

Stakeholder Input Report for

**Washington County
Public Schools
Hagerstown, Maryland**

submitted by

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Washington County Public Schools

Washington County, Maryland

District Stakeholder Input

April 2022

Executive Summary

On April 21st and 22nd, 2022, consultants Dr. Ralph Ferrie and Dr. Judy Sclair-Stein conducted meetings with district stakeholders representing different groups associated with the Washington County Public Schools. These groups included: administrators, community and parents, support staff, students and teachers. The consultants received input from approximately 100 individuals in these groups. Input was gathered regarding the selection of a new superintendent for Washington County Public Schools. Outlined on these pages is an Executive Summary of the major themes expressed by the participants at these sessions.

Tell us the good things about your community.

- Close proximity to major metropolitan areas: one hour from Baltimore and DC; 4 hours from NY
- Near major historical sites...Gettysburg, Antietam, etc.
- Small city, rural and city opportunities
- Outdoor activities
- Excellent health care
- Fair cost of living
- Diversity
- Great educational opportunities

Tell us the good things about your schools.

- Program offerings...there are numerous opportunities for students to meet individual needs and interests from universal Pre-K to magnet schools to college preparatory, etc.
- Dual enrollment programs
- Technology High
- Prestigious high school for the Arts
- Dedicated teaching, administrative and support staff
- Outdoor education, planetarium
- Active, involved and collaborative partnerships with the community and the community college

What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the district?

- Funding at the minimally required level as determined by Maryland State law
- Mental health issue of students and staff
- Student behaviors, further impacted by Covid and drug issue
- Opioid issue in the area
- Teacher recruitment and retention
- Redistricting, particularly at the secondary level to be inclusive of demographic balance
- Parent desire for input in their children's education
- School communities within the district are all very different; being aware of this and not trying to implement a "one-size-fits-all approach."
- Being knowledgeable of the *Blue Print for Education*, the implementation of it as well as the intricacies
- Budget constraints have prevented necessary upkeep, renovation and/or additions to buildings
- Equity issues, as there are many children who live at the poverty level in the district

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

- Integrity and honesty
- Visibility and accessibility
- Relationship builder
- Good listener
- Collaborative decision maker
- Responsive
- Creative, out-of-the-box thinker
- Open to the ideas of others, flexible
- Make decisions based on what is in students' best interests, even if not popular
- Someone who is coming to WCPS to establish roots and become an integral part of the district and the community

Washington County, MD

STAKEHOLDER MEETING Notes

McPherson and Jacobson, LLC

Stakeholder Group: **Administrators** April 2022

1. Tell us the good things about your community.

- Pockets of small communities, diversity
- Families that want to be part of the schools
- Relationships that are developed throughout the county
- Location – an hour from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.
- Small and close knit – familiarity with neighboring schools
- Location – near Pennsylvania and West Virginia
- Diverse county and district – inner city and rural areas
- Performing arts opportunities, world class orchestra in Hagerstown
- Great community partnerships, library system, financial donations, volunteering, partnership with JLG
- Quality of education
- Health care
- Arts programs
- Outdoor experiences
- Welcoming
- Friendly community members
- Restaurants
- Benefits from living in a bigger city but also the small-town feeling
- Communities that rally around their school – community pride

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools.

- Small enough to make changes that have an impact on students
- Diversity of ideas within the district
- Academic programs, technology
- First one-to-one district in the state
- Amazing teachers, supervisors and their commitment to the district
- Collaboration between departments and staff
- Instructional innovation, research driven, risk taking is encouraged
- Staff are innovators, wonderful, caring educators
- Encouraged to reach out to experts outside the county – example curriculum development – Jay McTighe
- Each of the 45 schools has its own character
- Strong English Language learning program that keeps the students in their home schools
- Creativity is important – out of the box solutions for problems
- Schools have different needs due to location within the county

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools. (cont.)

- Take advantage of various grants in an effective manner – funds are used in a creative and innovative way – example is the tutoring program that is supported by grant funding
- Central administration supports grants
- Strong culture regarding collaboration with senior leadership
- Not an “us versus them regarding schools and central office” it’s a “we”
- Family feel – supervisors feel valued
- Teachers feel supported
- All day PreK programs
- English language support in the PreK program
- Performing arts school, Tech High, program variety
- Magnet schools – elementary and middle school magnet schools for the arts
- Get much done with minimal funding
- Program opportunities for students
- Diversity
- Intentional organizational chart administratively
- Make the most of every dollar
- Magnet programs, agriculture program, Tech High
- Opportunities offered to students
- Elementary magnet schools
- Apprenticeship opportunities
- Senior leadership works well together
- Data driven decision making
- Student focused
- Differentiate to meet the needs of all students

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools?

- Getting students caught up after Covid
- Social emotional issues that students have at all levels
- Closing the achievement gap
- Mentality of not just getting back to what was prior to Covid but also making changes to address issues
- The State’s new legislation regarding funding
- Get the district back to believing that it can be “world class”
- Mental health issues in the community
- Attendance issues
- Political environment
- Work with the associations within the district
- Redistricting
- Be aware if an outsider is superintendent
- Be aware of how to carry oneself
- Trust is not easy to build within the County and District

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools? (cont.)

- Historically based community
- Different areas of the county have different cultures and belief systems
- Budgetary constraints
- County only provides the minimum budgetary support
- Diversity of political viewpoints – hear from the loudest groups – those opposed to equity
- Vocal minority
- Come in to get knowledge of multiple perspectives
- Community emails current superintendent and gets a response within 24 hours
- Lack of following chain of command – parents will go right to the superintendent and copy the Board of Education
- Sometimes superintendent will refer issues back to the appropriate administrator and sometimes the superintendent responds to the parent issue directly
- District will require funds for capital improvements due to the age of the buildings
- County Commissioners proud regarding level of funding which is low compared to other counties in the state
- New state superintendent making drastic changes that will be impactful
- Build a culture of trust
- Groups in the district are not feeling valued
- New factory development and growth in the county
- Staffing shortages and salary structure in the district
- Living in an area that is a super highway for drugs
- Children born addicted who now have mental health issues and behavior issues
- Some students coming to school in early childhood settings that are not toilet trained
- Lack of resources to support mental health issues, addiction issues, etc.
- *Blueprint for Maryland's Future*, funded and unfunded mandates
- Staff can go to adjacent counties and improve their salary
- Criteria required for retirement from the County school district
- Redistricting or additions to certain buildings to increase capacity
- Farmland is being converted to warehouses to support trucking industry
- Road infrastructure to support the warehouses
- Funding is a challenge
- Building a relationship and developing trust with county government

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington County Public Schools?

- Ability to work with different groups
- Strategic mind
- Assist different groups no matter what their role is
- The ability to delegate

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington County Public Schools? (cont.)

- Willing to have tough conversations
- A realist, dedicated to the work
- Pragmatic and progressive at the same time
- Someone who won't go back to the status quo
- Someone who will trust the principals to solve problems
- Someone who understands all aspects of the district
- Balance between the ability to push back and take on the challenges
- Someone who will come in and learn about the county and the district prior to making changes
- Make change in a comfortable manner
- Transparent, informative
- Help people navigate the change
- Highly respected, valued individual
- Stable, steadfast
- Grounding of where the district is now and how to implement the changes intentionally, deliberately – “don't build the plane while it is in flight”
- Flexible
- Trusting of the experts
- Value perspective
- Believe in the staff, believe in the experts
- Systematic, have a plan – make informed decisions
- Develop relationships with the union leadership throughout the district
- Open minded and build bridges
- Listener
- Present leader
- Respected within the community
- Include appropriate staff in the decision-making process
- Understands facilities and operations – the business side of the district
- Value staff and show appreciated
- Honesty and Integrity
- Take ownership of decisions
- Willing to admit when a mistake is made
- High expectations
- Someone who you know where you stand
- Demanding – hard working – leadership by example
- Caring and compassionate
- Treats staff with respect
- Visibility – attend events – presence in the schools
- Authentic
- Sense of humor
- Someone who values the life – work balance
- Someone who respects boundaries

1. Tell us the good things about your community.

- Outdoor opportunities are abundant
- Historical areas and a great deal of history
- Urban and rural settings
- If you want big city – Baltimore and Washington, D.C. are close enough
- Small town feel
- A great deal of growth
- A great deal of generosity
- Large number of non-profit organizations
- Organizations have a vested interest in the County – want the County to be the best
- Involved business community
- Passionate residents – passionate about the schools
- Crime rate is relatively low
- We are community oriented...We congregate around our community and our schools are a vehicle for holding our communities together
- We are very centrally located to get to the nation's capital
- School infrastructure is very good here...our buildings are in better shape than other districts
- Progressive district
- We were one of the first with 1:1 initiative
- Tech and Arts academies
- Leadership in the community is very open to new people coming in.
- New people are welcomed quickly
- Cost of living is good
- Great place to raise a family
- Public schools are the premium here...schools of choice, not private schools
- It is the ideal locality to raise a family devoid of the hustle and bustle of the city
- Collaborative nature...not only are the networks embracing of new people, we like to work together and not necessarily compete. Many collaborate with the school system
- Good hiking and other outdoor activities
- Close to big cities, C & O, historical, highway interchange and other large cities and close to other museums, arts and other areas
- Business communities has a good relationship with schools...Chamber hosts the Teacher of the Year

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools.

- Commitment to the education of the students
- Blue Ribbon Schools
- Unique experiences for students
- Variety of programs developed and offered to the students
- Tech High School
- Strong vision from the administration
- High student achievement
- Performs well as related to its peers
- Dual enrollment program – hybrid program
- Student access to community college programs – associate degree programs and preparation for bachelor’s degree programs
- County is 456 square miles which encompasses a variety of communities with different needs and different demographics
- The arts school program, the agricultural programs
- Public – private partnerships as related to establishment of particular programs
- School personnel participate within other county organizations and initiatives
- Technology initiatives
- Strong leadership team...top tier is talented
- Some exceptional teachers
- We’re rural, but it’s a teaching area...it’s a good community to be selling to.
- Our starting pay is attractive
- We have the tech high, the business programs to do training in, the trade school, the police and fire academy, the U. of Maryland system, etc....There’s a lot of fit for people who don’t want to take the traditional road
- The relationships with the Community College and U. of Maryland....Impressed with the agreements and cross educational opportunities

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools?

- Recognition of what the county population needs
- District is not well-funded – work within those parameters to make things work
- Funded at the state minimum
- Some areas of the county have high poverty rates
- A high amount of generational poverty
- Advanced manufacturing program expansion in the district in collaboration with the community college
- Dual credit becomes free next fall – challenge will be transportation for students to get to the community college to address equity issues – high school teachers need to earn master’s degree in their discipline so they can be credentialed by the community college in order to teach dual credit programs in the high schools
- Mental health issues, addiction
- Manage security in the schools – train teachers and equip them to manage security issues

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools? (cont.)

