriculum and instructional area are clearly evident in our district. Established roles and responsibilities, particularly those of the Activities Director, do not appear to be consistently honored, especially in situations involving individuals with personal connections to administration. Collectively, these issues have contributed to increased tension, diminished morale, and ongoing conflict within the building. Addressing these concerns with transparency, consistency, and adherence to policy will be critical in restoring trust and ensuring a positive and equitable environment for students and staff. Our Athletics department needs an intentional effort to recruit, retain and provide support and training necessary to have successful programs.	3/25/2026 9:26 PM
3	Sometimes it feels that discipline isn't consistent and even though things can be situational, it needs to be something we make sure to do evenly among the students and hold them accountable for things.	3/25/2026 7:04 PM
4	We have a space issue at the K-8 building and a large class size issue at the middle school. Because the middle school shares staff with both the high school and elementary, it really handcuffs efforts to offer more sections of cores and ways to be creative with our schedule.	3/25/2026 3:27 PM
5	It's easy to know other people's business, since we are small.	3/25/2026 11:59 AM
6	The school promotes favoritism. Numbers are absolutely skewed so that the school looks good. High School students are not prepared for college. They have no study skills. Just	3/25/2026 11:43 AM

because students pass their grade doesn't mean they actually passed. Many get D's and still can play sports and are considered passing. The brightest Graduates cannot handle college if they love out of state because the school never adequately prepared them for education outside of Central Lee, which is not as great as they act. They are very behind on a real world level. Compared to local schools they are just local average. Many workers at the school look down on students if the adult doesn't like that student's parents. All students test their skills in September. However, if they test below a grade level, their course work is set to that grade. Example, a third grade student may test at a late 1st grade level. So the curriculum director has them do all their already work set for 1st grade work. Obviously, at the very beginning of the school year the student will be a little rusty so by starting them at their behind grade level, the student will naturally progress. That data "proves" the school has such a wonderful system where all students thrive and excel and grow. No, that 3rd grader grew from 1st grade work to maybe 2nd grade work by the end of their 3rd grade. How is this allowed?! The school trying to make their numbers look good is educationally handicapping and limiting true educational growth. There also needs to be an advanced program for gifted kids starting in elementary. Other states allow gifted students to thrive. At Central Lee, most gifted students end up in trouble with boredom. Again, Central Lee is stifling real growth and robbing their students of their potential. It is a crime what they are doing.

7	Central Lee is a district with a culture of high expectations. We are proud of what has been built, but we also expect continued progress. There is an understanding here that standing still means falling behind, especially as educational opportunities continue to evolve. I believe it is important for the next superintendent to understand that this is not a community looking to simply maintain what already exists. Families here value innovation, expanded opportunities for students, continued academic rigor, and improvements to facilities that reflect the quality of the programs inside them. We want leadership that understands Central Lee's identity is tied to achievement and forward momentum.	3/25/2026 8:34 AM
8	Money needs to be spent on needs that benefit our students directly FIRST! We are limited on space in the elementary and middle school and need to consider how to solve that problem. There are still lots of facility updates that need completed to support learning and the staff. Staffing needs to be addressed also, we spend a lot of money on our administration and need to start focusing on recruitment of quality teachers and associates by possibly offering more money to them as well as rewarding our seasoned staff for their dedication and hard work. Are there ways for us to cut back? For example, curriculum director, SpEd director is her job absolutely necessary and can those responsibilities be absorbed by another position rather than paying such a huge salary to a person who does not contribute much to our staff and the culture of our school? Same can be said for other positions, I think a true audit of what the administration does needs to be done to address whether those positions are truly benefiting our students. Our new superintendent needs to be present and personable, making his/her presence known in our buildings. Our principals also need to be held to very high standards. Getting a feel of the staff on the attitude and culture of the buildings is important. Finding out what problems are occurring in each building is important, so the new superintendent needs to touch base with staff on a regular basis to address any issues that may be happening.	3/25/2026 8:14 AM
9	Very sports focused school. We are cliquish and people's last names seem to matter :( Most everyone at the school are alumni or family members are, so generational problems exist. Lack of room for classrooms and room for associates to work with children. Not enough support staff in some rooms- need to make associate jobs marketable... better pay and benefits so people actually want the job. We need to fix our current building- water fountains, and concrete on the playground.	3/24/2026 4:28 PM
10	Lack of classroom space Very sports related Sometimes Cliquish	3/24/2026 4:25 PM
11	Most of school staff is central lee alumni, and sometimes seems the outsiders can have a hard time getting in. Sports are sometimes held too high of a priority. We do not have enough classroom space for the students we have in classrooms or for those who need to take a time out somewhere.	3/24/2026 4:24 PM
12	I feel that we are experiencing a sub and associate shortage.	3/24/2026 4:20 PM
13	At times, it has felt like the elementary level has not received the same level of focus, support, or communication. With the increase in behavior concerns, it would be helpful to have more consistent feedback and guidance to ensure we are using the most effective approaches to support students.	3/24/2026 11:52 AM
14	Supporting and retaining high-quality staff is also a key focus. This includes not only teachers,	3/24/2026 11:40 AM

but also coaches and activity sponsors who play a vital role in building relationships with students and contributing to school culture. Ensuring that staff feel valued, supported, and heard will be essential to maintaining a positive and successful environment.

