

Dear BOE members,

I am writing on behalf of the Chinese American Parent Association of Howard County. We believe the following characteristics must be considered when hiring a HCPSS Superintendent.

States short-term and long-term goals clearly with well-defined priorities and executable plans

This individual must demonstrate to the community that he/she knows how to conduct HCPSS business. Having a big vision for the future is necessary, but that vision has to be well-defined and fits specifically to the HCPSS community. Vague ideas lead to uncertainty. Parents don't want uncertainty in their children's education. We want a Superintendent to be clear about goals, priorities, and plans and to know how to carry them out. CAPA hopes the future Superintendent will set priorities include, but not limited to, the following:

Promotes academic excellence

There is no doubt in every parent's mind that the main function of school is to teach children knowledge and to help them achieve academic excellence. Thus, the new superintendent should prioritize raising student's academic performance level and holding teachers accountable for it. Academic excellence is what draws parents to the county's public schools. The school system cannot afford to lose the support of the parents who pay the taxes to fund it. The future Superintendent must set the priority to achieve as highest as possible in the area of academic performance. The school system must help each and every student to achieve their personal best, no matter where the student is at in the academic achievement spectrum.

Ensure quality of teaching

Quality of teaching should be evaluated by measureable standards. The future Superintendent must be able to empower the teachers to appropriately implement their instruction by providing them training and tools. This individual should promote a culture of respecting teachers and be able to engage the teachers through an effective reward system.

Demonstrates aspiration and capability to communicate and understand people from diverse backgrounds

Our school system is very diverse. It is an opportunity that we all embrace but it also creates unprecedented challenges. The new superintendent should honestly face the challenges. We want to see a superintendent who truly makes personal and institutional efforts to reach out to students and parents from all walks of life.

This individual SHOULD possess the following characteristics:

- 1) Genuinely has the **aspiration** to know community members from each and every corner, especially the traditionally unheard ones;
- 2) Has the **capability** of understanding people with diverse backgrounds.

This individual should NOT:

- 1) Pretend he/she understand the community members when he/she doesn't;
- 2) Reach out for show and not take any action;
- 3) Only talk to the people who are well-connected, well-articulated, and well-positioned.

Demonstrates competence to manage conflicts effectively

Conflicts happen. The future superintendent should take a collaborative approach without giving up principles. He/she should be willing to listen to all stakeholders but be able to make a decision that is the best for the community as a whole, both short-term and long-term. He/she should be able to effectively communicate the rationale of his/her decisions with community members who possess different opinions.

Puts interests of students, families, teachers and the whole school system first before his/her personal career / agenda

A career-driven Superintendent has had and will have a tremendous negative impact on our community. This individual might be very capable but the overall effect has not been and will never be favorable to the HCPSS community.

Experienced individual with a good track record that shows the above characteristics

Again, parents don't want uncertainty in their children's education. We want an individual with a long track record of demonstrating the characteristics we want to see in our superintendent.

Sincerely Yours,
Jean Xu
President, CAPA-HC