- Teacher pay, benefits and control behavior in the classroom – student behavior
- Change in the character of the young children that are entering school
- Level of financial commitment from foundations and endowments will decrease because donators view these funds as supplanting budget and state and county funding
- Analysis of how to use the funds available effectively
- Support for the family units – after school programs, etc.
- Disconnect in terms of equity-minded leadership; new supt. will be inheriting the issue of not being able to attract educators from diverse backgrounds
- Being able to survive in this environment without being called names if you are a person of color.
- Be conscious of educator wellness; Check in on teachers...
- The beginning teacher salary is the highest in Maryland, however while our salary starts out high, they tend to become stagnant at years 5-7
- Our county is seen as a low-effort county in the way we fund the school system; this is the 6th year we have been seen as a low-effort county.
- Getting the funding to put more money into teacher salaries
- Part of the retention question in terms of retaining teachers is related to school culture and student behaviors...supt. has to be able to balance the state expectations with what is happening at our buildings
- The next person that comes in has to balance the academic expectations with making sure that people are o.k...prioritize behavior management and working with community partners
- The school communities within our school district are all incredibly different and diverse. There are inherent challenges there. First understanding what the differences are and then how to address those needs.
- We will not achieve academic greatness until we address mental health support
- Very different needs in different parts of the county.
- One size does not fit all...ex: All day pre-K
- There is a behavior and attitude problem in the school...need to attract more people of color.
- There can be no tolerance for treating people of color coldly; supt. is going to have to hold that line.
- The budget is a big problem; county commissioners have not been financially supportive of WCPS for a long time.
- We don't have sufficient numbers of staff.
- We don't have adequate facilities to support our programs and consequently we are losing staff.
- School system needs to have a lot of transparency around the way dollars are used in order to have hopes of getting more support from county commissioners.
- Behaviors among kids are prevalent and growing...1 in 5 kids are coming to school with behavioral challenges. Impacting our academics. Staff and kids need support. We are under a behavior/mental health crisis

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington County Public Schools?

- Open-minded to doing new and unconventional things – outside-the-box thinking
- Visibility and accessibility
- Student first mentality
- Creative
- Focus on academics
- Clear vision
- Excellent communicator
- Willing to form partnership
- Pro-education
- Willing to listen to everyone and get back to constituents in a timely manner
- Calming voice for education
- Relationship building in the district and in the community
- Made themselves available where diversity and inclusion was a strategy
- Keen eye to having staff members be diverse, not just teaching staff
- Equity in the way our children are treated; progressive movement in our schools
- Be a good instructional leader and a strong advocate for special education
- Experience working with special education
- Being able to hire and retain teachers who are diverse and culturally competent
- Younger teachers who are more progressive and giving them a place in the school system...all with a goal of providing equity for our students
- Bring empathy, equity, bring collaboration, bring inclusion...everyone needs to feel a sense of belonging
- Hopeful; firmly believe that things can be better tomorrow.
- Figure out the path over, under, around or through to make things better.
- Empathy and Collaboration
- Compassion and students first
- Confident and knows how to push the board
- Communicate at the state level
- Visionary and classroom culture person, but also has the political channel to MSDE
- Be in classrooms, talk to teachers, sit with kids, talk with staff...connect with your people. Folks will continue to work hard for you!
- Roll up your sleeves and get in with the people.
- See the school, its staff and the parents as family.
- Attract a large number of followers to get this train moving in the right direction.
- Have charisma...a little pixie dust! 😊

1. Tell us the good things about your community.

- Good people
- Located close to a big city, to a mountain trail, to the beach all between 15 minutes or an hour and a half
- Can be in DC or Baltimore in an hour; be in NY in 4 hours
- Easy to get around; shopping is easy
- Pretty convenient
- History buffs like it here
- Outlying areas...rural/country; in town very much a city atmosphere
- It's beautiful here
- Can be on Appalachian trail in 30 minutes
- So much here to do if you're into the outdoors
- Can study Antietam and the Civil War
- This place is pretty much like Mayberry
- Kids just show up at the house; pretty much like a small town
- Can do day trips...your first hour drive is pretty much like being in the country
- There's a diversity of viewpoint in the area
- The opportunities and the lifestyle here is marvelous; the schools and my kid's teacher are marvelous
- Depending where they are coming from, the cost of living here could be much cheaper to live
- The state itself has a lot of resources...they plow the streets in the winter time

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools.

- Great arts support; music programs here are very good here
- Sports programs here are great
- Maryland state has a great education program
- Great special education program
- Caring teachers; help for the kids if they need it
- Resources are here for kids and excellent teachers here
- The quality of education is so ridiculously high
- WCPS had the Natl. Supt. of the Year previously
- Diff. high schools have different specialties
- IB program; technical high schools; amount of education kids can get
- Arts programs
- Magnet programs are amazing
- They do a good job of making sure that my child doesn't fall through the cracks
- Tech high offers architectural programs....
- Transportation is offered to magnet schools from high schools

- 2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools (*cont.*)**
- Great field trip opportunities
 - A lot of sports
 - Quality of teachers
 - GATE program
 - Opportunities for more advanced learning opportunities
 - Spelling Bees and person who wins gets recognized...they don't give everybody a prize
 - We live in farm country
- 3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools?**
- Violence in schools has started to pick up
 - Students not seeing that there should be consequences for their actions
 - Make sure principals and assistant principals tow-the-line with regard to student behaviors
 - Administrators at the building level are expecting teachers to handle issues that should be handled by administrators
 - Changes in health education are going to need to be addressed (conservative population)
 - Having the parents have the opportunity to have control of their children's education and to opt out of their children taking certain courses
 - As a result of Covid, getting kids back up to par.
 - Learning delays amongst kids...especially as a result of Covid
 - Supt. who has special knowledge or understanding of kids who have learning delays and what are we going to do about that.
 - Drugs have become mainstay in all neighborhoods, not just poor neighborhoods
 - Supt. needs to understand that changes need to happen with City Administrator
 - African-American students are performing below their white counterparts...this is not just as a result of Covid.
 - Inequities need to be looked at that will give our minority kids the opportunity to do better and an emphasis on closing the achievement gap.
 - We need more African-American teachers who kids can relate to; we need more diversity in our teaching staff.
 - Parents should have more flexibility in having input in what their kids are taught, than just what the state recommends or mandates.
 - Teaching my son that he can be a girl...applying Maryland educational equity law is wrong and caused confusion that was not there.
 - I want my child and my child's peers to be open-minded

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools? (cont.)

- Feel they are teaching that my kid is white and that's bad; the kids who are black are oppressed
- Magnet programs are great, but transportation to the magnet programs are not available, therefore access is not equitable
- We live in farm country, but the food isn't very good; they should feed local foods.
- Equity issues are a challenge
- A lot of people moved to Smithsburg because it's a "good school"...code for: "No Black People."
- There are more diverse people in Hagerstown...doctors, Muslims, people of color
- There's a lot of poverty in Hagerstown
- To the people who believe in Equity, (with a capital E), if they are going to focus only on race issues and the solution they are going to have trouble implementing... will be equity that means equality of outcomes. If after a few years there are differences in outcomes, they're going to say it's because there were differences in equity in access to opportunity. (Equality of Opportunity vs. Equality of Outcomes)
- Job development and school-to-career opportunities and how do we prepare students here for jobs that will earn more than \$18 per hour.
- Warehouses don't have a ready workforce in Hagerstown ready to start work...such as Amazon and others.
- If we want the county to thrive, we need jobs that pay better
- From an equity perspective, not all feeder schools offer instrumental music at 4th grade; some not until 6th grade; therefore the playing field isn't level when it comes to auditioning for BIFSA
- Can every child access musical instruments?
- Music education does not seem as strong as it could be
- We need more money for musical instruments; also there are no after school buses

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington County Public Schools?

- Supt. should not be afraid to clean house in some places
- Have a very thick skin.
- Be professional and understands the value of building relationships with stakeholders
- A desire to listen and work with others and hear opinions of others and be willing to change their opinion after listening to others.
- Have dialogue
- Open minded to other ideas
- Don't have a slash and burn mentality; keep our good programs such as arts and sports
- Out-of-the box thinker; if we have an issue, let's work it out
- Relates to children and understands where they're coming from
- Female supt. would be awesome
- Business background would be great...business, not an education background
- Good communicator
- Good listener
- Navigate the native, "good old boy network."
- How can you talk with the local network which has been entrenched here for a long time and make changes
- Someone who has written a history book or two; someone who understands that 20 years is not history.
- Understands on a core level that this county, which is named after George Washington, that this county is based on the founding ideals of George Washington. It's really what holds us all together. It's really what allows how diverse we are, how privileged we are and the principles of the founding fathers.
- Open minded
- Can see other sides to any story

1. Tell us the good things about your community.

- We have a lot of arts opportunities
- We have many historic areas...Antietam battlefield
- A lot of diversity
- Room for growth and changing opportunities
- Very centrally located...not far from Baltimore and DC
- Rural and city living as well
- A lot of nature and state parks
- Chesapeake and Ohio (C & O) Canal
- Wash. County...good melting pot...good representation of state
- Conveniently located to ocean and other places in state...general living
- New opportunities for entertainment and family life
- Easy for families to move here
- Youth sports programs
- Rivalries in and among the high schools
- A lot of sports programs and community college offers sports programs
- Wash. Co. has a lot of agricultural

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools.

- Academic opportunities, such as Intl. Baccalaureate
- Tech high provides great opportunities for job experience...apprenticeship experiences
- Opportunities for students to create clubs based on their interests
- IB career program, teacher academy and visual arts
- Students can study what they may want to do out of H.S. Prepares for after grad.
- Tech High offers co-op work...we get our school hours from working
- HBC dual enrollment program
- Some schools offer child care completers, business completers, marketing program...can zone in on what you want to focus on in the future\
- Agricultural opportunities...if you're not interested in white collar work.
- Student government works pretty closely with the Board and we have a student member on the Board
- Pre-K program
- Middle school has a magnet program
- H.S. has an arts school and we have Tech. H.S. HDC programs...(Community College program)
- Elementaries have clubs and activities
- Ag academy at Clear Spring
- Apprenticeship program

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools. (cont.)

- Wash. Co. has a lot to offer
- Offers food backpacks for families who need help
- Outdoor school programs
- Elem. Students exposed to high school opportunities...orientation is strong
- In elem. Encouraged to start thinking about what you wanted to do.
- In elem. Did projects that would help our community
- Schools in the county helped families who were in tough financial situations, particularly at holiday season
- Being intertwined with the community...exposed to the community
- Many non-profits that help out families
- When people move into the community, they help families transition

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools?

- A lot of teachers and staff have quit in the middle of the year; this impacts the students
- A lot of teachers are trying to be our friends and we're not getting our education
- Shortage of subs
- We change administrators too much...at our school we're on our 4th principal in the past few years. We don't have a sense of authority.
- We need more transparency with the supt.
- We lose our vice principals every year.
- There are different academic programs at different schools.
- Consistent fights in our schools and the admin. is doing their jobs, but it's not enough.
- There are long term subs, but when we pull subs off the street, they don't connect with the kids as well
- Teachers, because of the pandemic, did not feel appreciated or supported, so they are going to other professions.
- Teachers need help with their mental health.
- Disconnect between the BOE and the teachers in the classroom...frustration with how things were done between the educational process and the curriculum
- The county has run this more as a business, rather than putting the needs of the students first; as a student with special needs, I feel this.
- Since the pandemic, mental health has become a need at the high school. Violence has become a big issue.