15	Consistency is lacking on all levels. We need to start hiring teachers from outside this area in order to get some new ideas. I feel we are somewhat stagnant when we continue to hire past students as educators. They come in seeing things as they have always been and not changing.	3/24/2026 10:05 AM
16	Being new, I am unaware of issues.	3/24/2026 9:01 AM
17	Be prepared to spend more time at school, band trips, sporting events, choir performances and science fairs. Be prepared to enjoy the simple life in multiple small communities and give each community an opportunity to be recognized and celebrated.	3/24/2026 8:55 AM
18	A lot of people set in a mindset of "this is how we've always done it"	3/24/2026 8:43 AM
19	Space. Our district is growing and an expansion will still likely be needed in the near future. As a premiere district, it is important we keep class sizes small to ensure we still provide the best education in the area - this can mean adding educators, space, and support staff.	3/24/2026 8:12 AM
20	Central Lee disproportionately focuses on sports and extracurriculars over academics. This is a school, and as such, academics come first. We have lost sight of why we are here, and that is something that should be restored.	3/24/2026 7:47 AM
21	It is a commute to most shopping. Locally, within 20 minutes of the school, you can get basics. The farm stores offer more than you might guess.	3/24/2026 12:42 AM
22	While we've had some major facility improvements in recent years, our facilities still pose some problems that need to be dealt with.	3/23/2026 9:28 PM
23	Scheduling conflicts due to sharing teachers between each building. Lack of space in the middle school. Inconsistent electives in afternoon. Teachers teaching between grade levels causes scheduling conflicts. Lack of title resources in the middle school create extra work for Core teachers.	3/23/2026 5:31 PM
24	The current financial position is earned not guaranteed with the expectation of growth without tax increases, enrollment is a daily competition, participation in activities/athletics is lacking and must be viewed and promoted as strategic assets, community members are passionate and engaged where visibility matters, staff morale and accountability.	3/23/2026 3:55 PM
25	The teachers and staff never get a say over 1 specific person in the high school building.	3/23/2026 3:21 PM
26	Growth in the district and space.	3/23/2026 2:27 PM
27	We've been know to hire a lot of alumni for all positions-in one way I understand the reason but we've also had people come from outside the district & they usually don't stay long because they didn't grow up here-that needs to change -we need families to stay & bring their ideas & talents	3/23/2026 1:57 PM
28	Feeling that past position abused their power. Create an environment that we need to keep up with bigger schools how we look on exterior and focus on making it a stepping stone to move on to increase cost elsewhere.	3/23/2026 11:41 AM
29	Expectations to maintain our current upward trend will be high. It's challenging to lead a high-performing team smoothly, uninterrupted, and in an upward trend. Stepping in to a positive culture and maintaining strong momentum while building trust is the mark of an effective leader.	3/23/2026 11:31 AM
30	I would say issues coming into the district would be normal in that the new superintendent would be establishing new relationships with the staff, board members, parents, and community. I believe the new candidate will be provided with a solid foundation coming in and will have no problem with fitting in and earning trust.	3/23/2026 11:09 AM
31	The lack of economic infrastructure in this area is an unfortunate critical demise of student's home lives which ultimately effects their school behavior and ambition. I think the next superintendent needs to have an idea and attitude that we are fixing things for generations to come. This is going to be a slow process, but Central Lee does have a lot of great community support and has the potential to change the lives of its students.	3/23/2026 11:04 AM

32	Not a lot of diversity. Small town attitudes. Most Everyone is related.	3/23/2026 10:50 AM
33	Would love to see the new superintendent as actively involved in making a presence in each building as much as possible. I love that about our current superintendent.	3/23/2026 9:19 AM
34	One important area a new superintendent should be aware of is the strong foundation of transparency and relationships with the Central Lee Education Association. Our district has built a culture where open communication is valued—questions are encouraged, answers are provided, and roles are respected. This approach has led to collaborative problem-solving and outcomes that are mutually beneficial for both the district and staff. Maintaining this level of trust and transparency will be essential moving forward. Another consideration is the reality of enrollment fluctuations, which are largely outside of our control. Because of this, the district must remain proactive, thoughtful, and strategic in decision-making. Being forward-thinking and adaptable will be key to sustaining programs and opportunities for students. Finally, the strength of our district is rooted in the administrative team's commitment to trust, teamwork, and transparency. Decisions have historically been made collaboratively, with input valued at all levels. Preserving this team-oriented approach will be critical to continued success. Overall, a new superintendent should understand that Central Lee operates best in a culture built on relationships, open communication, and shared leadership—and that maintaining those elements is vital to the district's continued growth and stability.	3/22/2026 3:24 PM
35	Need for transparency, keep politics out of school, involve parents, communicate with parents, no agendas	3/21/2026 12:32 PM
36	disciplinary actions streamlined between all buildings/principals; more staff for our Special Education department	3/21/2026 10:38 AM
37	The candidate should practice fiscal responsibility and strive to curb spending to stretch taxpayer dollars.	3/21/2026 10:12 AM
38	Socioeconomic factors of the student population, growing resistance and frustration with increasing property taxes to fund district projects.	3/21/2026 8:29 AM
39	Rural travel, all types of weather.	3/21/2026 7:42 AM
40	Need for better use of education time. Less assemblies etc. Better volume control and behavior control in common areas.	3/20/2026 8:26 PM
41	To foster the needs of all students not just the ones with no handicap or educational deficiency. Willing to go above and beyond to help whoever may need it, within reason of course.	3/20/2026 11:55 AM
42	My only issue was at the beginning of the year it didn't seem like the school thought about new incoming families. There was a lack of communication about certain things when it came to beginning of the year events. I talked with the building principal and [REDACTED] definitely listened and took what I said into consideration.	3/20/2026 8:54 AM
43	Bullying is a big issue with this school. I would hope that the candidate chosen would take these matters seriously and be beneficial to the mental safety of the children	3/20/2026 8:49 AM
44	Our athletic teams peak in Middle School. It's a system issue.	3/20/2026 8:16 AM
45	Don't mess up a good thing. The principals do a great job of working with the staff and students.	3/19/2026 8:16 PM
46	Because its a community with a small town vibe, there can be issues with in-crowds and bullying, especially if a child is part of any minority population. That's true in many places but small town Iowa tends to lean toward the less diverse side of things and kids who don't fit that mold aren't always treated with kindness by other kids.	3/19/2026 7:34 PM
47	Our district could use a break on the property taxes. We have had enough expansion for a while.	3/19/2026 6:35 PM
48	I am unaware of any issues.	3/19/2026 6:28 PM
49	Strong negotiating committee; strong teacher leadership committees	3/19/2026 4:33 PM
50	We are in need of more classroom space. Our student population has greatly increased in the last five years and in the PK-8 building we are running out of room. It creates a challenge as	3/19/2026 4:25 PM

	lower elementary numbers are not as high however grades 3-7 are significantly higher than usual.	
51	While it is not as bad as some schools there is some bullying that goes on, it only gets delt with if the parents get involved. Another big issue is the school is holding back gifted children and not nurturing their gifts. Also the way it is currently staffed, they are unable/unqualified to fulfill the existing IEP's or the 504 plans that are established. This is a big issue as again, the children are not getting the support they need.	3/19/2026 2:51 PM
52	I am unaware of any specific issues; however, I think it is very important to understand the demographics of the people and the community. I think people (myself included) truly love the current superintendent's transparency through newsletters and social media.	3/19/2026 12:31 PM
53	I do believe there is a bullying issue at this school that is not being taken seriously. A lot of kids have stressed this to me, that they don't report it to anyone because they have seen that the kids that have reported the bullying end up being the ones that get into serious trouble such as suspension. While the one causing the issue gets away with it and gets nothing. So why would you report being bullied. I know I wouldn't. What needs to be done is that someone needs to find the root cause of why the kid being bullied might be retaliating back to the one bullying them.	3/19/2026 11:06 AM
54	Our district is growing. The new superintendent will need to have a plan to continue our growth and a plan to continue our facility needs.	3/19/2026 11:03 AM
55	Our school is busting at the seams, we need goals on building upgrades/improvements for elementary/middle schools; Parking lot - need more parking and help with layout of entry and exit to schools very congested; Better process for Load & Go before and after school; Set up of outside sport facilities - not very conducive for emergency services (ambulance) to get to athletes especially onto the football field; Curriculum offering - look into ASL or something additional to Spanish, more options for non FFA/Ag students	3/19/2026 10:49 AM
56	People try to stretch the rules and policies to better the work place and their area of work but sometimes need to be reminded of the rules and regulations. This is not a bad thing but the new superintendent needs to be firm but fair while allowing growth.	3/19/2026 9:48 AM
57	Families with names flexing to change how things are operated.	3/19/2026 9:31 AM
58	Keeping the city riff raff in the cities. There is no place for it here. Kids here are here to learn not start gangs	3/19/2026 9:17 AM
59	To be able to sustain growth and success, as well as increase both into the future.	3/19/2026 8:58 AM
60	There's bullies in every school	3/19/2026 8:54 AM
61	Parking can be a problem with large events. Some of our sports programs are just average with coaching issues that continued to be swept under the rug causing a decline in attendance in some programs. I've been told other schools do not like to play football and soccer because the field is not level and has lots of dips so players do not feel safe playing on the field.	3/19/2026 8:30 AM
62	The new superintendent should be aware of challenges related to staffing and retaining teachers, balancing budgets while maintaining quality programs, and addressing diverse student needs. Community expectations are high, so communication and transparency will be important. Additionally, there is an ongoing need to adapt curriculum and resources to meet evolving educational standards and technological advancements.	3/19/2026 8:04 AM
63	There is a common belief that family connections preserve the jobs of coaches and teachers who would otherwise be punished or fired for their behavior toward students and it prevents many families from encouraging their children's participation in sports or backing their children's teachers' rules and discipline.	3/19/2026 6:57 AM
64	Being open minded about best practices for student progress has always been imperative. Country wide results of measured achievement are being linked to technology learning and showing that we may need to find a better balance between screens and pen and paper learning. How have you kept up with this research?	3/19/2026 6:40 AM
65	Managing expectations, funding issues from history of low SSA	3/19/2026 6:00 AM
66	Very cliquy and a lot of selfish maneuvering for sports in efforts of "my child" vs team development. I'll pat your back if you pat mine. Inconsistent standards amongst teachers and	3/19/2026 1:11 AM