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools? (*cont.*)

- We need to build trust not only with the teachers, but with the students and the parents. Transparency.
- The curriculum has failed us at times; sometimes we're not heard as students. Students should be more involved and should see the supt. more than we do.
- A lot of us haven't even met the supt.
- Teachers want support from the supt. Teachers don't feel like they are getting recognition from supt.
- Dr. Michael has worked with custodians and food service staff; he has been great, but we need to see him more.
- We want more of a family-like environment with the supt.
- Online school messed with students and teachers' mental health; a lot of teachers gave up during that time. A lot of teachers gazed at blank screens.
- The transition back from the last two years of Covid has been a challenge.
- Substitute teacher shortage is a big problem.
- Teachers during their planning period are being put in classrooms where there is no sub, so they are giving up their planning period
- Teachers are not getting the support they need.
- There is a disconnect between the BOE and the staff. There is a lack of transparency from the BOE.
- When the new supt. comes on board, there should be a transparency committee.
- This meeting is great to get our input, but it's only a step in the right direction.
- Student discipline is bad
- We don't have enough money from our county commissioners

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington Public Schools?

- Has been a teacher and has had experiences in the school system
- Really personal and someone with whom you can make a connection
- Recent experience in the schools
- Involved and need to know about current events
- Empathetic and good communications skills with teachers and students
- Be visible at sports, plays and things like that.
- Be supportive of all...custodians as well as teachers
- Someone who has been through stuff...life in Hagerstown if rough...there's a lot of drug addiction...be able to empathize with students. Someone who can understand what students in Hagerstown go through
- Someone who endorses equity training and restorative practices and doesn't let teachers make questionable comments about race, sexual identity, etc.
- Honest and transparent
- Calls people out
- Someone who is willing to sit down with students and see what's bugging them
- Someone with an open mind
- Great communicator, because sometimes people don't know what's going
- Adaptable and flexible
- Putting the students first, always
- Optimistic and determined
- Connects with the students
- Take charge and make change when it's needed
- Representative of us as a community; maybe even attended WCPS.
- Make sure they are understanding of student problems
- Understanding that there is an issue
- Needs to do things based on what he needs to do, rather than just making people happy
- More diversity
- Be from a similar county so they will understand us
- Funding awareness
- Experience with mental health issues and discipline; programs and new ways for teachers to control their classrooms

1. Tell us the good things about your community.

- Diversity
- Events are varied throughout the community
- Hard working community – excellent value for the dollar
- Many educational opportunities
- The arts are building up, specifically in Hagerstown
- Many family-owned businesses
- Small-town feel
- Close to large cities
- Schools represent families
- Gettysburg only about 45 minutes away
- Washington County more diverse than we're given credit for
- Proximity to major metro areas is a good draw
- DC and Baltimore are not far; NY and Philly 3.5 hours to are close
- State parks in West VA and shore not far
- We're more working class...we have a Southern flavor to this area; it's more southern than other parts of Maryland.
- There's a welcoming atmosphere
- Great food
- Wonderful orchards
- A lot of cuisines
- The power of the people...our association has reflected what our county would want.
- The beauty, the closeness, the history and the pride.
- We do have a large medical facility in Washington County; there's medical care here.
- A short jaunt to the best medical care in Baltimore and DC
- Maryland Theatre in downtown
- Our downtown is experiencing a regrowth
- Washington County Museum of Fine Arts (and it's free)
- Maryland Symphony
- Airport closest to Camp David with the longest runway
- Nice golf courses
- Caverns
- Civil War battlefields
- Active interfaith coalition
- R.E.A.C.H. – Cold weather shelter...organized by faith communities

2. Tell us the good things about the Washington County Public Schools.

- Quality teaching staff
- Excellent school culture
- Commitment to the students
- Equitable practice for all age students
- Flexibility to meet the student needs
- Student centered system
- Student involvement in donating for appropriate causes
- Values the concept of the comprehensive high school, maintain the arts, athletics
- Instrumental music at the elementary level
- Students benefit from the comprehensive approach
- Variety of programs, Tech High, school to career programs are varied
- CTE programs are strong
- Marshall Street School – meets the needs of severely handicapped students
- Serve students from birth through 21
- PreK programs – some high school students work within the program
- Student centered, dedicated staff, students’ talents are nourished
- Seal of biliteracy, district is becoming more diverse, being bilingual is celebrated
- Teachers have been able to go to one spot on essential curriculum online
- Amazing programs...school for arts, technology; many opportunities for students
- IB program
- Great teachers
- We see kids’ pride in their home schools at Tech High
- One of two public high schools for the arts in the whole state
- We regularly have people at the state level from our sports programs
- Strong theatre programs
- All schools have strong music programs; BIFSA is not the only school where we value music education
- Business partnerships with the schools
- Outdoor school with environmental education
- Planetarium
- Investment in technology and ensuring that infrastructure is there
- Enabled a Digital School this school year
- Have a good AP program and several educators are involved at the college board
- More books have been purchased for independent reading, which have been through a review process
- On professional days, many teachers have been leaders of the professional development and training
- There is so much potential that a superintendent could walk in and do so many things to demonstrate leadership for students and staff with the *Blue Print*, etc.

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools?

- Funding – no support from County Board of Commissioners
- County supports funding at the minimum as required by the State
- County will not fund the school resource officers
- Teacher retention
- Transition out of Covid
- Recruitment and retention of diverse educators
- Room for improvement in welcoming diverse individuals into the district
- Issues that exist around racism and homophobia – there is a tolerance toward free speech that sometimes crosses the line
- Public being critical toward some of the lowest paid staff members in the district
- Disrespectful members of the public
- There are positions needed within the district that were eliminated due to lack of funding – some administrators are serving in multiple roles
- Increase in student behavioral issues that could be addressed through more staffing such as counselors, etc. Social/emotional issues of students are increasing and these issues need to be addressed in order to establish an environment conducive to learning
- City of Hagerstown is in the middle of a revitalization – issues still exist related to poverty and addiction – these issues become problems for the schools to address with limited resources
- Feelings that decisions made by central office are made with a lack of concern for employees
- In the school system, not all diversity is represented in staff
- Transient population and student attendance
- Student behaviors...a whole new level...our biggest challenge
- The *Blue Print* is going to require so much accountability with the funding attached.
- Very concerned with what I've heard some parents say in public comment which is blatant falsehood about book banning and TED talks. It feels like we are at a very precarious time in our district right now. Tied to academic freedom...very concerning.
- Occasionally the behavior of students and parents is not civil. There is an undercurrent of white supremacy regarding LGBTQ, Racism, anything we as educators do to correct a narrative (such as Pilgrims and Thanksgiving), etc.
- Washington County is really a microcosm of what is happening in the nation. The divisions we are seeing in the country...Washington County is not immune from that.
- You can't have the assumption of liberalism and come in here and be successful in Washington County.

3. What issues should the superintendent be aware of as he/she comes into the Washington County Public Schools? (cont.)

- Young children are disrupting classrooms with behaviors such as kicking and hitting and teachers are leaving WCPS.
- Restorative practices are very important and we need to do that.
- Funding piece is critical
- There used to be elementary Spanish in 9 buildings and now there is elementary Spanish in 1 building and yet our community has grown in diversity.
- Because the cost of living out here is much lower than Frederick County to the East, people are moving to the West and into Washington Co.
- We do have members of our delegation representing us in Annapolis who are actively working against funding of public schools.
- If we have wraparound services, we can improve a community.
- Big drug issue here
- State prisons are here
- Our administrators do the best they can, but their hands are tied...especially post-Covid
- Is the curriculum inclusive of cultural backgrounds?
- There is not a lot of support for ELL students; often dropped into our classes with minimal supports
- No supports for the kids who need the supports
- Our curriculum is not changing as our population is becoming more diverse
- Recruiting and retention of educators...all educators
- Communication piece...things would often come out from CES and teachers weren't even aware of it until it was out on social media.
- Teachers need to be aware of and part of decision making
- We have a full-on attack on public education that is happening
- New supt. will be filling very large shoes
- How much curriculum is really too much?

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington County Public Schools?

- Open minded
- Educational background is important in order to empathize what teachers have to do
- Lead by example
- Roll up their sleeves to help when needed
- Delegator
- Respect for employees' skill set and knowledge
- Respects employees' training, a supporter of staff, makes decisions that are best for students and best for the staff
- Recognizes that every employee in the system is essential
- Collaborator
- Diplomatic person willing to listen to different perspectives
- Communication with the stakeholders
- Someone who uses the carrot – not the stick
- Caring and empathetic
- Come into our schools and represent us...make self feel like one of us
- Would like to see diversity represented
- Our ELL and diversity
- Someone who really understands why public education exists and someone who realizes that social justice means freedom of speech and freedom of choice exists for our students
- Be visible; teachers can e-mail you and you will e-mail them back
- Progressive while still being fiscally sound
- Lead positive change
- Make sure that the new supt. has been in schools where they have had diverse populations
- Come in and want to work with the things we have in place; don't come in and change things...give things time to work.
- Communicate, cooperate and collaborate with the teachers' union
- Talk to kids and teachers; be someone who kids and teachers know
- Meet with students and teachers; have a forum
- Have a good track record; their previous district should be sad to see them go
- Ethical and proven their work
- Someone with diversity and represents a minority group; it would be good for students to see themselves in this person
- Value the contributions that the staff bring to the system
- If something is not working, seek the input of the staff who are involved with it to find out why.

4. What qualities and skills should the new superintendent possess to be successful in the Washington County Public Schools? (cont.)

- Someone who wants to foster a collaborative relationship with teachers....we're all in this together.
- Important for the superintendent to listen to the teachers, students and staff, but also critical to listen to the community
- Diplomatic, but also understanding
- Address and really promote a positive culture and part of that is respect of all employee groups. Ex: Spend time serving lunch with the cafeteria staff.
- Bring us to the table...nothing about us without us.
- Listen to us and not just pretend to be listening
- Be a strategic communicator not an authoritarian leader
- Be a servant leader
- Someone who is real and doesn't put themselves up on a pedestal above others
- Someone who can easily handle themselves at the Chamber of Commerce meeting but is equally comfortable serving food in the lunch line.
- The superintendent is the face of the school system.
- Understand that we are working with human beings; the children and the staff are human beings.
- The association wants to partner with the superintendent and the board of education and are not looking for an adversarial relationship. We want to work together.
- The relationship with a superintendent should be about hearing things and working together.
- Need to value the College and Career Readiness Standards
- What do tech readiness programs look like, especially for our kids who do not get into Tech High?
- View our students and staff through an equity lens; many of our students and staff feel like second class citizens because they can't be their true selves.

*Survey Monkey Results for
Washington County Public Schools
April 2022*

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

143 Responses

Administrators

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

- Centrally located with easy access to Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia and an hour to Washington DC or Baltimore Strong sense of community within each school community
- The area provides a good quality of life. There is a vast array of activities in the local region and we are close to larger metropolitan areas. Something for everyone.
- Small town feel less than 1.5 hours from two major metropolitan area. Healthy mix of both trade and professional professions in the community.
- Washington County is a small community that at times feels like one large town instead of a county with nine municipalities. People know each other and businesses are happy to help sponsor events. Washington County is centrally located to Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Northern Virginia, all of which offer varied cultural opportunities and great medical care. It also offers quick trips to the ocean or the mountains. Washington County offers the ability for students to stay in Washington County while they pursue their higher education through Hagerstown Community College and University System of Maryland at Hagerstown. Washington County Government does a great job with parks and recreation. There are lovely pocket parks and larger parks all throughout the county. The County Rec Department also offers a variety of activities for folks of all ages.