	coaches dependent upon if they are alumni. An unequal emphasis on girls sports vs boys.	
67	As someone coming into the district, I think its positive culture and willingness to improve have been impressive to me. I would want a superintendent who, while willing to bring their own skills and talents to the role, would be willing to maintain our district culture and focus.	3/18/2026 11:48 PM
68	Na	3/18/2026 11:21 PM
69	Hiring the right candidate for this position is very crucial. There are potential applicants [REDACTED] that would be detrimental to our community. The hiring committee should know this, her type of biases are what the committee and the next superintendent need to be aware of. We need equality in the school, not someone or a group with certain last names.	3/18/2026 11:14 PM
70	As a community member we feel like we are already taxed to the max. It might be hard to get people to agree to things that are going to raise our taxes even more. Sometimes the money just isn't there for families.	3/18/2026 11:04 PM
71	I hope we can all continue to work together towards improving our schools and doing the best we can to educate our youth.	3/18/2026 10:37 PM
72	I believe with open enrollment , we don't always get the "best" students and I'm sure that sometimes causes some acute adjustments . However, I've seen time and time again where those students end up doing much better at CL because the culture is welcoming and problem solving.	3/18/2026 10:09 PM
73	People actually matter. So do staff. Treating people like humans even when you disagree with them goes a long way to building quality relationships.	3/18/2026 9:50 PM
74	High taxes. Need to represent all employees of the school just not teachers and administrators.	3/18/2026 9:43 PM
75	The politics of people coaching for the advancement of their children and grandchildren. They aren't teaching team work	3/18/2026 9:37 PM
76	There is a general feeling that teachers only have a say for what occurs in their classroom and their voice is not heard for building or district concerns. Example, I have not received this survey as an opportunity through my school email, only happened to see it on social media.	3/18/2026 9:28 PM
77	Currently there are certain individuals within the district that are using their status within the school to push for or meddle in things that will benefit a small group of individuals and not the entire school. The lunch program has transformed from "home cooked" meals to budget friendly meals on repeat. Things the kids are being fed at home regularly instead of giving them better, nutritious meals that they may not be getting at home. Our athletic teams are growing tremendously which is great but they are so big at the middle school level all of the kids aren't benefiting because they are sitting the bench since we don't have A and B teams anymore.	3/18/2026 9:08 PM
78	It seems like with sports its all about the last name game and how much money the parents can donate. The education/ behavior issues some are taken care of but alot are just pushed under a rug. There are alot of general education teachers that dont take that extra step to help the kids ( especially IEP students) to understand the assignments or assessments.	3/18/2026 8:51 PM
79	None.	3/18/2026 8:50 PM
80	We are very rural. Our students participate in everything from showchoir to FFA to soccer.	3/18/2026 8:47 PM
81	We need to expand our classrooms to fit the open enrollment numbers, and, we need to make sure that we aren't flooding schools with too many open enrollment students where our own students are lost and our values are watered down.	3/18/2026 8:44 PM
82	Problematic students (students that repeatedly cause problems) are not disciplined or held accountable to the extent that they should be. Also some kids are allowed to graduate and receive their diplomas without meeting state standards.	3/18/2026 8:39 PM
83	Being a new parent to the school district I'm not sure what issues there are at this time.	3/18/2026 8:35 PM
84	We are on the cusp of either becoming a 3A school, or declining/plateauing enrollment. We are potentially changing athletic conferences for various reasons. Some of our staff feel like we do too many "checklists" and unneeded extras, and some are meaningful and warrant incorporating because they are good for students and keep staff effective.	3/18/2026 8:32 PM

85	Sports can take precedence over education at times. Lack of discipline at time. Vape issues,	3/18/2026 8:32 PM
86	Bullying and hazing among boys in high school	3/18/2026 8:26 PM
87	Some families lack input for their students, help foster a growth mindset	3/18/2026 8:23 PM
88	Capping open enrollment and limiting class sizes. Continuing educational success and expanding upon that success.	3/18/2026 8:22 PM
89	That we need to continue to move forward with the progress we have achieved under [REDACTED]	3/18/2026 8:07 PM
90	Large open enrollment, class size, building expansion	3/18/2026 8:05 PM

## 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: 98 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Authenticity, systems thinker, progressive,	3/25/2026 10:36 PM
2	Strong character and integrity, unbiased lens, not easily manipulated, visible	3/25/2026 9:26 PM
3	Be approachable, be thinking about the future for the district, and also making sure to understand that we want to make things better but to be aware that tax payers dollars need to be handled appropriately.	3/25/2026 7:04 PM
4	They need to be visible, approachable, student-focused, compassionate, willing to bring in fresh ideas, and able to have a systems approach, not just a buildings approach. Our principals are not on the same page sometimes, and sometimes go rogue. That is difficult for shared staff and for parents with students in more than one building. There needs to be consistent accountability across the district for students, staff and administration.	3/25/2026 3:27 PM
5	Approachable, humble. Also, someone who respects the values of our community	3/25/2026 11:59 AM
6	Please dont be a graduate of central lee. We dont need more nepotism or cronyism. The students need to be treated with respect and their potential needs to be fed. We need a super who will fight for these kids, not just popularity.	3/25/2026 11:43 AM
7	I believe the next superintendent needs to be a visionary leader who is motivated by progress and continuous improvement. This is not a district where someone should come to simply manage day-to-day operations or coast into retirement. Our next superintendent should look for ways to expand opportunities, strengthen facilities, and support high-achieving academic programs like our science research initiatives. Their goal should be to continue to raise the bar for what students can accomplish. I also strongly believe the superintendent should be highly engaged at the state and national level. This will ensure our district stays informed about legislation, innovation, and best practices in education. Encouraging staff to be involved in these conversations is equally important so Central Lee can continue to be proactive rather than reactive. Most importantly, I believe we need a leader who understands that Central Lee succeeds because it refuses to become complacent. We want someone who embraces the idea that there is always another opportunity to create, another program to strengthen, and another way to better prepare students for their futures. That mindset is what attracted my family to Central Lee, and it is what will keep families like mine here.	3/25/2026 8:34 AM
8	VERY PERSONABLE! We want to SEE the new superintendent, it's important for staff and students to know who are leader is and to see him/her interacting with our staff, students, and public.	3/25/2026 8:14 AM
9	For a superintendent in the Central Lee Community School District, success depends on being a visible, relationship-focused leader who understands the needs of a small rural community. Strong communication and trust-building with staff, families, and the school board are essential, along with the ability to manage limited resources responsibly. The superintendent should prioritize instructional leadership to support student achievement, while also being adaptable and responsive to community expectations. A clear vision, knowledge of school law and policy, and a commitment to meeting the diverse needs of all students help ensure the district continues to thrive.	3/24/2026 4:28 PM
10	Friendly Great listener Great communication People person	3/24/2026 4:25 PM
11	They need to be a team player, and be willing to be in the mix with the school as a whole. Communication is a huge part of the job, so everyone is aware of all things needed. They should be companionate to our small minded community and our kiddos.	3/24/2026 4:24 PM

12	I feel that the superintendent should always be working to better our school as a whole, while still supporting the individual needs of the staff members. They should take all ideas into consideration when making a decisions that effect the school and involve staff in these conversations.	3/24/2026 4:20 PM
13	Strong Communicator Supportive of teachers and staff Consistent and fair Approachable	3/24/2026 11:52 AM
14	Strong leadership in supporting and retaining staff is critical. This includes valuing teachers, coaches, and all employees, providing encouragement, and creating an environment where staff feel respected and supported.	3/24/2026 11:40 AM
15	The number one thing for the new Superintendent is TO BE PRESENT!!! Not just during school hours, be at community and after school activities. This let's the community and students know they are invested. This is where he/she will hear what is going on. Have an open door policy for staff and parents. Communication is key and to be a good listener. Let's start focusing on the kids we have here instead of continuously opening up enrollment. Our kids in this community deserve to be taught here first and foremost. If we continue open enroll our sports classes will increase and we can't even compete in the classes we are in now.	3/24/2026 10:05 AM
16	Listener, involved in the community (visible). Financially wise, understand the political arena: and how it impacts rural schools.	3/24/2026 9:45 AM
17	Leadership is key. Great leaders produce happy teachers who produce successful happy kids. I think it is highly important that the leader lives in the district, raises their family in the district, and has just as much if not more pride than everyone else. It's not just a job to them, it's their home too.	3/24/2026 9:01 AM
18	Be willing to tackle any issues. Covid was a prime example where Central Lee created pods where students were spread over multiple communities Jin churches and public buildings. A time where our kids brought life into these communities daily. The ability to inspire kids to learn and discover that science fair offers more than understanding their research by developing a multitude of other skills. Where athletes discover their physical abilities and develop team unity. Where band is more than just playing a few notes but creating incredible music and harmony together.	3/24/2026 8:55 AM
19	Love for kids Listens to the community	3/24/2026 8:43 AM
20	Knowledgeable about school law and processes. Good management structure and style. Personable as its a small district and everyone knows one another. Good presence and character in community.	3/24/2026 8:12 AM
21	Fiscal responsibility. Be conservative and careful with all financial expenditures. Prioritize learning. Any candidate will pay lip service to this, but actually putting learning ahead of sports is paramount.	3/24/2026 7:47 AM
22	Traditional with strong values. Avoids social drama and adheres to academics rather than special interest.	3/24/2026 12:42 AM
23	The new superintendent must be community-minded, forward thinking, and able to balance the complex needs of all three buildings. He or she will not get stuck in tradition. This person will build strong, trusting relationships with the board, parents, staff, and union. They'll have the integrity to follow through with commitments and the professionalism to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Mostly, this person will be approachable and available, and they'll lead with empathy and accountability.	3/23/2026 9:28 PM
24	communication support for ALL extracurricular activities listens to ALL voices considers the many teachers paying for daycare when decisions are made about schedules and extra meetings	3/23/2026 5:31 PM
25	Financial stewardship without tax burden, empowering leadership not command and control, enrollment growth mindset, commitment to activities and athletics, student outcomes and lifelong learning, and culture and identity that embraces and promotes "Proud to be Central Lee"	3/23/2026 3:55 PM
26	A non graduate of the school so they don't know many people and someone that is good a wants the sports to be good and also just someone who isn't there to get money they want to make the school better and also keep what the school already has going good.	3/23/2026 3:21 PM
27	It would be great to hire outside of the district. We have excellent administrators that are all CL	3/23/2026 2:27 PM