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

- Our staff are dedicated to supporting students. Collaboration among departments is key. Our students are resilient.
- We value teacher continuing training and professional development.
- The employees care. They care for the students and the community. They go above and beyond when needed.
- Washington County Public Schools offers many choices for students from magnet programs, to visual and performing arts, to technical education. Washington County Public Schools leads the state in student apprenticeships giving its students a leg up upon graduation. Washington County Public Schools is a great size. It is not too small that it cannot offer a variety of program options for students or advancement for staff, but not

too large that students and staff feel like another number. Washington County Public Schools' employees care. I have found that I enjoy working with almost everyone and that most everyone is very helpful and kind.

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

- There is a lot of growing and learning that needs to continue and be developed further among staff to understand all aspects of student and community needs. Keeping strong staff in our county can be challenging due to our location.
- We don't have the same resources (esp mental health) as some of the bigger districts in our state
- The facilities are aging. The Facilities and Maintenance & Operations groups do a very good job with the funding provided, but the time has come for planning replacement schools and building them frequently over the coming years.
- We need someone who will make the best choice for our future, not because its "how its always been done".
- The superintendent should be aware that education in Washington County is not as valued as it should be by a fair number of citizens and the county government. Many native Washington County citizens feel that teachers and administrators are over paid and resent anyone that makes more money than they do. The County Government continues, year-after-year, to dismiss education by providing the school system with the minimum amount of funding required by law. Many other counties in the state show their support for education by providing millions of dollars over required funding to their school systems. These counties recognize that education is a stepping stone to a better community. Washington County Commissioners have yet to come to this realization. Unfortunately, not even 25% of residents hold a Bachelor's degree. While this number has risen over the years because of the influx of individuals moving to the area it still remains low. It is worth noting that native Washington County citizens resent the "outsiders" who have changed their county for what they consider the worse, not the better. Washington County is heavily Republican and rarely, if at all, elects someone other than a Republican. This is a conservative county and lacks diversity. It was very surprising when the County Republican Central Committee selected a black woman to fill a vacant House of Delegates seat for Washington County. This county is primarily run by middle-aged white males so it was a surprise that they selected 1) a woman and 2) an individual of color.

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

- People person and willing to make connections with all staff, students and families; is visible to the community; takes in all perspectives prior to making a decision; takes a collaborative approach to understanding
- Provide learning opportunities for administrators /supervisors (not r/t education but leadership)
- Open to hearing from constituents but ability to not sway from political pressure

- WCPS is a business, just the funding comes to us in a different manner than private industry. The new superintendant should have business experience to help guide WCPS and make the best use of available funds. The structure and methods used in private industry also can be applied to a public school setting.
- Personable. Fair. Balanced. Thoughtful.
- The new superintendent should be someone that has the desire to work collaboratively with the elected board, staff, parents, students, unions, and local government officials. He or she should not work autonomously or be looking for a "win." We have had superintendents in the past that stayed in their office and were not seen by employees at both the central office or the schools. The chosen individual should be someone who wants to know what is going on and see first hand the great things, and not so great things, that are happening in all of our facilities. Until a superintendent visits schools on a regular basis, he or she cannot truly understand the needs of both students and staff. The superintendent should be someone who embraces the changes that are taking place in the workforce today. The superintendent should be someone who listens before making a decision and considers all possibilities and ideas, not just their own. He or she should make changes for the better, not just to make changes. If something works, it does not necessarily need to be fixed or changed.

Community Members

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

- Diverse businesses and workforce opportunities. Diverse quality of life offerings (theaters, restaurants, outdoor activities, state parks). Relatively "low" cost of living. Friendly and welcoming community.
- Our community has a lot to offer - rural, scenic, farmland, hiking, history, arts district, museums, Maryland Theatre, near the Baltimore and DC metropolitan area.
- Washington County is a wonderful community outside of Frederick, Baltimore, and Washington D.C. People grow up here, go to school here, have families and become employed within in this same community they grew up in. It's a great community with alot of potential.
- Our county has a strong rural heritage and a city that is going through a revitalization with exciting things happening. Included in this is the high school for the arts among many other great things.
- It's becoming more multicultural. There is a lot of history in our area that we value.
- It is a conservative area based on solid family and traditional values. Most of us believe the schools should teach and not try to be politically correct.
- The community is an up scale middle-class commuter bedroom town. It as well as the county is conservative.
- Small Town caring neighbors everyone looks out for one another.
- Good quality of life with great arts institutions such as MFAWC, MSo, MD theatre, BISFA, a growing area with much going for it economically
- Lots of opportunities
- We are a community that values education and public institutions.

- -Communities are generally proud of their schools and enjoy attending school events, especially for the arts-performances, art shows, sporting events, etc. -Diverse pockets across the county. -Washington county offers a beautiful rural setting, driving distance to many cities, and plenty of opportunities within this county as well.
- People seem to be supportive of each other. At least in my own neighborhood, there is strong sense of community. A family friendly environment.

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

- Tech High BISFA Free pre-K and Kindergarten Quality teaching. LOTS of opportunities for students to succeed. Generally good support from the business community - when asked for help.
- We are community oriented with our schools serving as hubs in our community, the community supports our schools and their activities, we like our heritage and our names and mascots and do not desire to change them - example: Boonsboro Warriors - we are Warrior nation and proud of the name and mascot picked by the community, the community does not have the desire to change their mascot or name.
- Washington County Public Schools has educational resources for children with a multitude of socioeconomic statuses or back grounds.
- We have dedicated teachers. Facilities seem to be very good.
- N/a. I have no more children in school.
- Students want to learn those things that will help them as they go through life. Most teachers are there to help them do just that. Sports programs are important in teaching students survival in a competitive environment
- The students are interested in getting an education. Many of the graduates attend college.
- Large sense of community! Engaged sports programs, musical programs, student involved groups that are all successful.
- Dynamic school system with dedicated teachers and volunteers
- Love our small school for elementary. Community is involved in our local schools
- The bus transportation is great. The schools are in very good condition. Excellent infrastructure for learning.
- -teachers in this community are passionate and caring -most schools are nicely integrated with up to date technology -great efforts within the county to get the community involved with various events and social media involvement - was the most present superintendent that I have ever seen over the years. I appreciated his efforts to visit all schools and be with the teachers, students, and in the community.
- Many of the educators are very invested in the kids and their educations.

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

- There could be a better working relationship with the business and nonprofit community, including partnering with decisions being made for student curriculum, collaboration with activities, and sharing/leveraging community/business/WCPS resources. There could be a more enhanced working partnership with Hagerstown Community College. It's

"good" right now, and there is room for more work together. There appears to be more than the "usual" friction between the County Commissioners, who fund much of the WCPS budget, and the BOE members and Superintendent. There needs to be more dialogue (solution focused) and less debate (problem and blame focused).

- The county operates on a limited budget, just as individuals, they should expect to live within their means, thus operate the Board of Education with the given budget. Money does not necessarily make smarter, more successful students, it is not always the answer or the only answer. Think outside the box.
- The MD General assembly has recently adopted the Kirwin Blueprint for the future which will allow for college ready students to attend Hagerstown CC after 10th grade. There is not one in WCPS that has any significant experience with dual enrollment. The new Supt. would be wise to develop a strong relationship with HCC's President.
- This district has struggled with moving forward politically, racially, economically and technologically. Washington County wants to stay the old time home town from the 50s, 60s and 70s which drives out the younger generation to move to places like Frederick, Baltimore, DC or out of state. Washington County struggles with diversity though the population is diverse. Washington County is incredibly segregated. Diversity draws in possibilities and fresh visions as opposed to continuing the same old policies and expectations. Diversity doesn't mean black and white. Diversity means more than that. There is so much opportunity just outside of Washington County not limited to include the option to telework, higher wages, a diverse workforce, opportunities to move up without being grandfathered in, etc. That is why people flow in and out of the district. Regardless if people want to admit it there is still an issue with ageism, racism, the lack of willingness to move on technologically and be more remote or even have the option. This idea of the traditional 9-5, stand in the office and gossip as opposed to productivity being measured by trust is a problem. If people want to telework and can do their jobs efficiently. Let them. If people want to go to the office and feel more comfortable in the office. Let them. If people don't want to wear a mask. Don't wear a mask. If people don't want to get vaccinated. That's their choice. Provide options! Too much at Washington County is black and white. Its often heard that this superintendent liked paper and binders or this superintendent liked such and such. It shouldn't be about that persons preference it should be about what's fair across the board for all stakeholders and what's best for the children of the county. Personal preference is a problem. What is best for the county? To compete with options other counties are giving and work. All more than older Caucasian men and women in higher positions of power. Asians, african americans, latinos, etc. should be considered for positions they're qualified for not because of you who know in the position or because of the need to fill some diversity quota to provide the impression diversity and inclusion is working. As you look at the photos of previous superintendents there is zero diversity. The truth is Washington County has a lot of potential but no one is willing to admit they're a racist, politically motivated and/or happen to have been networking in the county since childhood to get a position they may not deserve. I believe in this county, I see the potential for what it could be but staying in the past like BOCC same members and people cycling through will never allow this county to grow to its full potential without diversity in thought, staff, scheduling, vision, etc. This is somewhat of a ramble but as a resident of this county for 14 years it's sad to see the potential continually almost get there and then

people that do not want to change their ways always win. Change is scary but remaining stagnant is as well. The world is changing with or without Washington County.

- There is a growing sentiment that student behavior is driving many parents away from public school in favor of home schooling or private schooling.
- CRT and all it's deceptive names, parental rights.
- Washington County is a blue color community with the majority of professionals working outside the county. There is a drug problem in the schools. Teachers are professionals and should dress accordingly.
- Drugs are in the school. Classes are not homogeneously grouped. There is no dress code for the teachers.
- Concerned with drugs creeping into the school.
- Need to expand dual credit options in skilled trades. Greater emphasis on high school teachers with advanced degrees in their discipline.
- I don't really see us has being very different from most areas, drugs, disrespect towards authority, lots of diversity.
- The county school system is not well integrated with the local community college. Leadership-level relationships between the two are limited.
- -Special education department needs an overhaul. Higher turnover than in years past due to lack of support and willingness to work together starting at the top. It once was a strong department but has suffered for several years now due to lack of leadership. - student behaviors are a growing concern across all grade levels -would like to see more autonomy in the county, for instance on planning or county education days-feels like teachers and other professionals are not trusted as adults -terrible interviews, lack of professionalism with leaders on cell phones during the process. It was obvious that candidates were not given consideration due to what was allowed during the interview.
- Certain conservative communities are inhibiting the acquiring and retention of potential candidates for career educators. A naively narrow world view permeates the county's culture.

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

- Community involvement - not just around school activities, although that, obviously, is a priority. Be visible and accessible to all community stakeholders. Collaborator.
- They should embrace our community and our conservative values. They should support teaching our children reading, writing and arithmetic - the basics - and let the parents instill values and politics
- Strong demonstrated leadership
- Ethics and diversity, confidentiality, public speaking, neutrality (no friendships in the building), charisma, care for staff and students, driven, honest, transparent, willing to embrace change
- Willingness to work with a community that struggles with growing diversity. Creatively address an increased perception that student behavior in the classroom is a major issue. Understand we have a large home school population. Support advanced learning opportunities offered to high school students at the community college.
- A history of working with the parents and he/she should be a registered Republican.