	graduates. It would be great to see someone come in with an outside perspective and freedom of bias.	
28	I would prefer a person from outside our district and not an alumni for the same reason-new ideas -perspectives-doesn't know anyone or have any history here -fresh eyes	3/23/2026 1:57 PM
29	Be a real genuine person that is honest and can be relatable. Excels at communicating with public. A person that can bring people together and not worry about hurting feelings if need to hold others accountable. Someone who is just, fair and consistent with rules so boundaries are clear. Realize that being kind and acting with grace can be recognized as a good leader.	3/23/2026 11:41 AM
30	Specifically - Our new Superintendent should have experience supporting an Apple 1 to 1 technology environment. Emphasis on Technology education, professional development and an understanding of the need for a sound technology infrastructure is paramount for success. Generally, our next leader should have integrity, be trustworthy, committed, honest, positive, involved, active, communicative and must take time to get to know and encourage the students and staff.	3/23/2026 11:31 AM
31	Obviously, the new candidate should be professionally skilled in all aspects of how financials work for a district. I believe the individual should possess communication skills that are both professional and welcoming. Leadership skills that can be respected by the employees and community members both. The candidate should definitely be approachable. The superintendent is the face and voice of the district and this position is honorable. I wish you best in your selection process.	3/23/2026 11:09 AM
32	I think similarly to the students, this candidate needs to have resilience and critical thinking skills. This position is going to take someone who can think outside of the box yet still be able to create a strong connection with the community and students. I truly hope whoever you choose isn't just applying for this to be a resume builder but in fact to truly make a difference for the next generation. Someone who is young and ambitious. Also someone who is not afraid to challenge the status quo, I think everyone in this community is fed up with the same group of people holding the power and everyone needs to work together to try new opportunities and ideas to better EVERYONE in this school district, not just the families with money or the kids who excel in sports, but everyone. Community schools are where the future is built and created, and we need to make sure the next superintendent can relate, create opportunities, and take on the true responsibility in their heart to better all kids in this community, not just add to their resume.	3/23/2026 11:04 AM
33	Open minded, good speaking skills, fair, respectful to parents and kids. Not from the community but like community.	3/23/2026 10:50 AM
34	Good leadership and consistency, but also understanding and promotes a good work/life balance for staff and students.	3/23/2026 9:53 AM
35	Involved, Informed of our district and communities, A strategic leader with strong communication skills.	3/23/2026 9:19 AM
36	Over the past 18 years serving on the administrative team under two superintendents, I have seen Central Lee Community School District thrive because of three foundational elements: trust, team, and transparency. As a [REDACTED] for six years at the elementary level and the past twelve years at the high school, I have highly succeeded in my role because of being trusted as a leader. That trust has been demonstrated through active listening, seeking input, and respecting my professional judgment both inside and outside of the school setting. When leaders feel trusted, they lead better—and that directly impacts students. Transparency has also been critical. Both superintendents made a consistent effort to share the inner workings of the district with the administrative team. This openness builds credibility and strengthens collective ownership. Nearly every major initiative was discussed and developed collaboratively at the administrative table, reinforcing a true team approach to leadership. A successful superintendent at Central Lee must continue to foster this culture—ensuring that principals and staff feel seen, heard, valued, and trusted. When that happens, people give their best to students and to the system. In addition, strong knowledge of school finance and operations is essential. Both previous superintendents demonstrated a high level of competence in these areas, which provided stability and allowed the district to grow strategically. Equally important are interpersonal skills and a servant leadership mindset. The most effective leaders here have been personable, approachable, and grounded in the belief that leadership is about lifting others up—not exerting authority. At Central Lee, leadership is most impactful when the superintendent is willing to put others on their shoulders and help	3/22/2026 3:24 PM

them succeed. We often describe Central Lee as a district grounded in tradition with innovation. A new superintendent must understand and respect the traditions that have made us successful—educating the whole child, prioritizing relationships, and empowering staff with autonomy—while also guiding us forward. Our staff is made up of passionate educators who care deeply about students and their work. They respond best to a leader who: \* Listens to understand \* Takes time to learn the system and its people \* Prioritizes relationships and people whenever possible \* Celebrates both large and small successes \* Leads with integrity and avoids double standards Ultimately, Central Lee will continue to thrive under a superintendent who builds trust, leads collaboratively, values people, and models servant leadership in both words and actions.