- The new superintendent should be a good listener, a strong manager and be fiscally responsible. They should also be willing to set aside to randomly visit classrooms.
- He/she should be a good manager of personnel and an outstanding manager of money. He/she should understand money does not equate with a quality education.
- He or She needs to understand this area does not lean left. We believe gender topics are best taught at home! Social issues should not be a priority reading, writing and math should be the focus!
- Great leadership skills that is very plugged into the changing requirements of the workplace.
- Integrity, honest, listening and supporting their staff and parents
- Humility, pragmatism, and altruism. No big egos are useful in such a large community.
- First, I am appreciative of the survey to offer input as a former tenured (10+ years) employee of WCPS. I left due to lack of leadership in the special education dept and lack of opportunities for personal growth and went where I could continue to grow my skill sets in a leadership role. Listening, patience, and humbleness are essential skills and qualities for the next superintendent as well as possessing the ability to communicate to a diverse community. These seem like obvious qualities, however it will be invaluable for the next leader so should be stated. In this county, some may be resistant to change but it can still happen with how the changes are delivered and communicated. Let the community, more specifically parents and teachers, other staff at WCPS offer input to such as this survey. I look forward to seeing someone that can come here, embrace what Washington county has to offer and continue to push WCPS forward, helping to educate and prepare our younger community members for a future of success. They are our future and we need to make sure that our children have what they need to thrive.
- Thoughtful responses to community concerns. Not dismissive of educator opinions on issues. Willingness to visit classrooms more frequently.

Non-Certificated Staff

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

- The County is a mix of city and rural.

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

- We have amazing schools as in the Fairview Outdoor School, Barbara Ingram, and the Technical High School. The quantity of elementary schools. That fosters community, school family, and smaller class sizes.

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

- My concern is about students that miss an extraordinary amount of days of school. There are students that have missed over 100 days of the 180 days of school and are passed on to the next grade. The premise is that if the student is held back they are more likely to quit high school being older. However, when the students misses time, especially on the elementary grade levels, this is concerning because of the foundational skills they are missing; addition, subtraction, etc. So how is the student not going to be frustrated and have a harder time coping and learning concepts like algebra and geometry when they missed basic math skills. Math being just an example. This skill could also be applied to reading/language skills. Also, as a side note, students seem not to have spelling any longer. We are seeing the detrimental effects of this. Not every communication is through electronics with spell check. Also, the spelling must be close for spell check to work. How many use lesser vocabulary due to not being able to spell. Also, that know that most parents want summer vacation. We do not want year round school. The vocational/trade school should not just be for the students with the best grades. Many of students that are choosing this path because school is tough for them and college may not be an option.

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

- The ability to relate to and communicate with the families from city and rural. Not every school in our county has the same demographics. The ability and desire to relate with staff in every area of the schools from custodian, ESP, as well as teachers. The ability to know that there are males and females. A person with biblical values would be a great asset to the county.

Parents

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

- People are very tied to their communities. There is very much a sense of community identity that people feel makes them different than neighboring areas.
- A lot of historical sites nearby and beautiful parks.
- Conservative values
- Lots of programs available outside of schools for children including sports, scouts, and camps over the summer. The community seems to look out for each other and keep each other informed.
- There's a lower cost of living than in Frederick or Montgomery County and less traffic. Maryland overall is a wonderful state with a variety of outdoor activities available.
- Many small communities here are very tight-knit and will support each other.
- The community is range in economic status and educational background. People are genuinely kind.
- Recently moving from a larger county, the “small town” feeling that Washington County provides is something my family enjoys. These types of counties and towns are the backbone of this nation and it needs to be maintained. We do not need to turn into a carbon copy of other locations.
- Washington county is growing in population and is becoming more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity and sociology-economics.
- Good business and restaurants.
- I can't generalize for the county except to say that children are valued. There is a broad spectrum as far as our county's average level of education, parental expectations, parent involvement, and respect for our teachers & administrators. The parents I've met are interested in the success of their kids, they value manners and kindness, and they involve their kids in lots of activities and sports. Also, they seem to be supportive of fundraisers.
- Washington County is a fairly quiet community that is growing. It is scenic and offers an abundance of outdoor activity year round. People know each other and their families. There's a community feel.
- The people that stood up for our kids against the mandates.
- Washington county is still conservative compared to the rest of the state
- Kids
- We just moved to the area and love this history we have surrounding us. We also love all the down to earth folks that we have met.
- Washington County is a beautiful area. nature/wildlife, family values, farms, history. Some of the small towns are tight-knit and care about each other.
- We have a very diverse community and some of the most, caring & intelligent kiddos you could ever find.
- Our community values conservative ideas and freedom guaranteed by God and our Constitution.
- Continue to work to make it better for the kids

- We live in an area where we have mountains, beaches and lots of history all within 15mins to 3 hrs of driving. Many areas in our community are still small and they rally around those when their are needs.
- A very welcoming community, small town feel, high expectations to keep up a quality of education.
- Small town feel with big city amenities.
- Low cost of living, small town feel in close proximity to city amenities, close proximity to outdoor activities
- I live in the town of Smithsburg, we moved here in March 2018. I can tell you that this community is very strong and tight knit. They welcomed us with open arms and made us feel very comfortable. We lived in Frederick previously, but are from rural Southern MD originally. Washington County reminds us of home, where we both grew up. Slower pace, laid back, community first type setting. When someone has a problem, the community comes together to help aid any way they can. Read the local paper, see the community ways. That tells you a LOT about how this community comes together.
- The people that stood up for our kids against the mandates.
- Small, historically supportive, diverse
- It's safe and hosts inclusive events.
- Our community as a whole tends to be very patriotic and leans towards the conservative side. The community values tradition as well as traditional curriculum. The community believes that education should take place in schools, and NOT let politics interfere.
- Relatively safe. Decent hardworking people who want their kids to succeed and to protect them from inappropriate classroom agendas and grooming behavior.

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

- There are a number of really caring staff who go above and beyond to do what is best for the students.
- There are a lot of great teachers.
- Teachers are passionate
- High-level instruction is encouraged and teachers are highly-qualified. Communication is improving in that it's not just relying on one source to spread news.
- Overall, I think the schools are good and the teachers are trying their very best.
- At our elementary school, the teachers and administrators are very responsive and caring and involved with the students. I don't feel that represents the entire district though.
- The teachers seem to care about their students and want to see each of them succeed. The front office staff such as school registrar or attendance secretary are engaged and kind.
- The most important thing is the schools fit the needs of the students. Students can interact with their teachers and staff on a more personal level so students feel safe and heard.
- Many of the schools have very dedicated staff and teachers. WCPS teachers are very dedicated to students.
- Usually good teachers.
- Communication from teachers to parents is a priority and I appreciate that. I used to sub for the county and I found the teachers to be collaborative, efficient, and focused. The

county tends to hire teachers from the area (trained in similar methods) so that helps with consistency and cohesion. Also, a lot of our county schools have smaller class sizes which is nice.

- Schools are student centered. Decisions are made in the best interest of students.
- My son is in magnet program. That program is great overall. He absolutely loves it and teachers have always been great.
- Washington county seems to respect the views of the majority
- Schools are generally good but need more support from the community. Work to support students.
- Sharpsburg elementary. It is so awesome to have a new school building and great teachers and staff to fill it. Love that we have a counselor dedicated to our building. I hope all schools have this.
- I think there are a lot of "home grown" teachers which I think speaks highly of the area and schools.
- Our schools have caring staff who go above and beyond the call of duty.
- The teachers who care - care deeply however there aren't enough
- We have many wonderful teachers and support staff. We still have many small schools where each student is known by name, which gives such a community feel.
- Caring teachers and principals
- The high standards of education, the technology use in the schools, the support of the teachers and school staff
- Caring teachers and leadership who go beyond for their kids.
- Relatively diverse schools, active parental involvement (depending on school)
- Our daughter goes to Old Forge Elementary for Pre-K. We LOVE this school. From the teachers, secretary, all the way up to the Principal. Our neighbors are custodial and cafeteria staff up at Smithsburg Elementary, and they are great.
- My son is in magnet program. That program is great overall. He absolutely loves it and teachers have always been great.
- Not much good to say this year but last year pur daughters previous school was fabulous. Staff were knowledgeable, went the extra mile, communicated regularly with parents and involved parents in their child's education. Unfortunately none of that is happening now.
- EKD is very caring and community oriented.
- Technology is available to students who can not provide their own. Overall the teachers work very hard to deliver quality instruction given the limited time and resources they are given, as well as the impossible situations they can be put it by misbehaving students and/or unrealistic expectations.
- Comparatively our schools are better than many in the state, but that's a low bar. Overall my children have enjoyed their teachers and class activities, with some exceptions and of course the covid virtual learning nightmare.

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

- Our county as a whole is fractured politically and the divide is getting bigger. There are a number of very vocal community members who want things done their way even at the

cost of, or especially because of, minority students. Not only our students of color, but those who identify as other than heterosexual, those whose gender identity may not match their birth certificate, or those dealing with physical or mental challenges. There is a "good old boys" mentality within our county government system that does not value what WCPS provides to the county, and has actively undermined efforts to better support our school system.

- Need more support for students who struggle emotionally, academically, and physically. Need more real and purposeful resources in place for teachers and students. Paras need to be paid more and appreciated.
- There is pornography in the library books. Against the will of parents, gender ideology is being taught in classrooms.
- It seems like more decisions are being left up to the government and unions, and less input is gathered from parents. As of covid, parents are not as encouraged to participate in school events as they were before hand.
- It's a diverse county with a variety of political views, the same with most counties in the US. Some of the schools are in real need of repair.
- Teachers are burnt out. Making teaching as a profession better and you can hire and retain better teachers. Pay better and support teachers better. Hire and retain more counselors who actually have time to support mental health rather than just address schedules. I hear a lot about behavior issues across the district because schools are short-staffed and students are acting out. Special education is especially a concern. Yes, this absolutely reflects the issues the education system is dealing with nationally, but that's not an excuse. Be a catalyst for healthy, student- and staff-centered change.
- There is a lack of diversity in staff. It is extremely important that students have representation in their educators. Lack of parent communication by school system such as policy changes by the BOE especially policy changes that will affect a student or parent daily interaction with the school system. For example, when there is a change to a policy such as send a handwritten note to school for the secretary to receive it so you can pick up your student up early, an email from the school system informing parents of the change is appreciated. Please make the Washington County Public School Website more user friendly. The design and layout are not user friendly for parents to find information. Please make more information available online.
- Parents are involved in the lives of their children. We will be aware of all material taught in classrooms and all resources provided to students by educators. As taxpayers indirectly paying salaries of staff and teachers, parents will be heard with any and all questions and concerns.
- The superintendent should be aware that the district lacks resources and staff when it comes to providing adequate services to students with IEPs. Students--as well as families--with special needs have struggled to get appropriate accommodations
- Behaviors, poverty, family makeup. Also that majority of parents DO NOT want a wine agenda for schools. Parental rights need to be respected.
- There is need for improvement in respectfully addressing racial and socioeconomic diversity. Teachers need to be better trained in classroom management, and the district should require Ruby Payne training, especially for schools with high rates of poverty. Effective teachers need to be culturally literate within their assigned communities. And, when they're transferred, they need to recalibrate for the needs of their new school.

- Even though WCPS is student centered, the fun has been taken out of school. Kids are not allowed to be kids. Decisions about students are made based on what's good for them academically but not based on the whole child. Kids should still be allowed to socialize and be outdoors. Recess time is limited in some schools and there's no school "parties" for special occasions like Halloween and Valentine's Day. And we wonder why kids have a hard time socializing? They are given the chance to. It is important to their growth and development. The final candidates should also have ideas to help promote staff retention and it seems the turnover rates are high.
- Stand up for our kids when they force things like masks. We moved our kindergartener to private school because of the rules with masks. He was 5 and seeing the teachers mouth is essential for learning sounds for reading. Honestly the private school had zero mask mandate and he progressed so much faster than kids in public school. We left our middle son in only because he was in magnet program. But we are moving him to private school next year because we were so impressed with not only how they handled the mandate but the kids progress so much faster than public school. We did leave our oldest in the public school there since he didn't want to switch schools. He is middle school so we gave him the choice. I wish Washington county was on par with private. There would be so many more kids that have success.
- Transgender issues have become a hot button issue. If you want the support of Washington county don't support trans bs. Also respect the parents opinions on all topics
- This is a community that often seems to not value education. Cutting taxes is always the priority and if education suffers - so be it. New superintendent will have to work with local politicians who do not value what WCPS tries to do...
- We are looking for some extra help in math for our 3rd grader. Her teacher has been staying after school to help her out, but it would great to have a staff member dedicated to helping kids catch up that are behind. At other schools she has had title 9 math help during the school day. I also think our schools are going to need lots of support staff to help them navigate more social emotional learning.
- This is a conservative area and we want to keep it that way. I do worry about downtown Hagerstown: violence, homelessness, panhandlers. Are we making sure our kids have their best opportunities to succeed after graduation?
- There are very inappropriate things being taught in the health classes (ie having to do with genders & abortion) - elementary/middle school students need not be introduced to these issues so young; that is a parent's right. There are inappropriate, smutty books in our school libraries that attempt to normalize pedophilia. There are also bullying & violence issues in many county schools (Jonathan Hager, South High to name a few).
- Our schools are over crowded, many aging buildings, and teachers are not afforded enough planning time to prepare for their days. Due to the restrictions of the past 2 years our students are suffering from mental anguish, they need to return to normal so they can see the future is bright. Restrictions have cost valuable learning and our children have fallen behind. CRT, the normalization of pedophilia, and gender destruction must be taken out of our curriculum and school libraries.
- The community is very sensitive to some of the issues that have come up in other areas with regards to CRT and pushing sexualization and gender studies on young children. A new superintendent should be aware that Washington County is not Montgomery county or even Frederick and if they allow any of those topics in schools the community will not

embrace them. Focus on teaching the fundamentals of education to set children up for success in life.

- Indoctrination CRT Inappropriate sex education Rights of parents and students to decide their health and well being
- Violence, drugs and bullying all seem to be on the rise. Due to the pandemic (it seems) student are behind in grade level and need assistance getting back on par, not bringing the bar down. Administration needs to handle more behavior problems and leave teachers to do what they do best and that is teach.
- Student behavior issues within the schools/classrooms have increased in past couple years. Inconsistency in how unsafe working environment for staff and student safety are addressed across the county.
- The consistently low reading scores and levels of African-American students
- Parents are becoming more concerned about what is being taught in the schools and what is being seen in other districts in the nation. More affluent families will migrate to private schools if inappropriate content is taught to young children (i.e. elementary school sex education). Teachers should be able to take charge of the classroom without fear of reprimand. The quality of education is declining because of classroom distractions and unaddressed behavior issues. Schools need to offer classes on life skills such as cooking, financial management, etc.
- More engagement with parents between home and school. I would like to see more school events at the elementary school level, like after school family activities once a month or once a marking period.
- A large number of the parents are not interested in science in this county! Making scientific decisions could be met with backlash.
- High poverty, provincial thinking
- Be aware that while this is a more rural county, there is some city in there too. Hagerstown can be difficult, not Baltimore difficult, but still difficult. When you get out to the rural parts of the county, you better like the smell of poop (cow, pig, you name it!). This is a farming county, and still VERY active. A lot of families still have their family farms, so they will put that first. We also have some people coming from the DC/Montgomery/Frederick county areas too, so that is going to impact our schools as well.
- limited resources, significant concerns for children's mental health - we are expecting kids to act/ perform like COVID never happened and these kids aren't behind socially (FYI- they are)! We can't apply 2019 standards in 2022. Curriculum is not rigorous enough and relies top heavily on iPad and you tube videos (ex- videos reading Kindergarteners stories instead if teacher OR having thr kids read themselves). Misinformation regarding legal requirements for special education(504/IEP) services. Staff need better compliance training. Teachers need to be held to higher standards and Curriculum needs to be rigorous and focus on fundamentals- the core curriculum is a disaster. Gifted education for young students needs to be expanded upon and brought online early on in education- will significantly cut down on. behavior concerns for some students.
- The curriculum is too advanced for the students and the lessen plans are too packed for the teachers to spend time with students to guarantee understanding.

- Teachers and parents look to you to be a leader, someone who is strong, and willing to take input from everyone before making final decisions on things that impact everyone in the system. Teachers and parents are hopeful that you will value them and respect them as an integral part of your job.
- There is no room in school for sexual/gender discussions except strictly biological functions in middle/high school. If I find out my elementary children are being exposed to disgusting topics or grooming behavior, they will be homeschooled. My kids know what to look for, I've warned them and they are letting me know what they hear. CRT/SEL is the same thing. If they are made to feel less than or 'bad' because of the color of their skin or background, they don't belong in that school or wcps. We see what's happening in Frederick County so it's on its way to Washington.

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

- They need to be able to play the political game to do what is right for our students while trying to win over our community. They need to be able to truly listen to the experiences of staff who are in the schools and seriously consider any relevant suggestions. They need to lead by example and not by fear or intimidation.
- Someone compassionate and appreciative of all the hard work that goes into educating students. Some one willing to advocate for teachers and students.
- Needs to be fair and balanced. Children should be educated not indoctrinated to the right or left side of things.
- I think the superintendent has to have the balance of listening to both parents and teachers equally. They also need to know what's going on at the school level and not just in central office. They need to make visiting schools a priority and listening to each schools community a priority because there are different communities within the county.
- This person should be calm, well versed in education, and able to deal with the environment surrounding schools today with care, compassion, intelligence, and humility.
- Forward-thinking; willing to actually consider science and health experts and make data-driven decisions for for students and staff, prioritizing mental health, safe communities, and the joys of childhood and teaching children over rigorous academic achievement.
- Flexibility in thinking, aware of historical racial practices and techniques that inhibit disproportion groups of people and takes real steps to prevent those practices within the school system. Kindness, understanding of technology and the benefits of utilizing it for students and for parents. Taking real steps to communicate with parents and keep them updated on policy changes. Someone who sees parents as a partner and embraces them. Someone who is wise and has an openness to the everchanging educational climate such as research and peer reviewed data showing what is working to enhance student's education, wellbeing and school quality of life. A passion for improving the opportunities for students such as magnet programs, lottery opportunities, and postsecondary opportunities. Increasing partnership in education with a range of stakeholders (not just local entities). Someone who is resilient and embraces a variety of opinions and thoughts.

- One that views the parents as parents of the students and respects their voices. One that provides proper resources to schools and ensures each school is evenly distributed to.
- The new superintendent should come into the position with experience working in an environment that recognizes and celebrates ethnic, racial and cultural diversity. The next superintended should show an openness to making major changes to encourage more diversity and inclusion in the classroom
- Good with budgets, aware of what's appropriate for different ages of kids, understand behaviors and low income issues. Needs to be fair and not driven by one political side.
- They should be straightforward, resilient, wise, and circumspect.
- It would be nice to have a female or diverse candidate who is familiar with a community similar to WCPS. Also- someone who can promote the growth and change necessary as our community grows and changes.
- Fight for our kids and parents rights. The biggest difference I saw between public and private school is the parent involvement. Public school it feels like they don't want you there. They want you to stay away from being involved. Private school they actively work to get the parents there at the school. They want involvement from the parents. Someone who pushes for that train of thought is who we need. More parent involvement is essential to better performing students.
- Understand the parents in the community. Parents have a right to their childrens educational decisions
- Must be able to speak with people and make them understand the importance of quality public education.
- Knowledge of special education and pupil services. They should be willing to listen to all parents, teachers and staff, not just the loud ones. Our educators and staff have been through a lot in the last couple years. They need a superintendent that will support them
- flexible, cooperative, open, communicative, patient,
- It is imperative that any new superintendent recognizes parents' rights.
- The new superintendent must possess conservative American values. He or she must put the students of Washington County ahead of bureaucracy.
- The candidate should be someone that is from the county or at a minimum has lived in Washington County and has a vested interest in the long term success of the school system. The candidate should also be personable and seen. They need to be willing to routinely travel to all of the schools and go to sporting events, concerts, and other events.
- They should be able to make hard decisions and not cater to peer pressure See all sides of a situation Must recognize the home and parents as the primary decision maker for their students
- They need to have experienced a classroom for many years. You don't make a good admin if you have never walked in a teachers shoes. Open minded and willing to take feedback and others options/ideas from staff and parents. The understanding that we have a range of diversity, in culture and life experiences from very rural (farms) to downtown city.
- Honesty, integrity and desire to visit classrooms regularly to listen to teachers and staff concerns. Leadership and personal relation skills. Supportive of employees and have best interest of all stakeholders when decisions are made.
- Some out of the box strategies

- Have the ability to stand up for the children, to ensure that they are given an unbiased, quality education. Willingness to listen to the feedback of the children and parents from all groups without regard to their race, gender, ethnicity, etc. Strong financial skills to make cost effective and appropriate budget allocations to address issues or upgrades in older school buildings.
- A strong, respectful, relatable and ENGAGING leader, positive outlook on our county's educational future. Strong communication with parents.
- Believes in Science, Separation of Church & State, prepared to be unpopular to make best public safety decisions regarding covid.
- Be willing to live in and be involved in local community. Be able to connect with a variety of people. Be satisfied with incremental progress achieved through growing community consensus.
- You have to be all about the kids. In the end, that is what is most important. Making sure the kids get the education they deserve. One would hope that they'd be willing to step in if help is needed at any level. Don't let your title make you better than the rest. Everyone in every job title is valuable. How you treat your staff, parents and kids will say a LOT about your character. And that is very important out this way. Your character is priceless.
- Fight for our kids and parents rights. The biggest difference I saw between public and private school is the parent involvement. Public school it feels like they don't want you there. They want you to stay away from being involved. Private school they actively work to get the parents there at the school. They want involvement from the parents. Someone who pushes for that train of thought is who we need. More parent involvement is essential to better performing students.
- Unbiased, fair, honest, a previous PhD level educator with management (scholastic and budgetary) skills, willing to listen to parental concerns (suggest a online Q/A forum) and he/she needs to wipe the board and start again with a fresh perspective because our kids are suffering with a board applying old standards to a new post/continuing COVID world.
- To be able to admit when the system is failing and not push an agenda that leaves too many students behind, too stressed.
- Having been a teacher for several years, having been a school administrator for several years, have children who have gone through school - all of these to ensure the person can see things from all perspectives. The superintendent should be fair and firm when it comes to all who they correspond with and not be afraid to do the right thing for children. The superintendent should be visible and recognized by staff and students - go into the schools and see what is happening. The superintendent should willingly seek out advice and information from all types of stakeholders - especially teachers and parents - because the decisions affect everyone.
- The highest priority is LEARNING and proven RESULTS for these children to be highly educated (math, reading, science, history) and be able to hold a job and create a life for themselves with hard work and good values, set for them at home and nurtured (not subverted) by the schools. Leave all the rest of your rotten emotional/sexual/race-baiting at the door. No one who loves their children wants any of that mess. Y'all need to focus on these kids and their real test scores. MD is behind in everything. My 4th grader says half her class can barely write. Keep the kids off the devices. It's ruining them and dumbing them down. More functional, in person, hands on learning is what is needed.