37	Conservative, willing to not expand classrooms, transparency, communicative, unbiased, put students first	3/21/2026 12:32 PM
38	willingness to listen to staff, students, community; forward thinking/growth mind set; lead by doing	3/21/2026 10:38 AM
39	Someone with good communication skills and one who honors and exemplifies traditional values.	3/21/2026 10:12 AM
40	Financial responsibility, transparency, receptive to feedback, promoting inclusion, ensuring educators are retained, hired, and promoted based on performance and not nepotism, proactive leadership, invested in the growth and professional development of employees, invested in the growth of students, sustaining high performance in the district.	3/21/2026 8:29 AM
41	Easy to communicate with, personable, friendly, good business head, promote the arts just as much as sports.	3/21/2026 7:42 AM
42	Ability to fairly assess situations without biased.	3/20/2026 8:26 PM
43	Obviously the proper education requirements. The patience to hear everyone out that comes their way. To make sure all the proper programs are in place for students of all kinds.	3/20/2026 11:55 AM
44	I would like to see a candidate who has experience but also has fresh ideas and will change with times. It's good to draw from the past but not to live there! I would like to see more direct involvement from the superintendent. Building admin are always in the schools and we know them, would be nice to see that from higher up too.	3/20/2026 8:54 AM
45	Be flexible and be present. Engage with the student body so they feel seen and heard.	3/20/2026 8:49 AM
46	Somone that is motivated and active. I don't want a "sit on your [REDACTED]" Super	3/20/2026 8:16 AM
47	Open to ideas.	3/19/2026 8:16 PM
48	Communication, honesty, transparency, open minded and willing to see people as they are and be respectful of their identities (this is especially important when working within the frames of gender identity, race, culture, religion, etc)	3/19/2026 7:34 PM
49	Personable and doesn't speak out of both sides of their mouth.	3/19/2026 6:35 PM
50	Needs to listen to staff and principals, not dictate from on high.	3/19/2026 6:28 PM
51	Be willing to support the culture and staff we have to continue pride in our school	3/19/2026 4:33 PM
52	Strong vision, advocate for students and teachers, understanding of the rich history Central Lee has in academics and community and be willing to be a part of that, not change (all of) the current structures. Deep understanding of school finance. Ability to take Central Lee even further.	3/19/2026 4:25 PM
53	They would need to have the skills to navigate small town politics to be able to bring in fresh ideas while still knowing what the community wants and not over reaching.	3/19/2026 2:51 PM
54	I think that characteristics and qualities that are very important are to be transparent and to be a leader who listens. Things that really mean a lot to me as a teacher is that [REDACTED] would do walk throughs and observe classroom lessons and converse with the students. I also know from a parent stand point that [REDACTED] was never too busy to stop and talk to students and my own children. They would see him in the parade for homecoming, at sporting events, and even on the playground from time to time. Having a superintendent that knows the staff needs and the student's needs really is what makes Central Lee so wonderful, and is so important to our small school community and it really promotes buy in and respect.	3/19/2026 12:31 PM

55	A great listener of the parents and the students. Don't just put a lable on a kid just because of what you might of heard or read about them. Make your own decision about the student. Get to know them yourself.	3/19/2026 11:06 AM
56	The ability to take feedback, suggestions and look at all perspectives. Our district has strength in multiple disciplines and the new superintendent will need the ability to help each continue to grow.	3/19/2026 11:03 AM
57	Strategic planner - curriculum offered, building/parking/safety improvements, Focus for ALL students (not just students in sports, music), Integrity, Trustworthiness, Effect Communication, Try to bring in some diversity - very alumni heavy which is fine but might be best for a fresh/outside perspective	3/19/2026 10:49 AM
58	They need to allow the staff to be themselves, to allow growth but also keep them in check. Not micro manage. They should be present in the district so the kids and community know who they are. They need to keep us in a strong financial position so we can keep growing as a school.	3/19/2026 9:48 AM
59	Integrity even when it's an unpopular decision. Community involvement, fairness and creative. Great communication skills.	3/19/2026 9:31 AM
60	Non liberal	3/19/2026 9:17 AM
61	To be able to look at the big picture. Provide overall management of the schools without micromanaging. Build relationships with all — parents, colleagues, and students. Become an invested part of the community.	3/19/2026 8:58 AM
62	Problem solving skills.	3/19/2026 8:54 AM
63	Be visible at most events, not events that just interest this person. We have a strong group of teachers and principals at all levels so please continue the tradition of being one of the top places to work for. Continued effort in putting advancement in technology is important. Not let a certain group of families or school board run a program.	3/19/2026 8:30 AM
64	The ideal superintendent should be a strong communicator, approachable, and collaborative, able to build trust with staff, students, and the community. They should have a clear vision for educational excellence, experience in instructional leadership, and the ability to manage resources effectively. Empathy, adaptability, and a commitment to inclusivity and student success are essential qualities for success in Central Lee.	3/19/2026 8:04 AM
65	Fairness and integrity above reproach lest he or she be thought of as just another insider supporting the small group of families that are believed to have disproportionate sway in hiring and hiring.	3/19/2026 6:57 AM
66	Listening to understand and not just reply is one of the most important skills of a leader. Can you give an example or situation where you found this to be true?	3/19/2026 6:40 AM
67	Visionary, collaborative, communicator, high expectations, visible, ability to make decisions	3/19/2026 6:00 AM
68	Patience, visionary, be resourceful for funding projects and not rely on taxes, approachability, love for our children and their success in school, ability to wear multi hats and step in where needed, ability to build partnerships, understanding of the rural community and way of life, community involvement and support of local businesses who support the school	3/19/2026 1:17 AM
69	Leadership from outside the area - not former alumni to balance the scales.	3/19/2026 1:11 AM
70	Adaptability, willingness to pick good people for their roles and letting them work, and continuing the growth of the existing district culture.	3/18/2026 11:48 PM
71	Na	3/18/2026 11:21 PM
72	Interesting, intelligent, communication, steadfast, genuine, decisive, entrepreneurial, understanding and diligent to name a few	3/18/2026 11:14 PM
73	We need someone who not only understands the kids who are advanced, athletic, super brains, but also those who struggle with learning. That's the area that we don't want overlooked! All kids don't learn the same way. Don't put them all in a box. Support teachers who understand that and go out of their way to help students with learning disabilities.	3/18/2026 11:04 PM
74	The new superintendent needs to be a communicator. He/she must welcome and	3/18/2026 10:37 PM