Students

No Responses

Teachers

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

- This community is always growing and is starting to change some things for the better. I have grown up in this community, went away for college and came back to Hagerstown to teach. I think that it is important to see how much great potential this area has and someone coming to this position should think about how they can use the resources we already have in order to make it a better place. Always adding new things aren't always the answer. We have a new city council and a female mayor which is the first time in our history we have had that. I think they have a lot of good envisions on how to enhance this community and I think that the superintendent should be able to collaborate with them in order to make our schools and community better for everyone.
- Boonsboro is a small but developing community , but changing as new families move in. We have become much more diverse and less rural.
- Our community is beautiful and diverse. We have many cultures coming together which I think is a beautiful thing. We have history and historical sites but also cultural and artistic opportunities with the theaters, museums, and cultural trail. We have great restaurants. We also have the benefits of being a bit rural but having close access to shopping, groceries, and amenities while also being within driving distance of a day in a big city, the mountains, or the beach. I love our access to DC and Baltimore and the surrounding areas. Our community has so much potential to be realized.
- Close to many businesses, historical sites, close to DC, Maryland Theater, HCC, diverse population, lots of small businesses,
- The community is diverse, friendly and welcoming. The area is also steeped in history, with a positive atmosphere and culture.
- We live in a diverse, growing community. There are so many different walks of life in Washington County and I think that's what makes us great. The people that live here care about their communities and their children's education, for the most part.
- Safe and many interesting recreational opportunities.
- Check with Washington County visitors center.
- The Arts are supported
- Small, caring and welcoming.
- Students, parents and teachers work together for better education for our students
- Small, caring and welcoming.
- Close knit, caring and compassionate to those less fortunate.
- Generally friendly people live here. Many are active in faith communities. Cold weather shelter mostly run by a coalition of church volunteers. It is beautiful, close to large metro areas, has an airport, a beautiful art museum, values the arts in education, has Maryland Symphony, Orchestra, movie theaters, shopping outlet, state and national parks.

- We have a variety of types of professionals and hardworking families. We have lots of outdoor and recreation activities. Great parks, waterfalls, lakes, and beautiful overlooks and hikes. We live very close to historical sites and landmarks that give you a city experience!
- Not much
- Lots of activity and community events, a busy community
- Abundant community resources, beautiful locations, many groups interested in supporting education.
- Our county is full of diversity in many areas. School to school ranges from issues regarding poverty rates, social emotional behaviors, and parent involvement. This county has changed vastly in just the 9 years I have taught. We need more programs in our schools dealing with behavior issues rather than curriculum.
- Great people reside in our community. The kids are amazing and willing to learn to be great civilians.
- Closeness, genuity and supportive
- • Proximity to many large cities • Outdoor activities • Historic sites • Increasingly diverse population • Many small, local businesses • Businesses and non-profits supportive • Resources for families and individuals in need, but not enough • Many jobs (but no many high wage jobs) • Large medical facility in the community • HCC is an asset. Affordable education. • Lots of shopping • Maryland Theater • Downtown is beginning a Renaissance
- We are close to many historical sites as well as the Potomac River. We have a community college -HCC. The Maryland Theatre is in Downtown Hagerstown and the area is being revitalized. Our population is diverse and we are within 30 minutes to an hours drive to larger cities.
- Lots of great historical events that have happened in the county and state.
- We have a diverse community from city and urban life to country and farming life. We are close to larger cities and have many opportunities within our county.
- It is a hard working blue collar community
- The community is tight-knit community and comes from a strong and rich history which this area is proud of and holds onto dearly. The community is also of proud of our traditions in each school area such as the Grid Iron Classic, yet is also happy to usher in new ideas such as outside graduations and other ideas brought forward by students to administrators.
- We are a small, but strong community.
- I'm rather new to the community, so I don't have much to say here. I do see the vast amounts of potential from each member, however, and I hope that we can work together to realize this potential and manifest it for the better of our students and families.
- Beautiful outdoor recreation opportunities
- Washington County is a very close knit community. There are people who are invested in making the area better for the next generation.
- Washington County Public Schools are located in a beautifully diverse area of Northern Maryland. The schools range from the rural area of Hancock, MD to the city schools of Hagerstown, MD. The median income of the 150,109 total population of the county is

\$60,860. There are a total of 56,035 households in the county with 79% of the residents being white, 10% black, 5% hispanic, 2% Asian and 4% of two or more races.

- We have so many beautiful areas in the county to explore. We are so fortunate to have the C & O canal and its amenities as well in many of our communities. History!!! SO many important historic sites available to explore. Friendly.....the people in Washington county are friendly and just good kind people
- We are located near mountains, rivers, and rural areas as well as urban and metropolitan areas. We have close knit communities.
- Everyone should work together to help make decisions about what happens in the schools, not just the Board of Education.
- Location to major cities
- There is a solid community effort to develop and support new businesses. I have seen an uptick in community events. The cost of living is manageable.
- Location to major cities
- Easy access to heroin and great hiking/outdoor activities
- Diverse
- It is diverse and growing more so. The location is a hub for other communities. It is close to cities while maintaining a more rural feeling.
- We have a lot of resources in our downtown area, and a lot of historical areas to visit.
- Outdoor activities, access to Baltimore and Washington DC, lots of history and historical places
- Close to D.C and Baltimore. Access to 81 and 70.
- diversity
- Some people are starting to take care of our environment.
- Others a genuinely willing and happy to help in any way when someone is in need.
- Great kids and families live in our community. There is a value on the arts and it brings joy!
- I live in Boonsboro and my children attend and graduated from Boonsboro High. Close knit school and sports focused community. It's a rural community. A large part of the community were born and raised here. However, more and more transplants are relocating to this area every year.
- Supportive community
- I teach in a city school. We don't really have a community, per se. It's an eclectic population of rich and poor, black and white, minority and majority, etc. It is a microcosm of many communities in the US.
- I live in a community steeped in tradition and diversity. Our students and parents love seeing the positive things that come out of our school system. They love to see the kids succeed in sports and academics.
- The community comes together in times of need.
- Diverse
- Washington County has a great mix of small town charm with desirable restaurants and entertainment. Plus, we are a short drive from DC and Baltimore metro areas that offer even more opportunities for fun, sports, and food.
- They are tight-knit and care about their neighbors.
- We live in a very diverse, thoughtful community that has education as a priority.

- Close to all!! Airports, DC, Mountains, Beaches, History, Cost of living
- Diverse
- The community of parents, companies, businesses, schools support our schools. This was evident during Covid when the parents organized parades for kids.
- Washington County offers close proximity to major metro areas while also providing small town/rural options for residents to raise families. Many parents commute out of the county, and because of the proximity to the Quad-state (PA, MD, VA, WV), many WCPS staff commute in to the county to work. We have a strong teachers association that attempts to work with the Superintendent and the WCPS leadership team collaboratively. We have an active "Hagerstown Hopes" organization that promotes understanding of the LGBTQ+ community throughout Washington County.
- People are mostly kind and supportive.
- We have an incredibly diverse population in the county area, as well as a mix of economy based on industry and agriculture. We have a lot of local history related to national events.
- Relatively safe outside of right downtown.
- Washington county is in a great area. We also pay teachers a livable wage which is very nice. First year teachers make 56,000. I know people who have a masters degree and been teaching for years and make less then that.
- The community is diverse and celebrates this diversity.
- We have a lot of great things happening! We are trying to revitalize our downtown and there are some exciting initiatives about to begin. We have great supports throughout the community that help to support WCPS.
- Historical and beautiful; close to metro areas; relatively low taxes for MD; growing industry with Amazon, etc
- Parents care about schools. Community pride, Thriving Arts District, Washington County has a little bit of everything - Big city to rural countries, large industry to family farms making it not a 1 size fits all.
- -Great parks in each of the towns. Many different community activities are offered at each one. Different sporting programs, crafts, cultural activities, etc. -We have the MSO which puts on great concerts. You are able to stay in our community and hear such great concerts. -4th of July at Antietam National Battlefield. -People are always willing to help each other out. People pull together in times of need. It is very heartwarming. - You are close to VA, PA, and WV. This allows you to experience many new things being so close to them.
- Our community is diverse, full of people that want to make a change. We have our challenges though, and right now we need a very strong leader to support these changing times.
- Our community rallies together when people are in need and stands together when it matters the most. Most people are kind hearted and good natured people that just want the best for our communities. Our community loves our children, and we want the best for them in this ever-changing world.
- Rich history, proximity to larger cities, beautiful rural areas, a growing population of diverse people from many backgrounds
- We are a diverse county with many great landmarks, schools, and community events.

- WashCo is making moves. Changes are being made to improve our community/downtown and I am so excited!
- Hundreds of years of history, dating back to the colonial era. Pride in the community. Pride in schools.
- Washington County offers a little of something for everyone.
- The community has a number of resources available to help low income families and the homeless (Ex. Children in Need, Reach etc....). The community has organized fundraisers at various places for children who have had cancer or other illnesses. Make a Wish also has helped many of our students. Many citizens, in the area are affiliated and active with a church. There are great festivals...Hispanic Festival, German Festival, Blues Festival etc.... A lot of different events on the weekends and a really great Art Museum and Theater. There are beautiful Parks ,Trails (Hiking/Biking) , Golf Courses, and Ski areas. Washington County, MD is close to VA, WV,PA, and DC .

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

- I think the teachers are very passionate even when we have been teaching through very difficult times. I think that students are successful because teachers don't want to see them fail. It is a small community, even though we are continuing to grow but I think there are traditions that make us unique. School grounds are well taken care of and all ESP staff work extremely hard to make our schools and classrooms run smoothly.
- Small, with parent involvement
- Our schools have dedicated staff and wonderful students. There are many opportunities for students to pursue their passions and areas of strength, which need to be expanded. I think it is wonderful how diverse our schools and student populations are and we need to celebrate and reflect that in our policies and practices.
- Strong administration, collaboration among teachers and staff, respect among staff to each other and kids
- The schools in Washington County all pride themselves on having a sense of community.
- The sense of community that some schools have is truly amazing - this comes from good leadership and a drive of the whole staff, stakeholders and student population to do good for themselves and their communities. It's successful if the leadership makes it a priority, the schools that understand why we do what we do everyday and remind themselves of that constantly are the schools that succeed in this county.
- Usually top performing system. (Always in the top 3 counties in the state) Two Superintendents ago , this system was run into the ground and are now 13th or 14th in the state. The "bones" are still good but need new leadership.
- Teachers and staff that truly care and try to teach (despite being overworked, having poor leadership, and no support from the board of ed).
- The staff has a sense of community
- Family oriented team atmosphere.
- Students are learning and there are great teachers in WCPS
- Family oriented team atmosphere.