	encouragement involvement. The growth and well being of the students must be foremost.	
75	Must adhere to the positive culture that is in place at CL. Must work respectfully with all school staff. Maintain the excellent status that CL is known and respected for. Always remember that all staff members including Superintendent are here for the students , not the other way around. If they're tired of children and dealing with the problems facing children today, they should find a different career path.	3/18/2026 10:09 PM
76	Had pretty much the opposite characteristics of anything about [REDACTED]. That should make for a decent human being that actually treats people well, isn't arrogant and is in the position for the right reasons.	3/18/2026 9:50 PM
77	Don't be arrogant like [REDACTED]. Serve the community not his next job! Be one with the community.	3/18/2026 9:43 PM
78	He/She should be visible, they should know what is going on with in all aspects of the school	3/18/2026 9:37 PM
79	Dedicated, someone that is not afraid to help alongside side their staff. Be proud to represent our school.	3/18/2026 9:34 PM
80	Outgoing, flexible, community minded, and involved with the students!	3/18/2026 9:29 PM
81	Have a solid understanding of how school business can run. (Ex. Purchase process). Be available and approachable. Great in building a culture among district leadership. Be able to discern when it is appropriate to hire alumni instead of leaning so heavily on choosing alumni for leadership positions. Bring new ideas.	3/18/2026 9:28 PM
82	The new superintendent should be able to see the big picture and not be closed minded. They should be a person who leads by example not by authority. They should create a positive environment for not only the kids but the staff as well. They should not just think of the school as a job but as their home, the students/staff as family and they should embrace the Central Lee culture!	3/18/2026 9:08 PM
83	Shouldn't be all about the sports. Our school shouldnt be known for the fancy gym now	3/18/2026 8:51 PM
84	The new superintendent should be a strong listener and communicator who supports students, staff, parents, and the community. They should foster a positive school culture and continue to provide opportunities for students to grow, explore their interests, and succeed, as has been done for the past 10 years. Leadership, collaboration, and a commitment to student well-being should be essential.	3/18/2026 8:50 PM
85	Don't base your budget on raising property taxes. Keep a budget in check.	3/18/2026 8:47 PM
86	A community driven mindset.	3/18/2026 8:46 PM
87	Innovative, student and teacher focused, passionate about education	3/18/2026 8:44 PM
88	Have a strong backbone as well as allowing for some flexibility. Have some creativity for problem solving and think outside the box.	3/18/2026 8:39 PM
89	I would like to see a very involved superintendent. Someone who gets to know all families and wants to listen to us to keep Central Lee School moving in the best possible way.	3/18/2026 8:35 PM
90	Personable, understanding, knowledgeable in budgeting and handling finances, understands the importance of the activities program, determined to grow staff, servant hearted leader, passionate about kids, school spirit.	3/18/2026 8:32 PM
91	Someone who values education and development. Disciplined, Organized, Professional, Personable, Open Communication	3/18/2026 8:32 PM
92	Excellent communication skills among different populations	3/18/2026 8:26 PM
93	Time management, communication skills	3/18/2026 8:23 PM
94	Personable and approachable. Understands concerns of parents and listening to those concerns. A willingness to move on from current educators in the district that don't meet expectations and standards.	3/18/2026 8:22 PM
95	Someone who strives for success in all areas of their career. Someone who enjoys community events, has charisma, and enjoys getting to know people.	3/18/2026 8:19 PM

96	Have extensive experience from outside of Southeast Iowa and be open to new ideas.	3/18/2026 8:19 PM
97	The willingness to work closely with the current employees and community to keep our momentum moving forward.	3/18/2026 8:07 PM
98	Value input from all sources, reach out to different communities that funnel kids to CL,	3/18/2026 8:05 PM