- Teachers work collaboratively and readily share information / ideas across teams, school, county. Teachers are dedicated, professional and genuinely strive to do what is best for students .
- Caring teachers
- Often the schools have state sport teams champs, academics are solid, one of 2 state public arts schools, stand out tech high, cooperation and partnerships with businesses. Solid community college, with school partnerships.
- We have amazingly talented teachers who do amazing things on a shoestring budget. Teachers here do multiple jobs while being paid one salary. Teachers here are interventionists, therapists, OT, and special education teachers because they put in the work for their students when there is no staff at their schools. You get a lot from a WCPS teacher.
- My coworkers are amazing. Always willing to help each other and do what is best for our students everyday.
- Teachers who have been here are good
- We offer lots a varied opportunities for students to receive an education. Many programs.
- Many quality, invested teachers. Coordination and cooperation between different schools and different content areas.
- The great thing about our schools is that our curriculum is laid out ready to no matter where you are. If a student left a school for another, they would pick up the next day they left off.
- We have wonderful teachers and staff at our schools.
- My experience with school administration has been generally positive.
- Community building by staff members
- • Blueprint for MD's Future • Educators committed to student success (even beyond academics) • Comprehensive high schools • WCTHS-supportive of trades • MSS/JDP • Some teachers exercise academic freedom, but that freedom is at-risk • Outdoor school is a gem that must be retained • Unique programs (magnets) to meet student and family needs *restricted by transportation • (some) Public private partnerships • WCPS/HCC articulation and Middle College • New ABLE fits a niche • Investment in technology
- We have really good and committed educators in our schools. They are passionate about their children and their jobs. We have many different opportunities for learning, within and outside of the traditional classroom. Many teachers and students participate in piloting programs throughout the year. We have the outdoor school program, ABLE program, and many Stem and technology programs.
- Teachers and staff in schools are committed to growth of students.
- Our schools are committed to fair education for ALL students. We work to create curriculum that reflects students and our community. Our schools offer many opportunities to our students, from intervention to enrichment.
- Teachers in Washington County are hard work and dedicated to our students. Staff work together to get the job done.
- Each is independent with the specific area population that it serves. The two city high schools and it's feeder middle schools are more urban. The other county high schools are more agricultural, with the exception of Williamsport High School which I see as a

hybrid of both. They all have their autonomy and uniqueness about them. You don't walk into one school and see the same in another school.

- They continue to show improvement.
- Fitting In- I love working in my building. In spite of the many hurdles placed before me, this is the first building I have ever felt that I fit in. While my program is humble, the students are eager and possess so much potential, and my co-workers continue to support and motivate me to make the program the best it can be. Mentorship- I've worked in several districts, and WCPS has spared no effort in providing me with a multitude of resources and mentors to utilize. Every one of these individuals has been abundantly helpful, friendly, and genuine in their desire to see me grow, and I am very grateful for all of them.
- Quality teachers
- WCPS is very diverse both culturally and politically. We serve a wide array of diverse learners that come from various walks of life. Our students match our community's diversity. While on the surface this could be appealing, there are a lot of racial and socioeconomic tensions that continue to divide Washington County.
- Washington County schools have the most amazing students and teachers. The dedication of the teachers to their students' needs and their craft is admirable.
- We have amazing staff!!!! The teachers and staff in this county truly value and care about their kids. So many diverse populations in the schools. WE are so fortunate to be able to have a culturally aware school system
- We have many programs for students beyond the regular curriculum. We have many dedicated students and teachers. We have technology to help students now and in the future.
- The teachers care about the students.
- The faculty
- The school I work at can be challenging but many students work hard and defeat their own obstacles every day. We have a diverse group of kids. Our sports teams work hard. Our clubs do super awesome things and we have a diverse selection of clubs and groups, some that were initiated by students. I've seen our student government strengthen recently which is really awesome.
- The faculty
- Every student has a Chromebook
- Dedicated teachers
- The school system is full of hard-working educators who are passionate about their jobs. Teachers are provided with necessary supports but trusted as educators to make wise decisions about curriculum and materials that make sense to their students in their classrooms.
- We have a lot of truly dedicated teachers and support staff!
- Staff generally cares about students.
- Updated buildings with one to one technology.
- the teachers have a variety of backgrounds
- Use of technology, caring staff, dropout prevention specialists, support for the arts (but needs improvement)

- Lots of hands on experiences in our school. MWEE's, STEM, Tree plantings, and live ducks to engage students. Science is amazing and presented well at our school.
- The teachers and staff work hard! The staff care about students.
- Dedicated, hard working, smart, resourceful educators and staff. Brilliant students that while living in challenging situations, want to be successful and show that they can preserve.
- Boonsboro offers a quality education with many opportunities for the students. Great sports programs with community support.
- Staff supports each other
- Great teachers. Great admin. Inclusive. Diverse.
- We have a tight-knit group of teachers. I would consider my co-workers to be an extension of my family. They have been there for me through many of lives ups and downs.
- They are a safe place for students. We work to meet the needs of students, not just for learning but also economically, socially, etc.
- Dedicated teachers
- Our schools are filled with awesome staff and students. Our schools are becoming increasingly diverse. Staff and students are often involved in creative learning and community projects.
- The teachers care about the kids.
- -Great administration -Awesome staff that always helps one another -Opportunities for students
- Work as a team, Students are first and foremost of importance.
- Strong staff with experience
- Students can feel free to be themselves. They have opportunities to learn a profession and work immediately of out high school. It is 2 fold because students can learn a job skill and prepare for college since we offer several AP classes. We need more schools like Tech High. I can't stress how important it is for the new superintendent to support tech education. It is the future. Just look at our country today. What jobs are needed? Plumbers, electricians, construction workers, nurses, scientists, etc... are all needed today. The new superintendent needs to understand that we already have a model that works that can be implemented in more places.
- We have special high schools, like Tech High and BISFA, that provide students with options for immersion study about chosen fields and careers.
- Professional and hard working staff.
- Our schools are diverse, with many new schools having been built recently, that are well equipped to support students with special needs.
- The teachers are a good thing about the schools. WCPS still holds some reasonable conservative values. Although very aware of the culture around them. The absence of "wokeness" helped us make a hard decision to move our kids from private to public schools. Alternatively, we are thinking about moving our youngest back out because we see stuff creeping in.
- Our schools have some awesome admin.
- The schools are well maintained. The staffs are cohesive units with a "students first" attitudes. Students want to get back to learning and sharing experiences with others.

- BISFA is an incredible option for our students as well as Tech High and other programs. We have a range of schools from small to large and everything in between! It gives prospective employees a range of choices when applying.
- Majority of the teachers work hard! They care for the students and they love what they do! They want kids to learn.
- Excellent AP programming and growing CTE programming that is responsive to local needs;
- Dedicated caring hard-working teachers, Still have music and art classes, still have librarians with libraries. School pride. Communities are proud of community schools.
- -There is a ton of school spirit. Each school is a safe place for kids and families. - Education is a priority. Also, making well-rounded students. -Teachers care a great deal about their students and want what is best for them. -Awesome teachers who give 110% each day and can roll with what ever comes at them.
- Our schools have great teachers, that are very dedicated. We have an abundant amount of resources to help reach student needs.
- Our schools have highly qualified teachers and administrators that truly care about their students. Within the walls of our classrooms, you will see kids learning in multitudes of different ways and teachers challenging them through every step of the way. Our schools also offer plenty of extracurricular activities to engage students in a positive environment.
- Resources for teachers, competitive pay for new teachers (but this does not continue for veteran teachers)
- Many hardworking and dedicated employees that always do their best despite challenges, COVID, etc. It is a fast growing county with new teachers being added each year to fill new positions. We have many hardworking students who have overcome personal and school related challenges.
- We are family!! Don't get rid of small schools- Old Forge, Greenbrier, Hickory, etc. Staff become family and we are able to build relationships with families.
- Schools are becoming more diverse (much to the dismay and displeasure of the self-proclaimed 'Patriot Parents'). The diversity must be embraced by all. Educators in WCPS are dedicated to student achievement, but more importantly, they are committed to student success and well-being that extends beyond the classroom and test data. Our ESPs are essential to student success, and our schools would not function without the work of our ESPs, including clerical, food service, maintenance, custodians, transportation, and paraprofessionals.
- We have dedicated staff that strive to be flexible even in less than ideal circumstances. We are all a small community and we all band together for the good of our community.
- Many teachers, ESPs, and Administration, are trying so hard to keep up with the demands and have made many sacrifices. They care about the kids and their schools. The schools really stepped up to the plate during the Pandemic ...before....during.....after with trying their best to follow cleaning and social distancing protocols. Thus keep everyone safe as much as they could, while providing the children with an education . The schools really helped during the most turbulent times we have ever had.

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

- Unfortunately behaviors are out of control and the lack of family involvement plays a big factor into that. There are threats made or physical attacks on students and staff that make going to work uncomfortable for everyone and there are minimal efforts taking place to help change these actions. A lot of it is out of the school or districts control, but it makes it to be an unsafe environment to be in for all stakeholders.
- Change in demographics .
- We have a serious issue with disproportionality in the percentage of students who are suspended, expelled, placed in alternative education, receive referrals, and disciplined. There is a lack of diverse staff and staffing that reflects our growing and changing population of students, especially students of color and those who are English Learners. We need more supports for addiction, mental health, behavior issues, and social emotional learning and enough special education staff, therapists, social workers, and guidance counselors to cover the needs of our students . We need to address transportation to/from and disproportionality within our special programs, like Magnet, Tech High, GATE, BISFA, Antietam Academy, etc. We have started the process of incorporating equity into our system but there is much more to do in order to ensure that apply it across the system in every school to provide adequate access to every student and stop catering to a minority of loud voices who want to exclude.
- Limited parent/family resources, need more intervention teachers, large EL population, teacher and sub shortages, underfunded budget
- The new superintendent should be aware there has not been an atmosphere of collaboration between the union and management. We are hoping things change under a new leader to insure what is best for the students under our care.
- The district is very diverse, each community has its own strengths and challenges. You can't lump Washington County into one being - the range is drastic. I think a key to success is making clear expectations for all involved in education and remembering everyone is here for the KIDS. Decisions about the school district should be based on what's best for kids.
- The staff at CES are in a bubble. The new super needs to get outside the bubble for information.
- An antagonistic relationship between teachers and management caused by a board of education that doesn't support teachers, doesn't listen to teachers and annually rolls out new programs, curriculums, systems, etc. that burdens and cripples the teachers' time and ability to teach.
- Behavioral issues.
- Class sizes are important, teachers are burning out, feeling unappreciated and undervalued.
- Tackle low teacher morale and salaries
- Class sizes are important, teachers are burning out, feeling unappreciated and undervalued.
- Lack of discipline among the lowest grade levels need addressed and a solid plan to address the issue needs to be designed and used.

- Serious behaviors in classrooms that disrupt learning Large class size Stressed teachers/staff due to aforementioned issues
- We do have a Patriot parent group, and this is a conservative community. Although the state may have fairly liberal values this is conservative. The county commissioners have not adequately funded schools and there seems to be distrust about education. We have a high rate of opioid and addiction issues in the community which affects families. We have a state prison, and many move here to be close to incarcerated family members.
- We need more staff. Special education case managers do not always provide services leaving classroom teachers to serve all IEPs outside of OT and speech. Therefore IEPs are not “in addition to” the regular classroom experience. They are essentially only paperwork. Students with educational IEPs in WCPS are not getting services to meet their needs. Staff need leadership and a seat at the table of decision making. In the past, teachers were not included in decisions or groups of teachers who would “go along” were chosen. Many of the Covid decisions were made without consulting teachers about logistics which caused more work for families and teachers. Teachers do not feel respected. We feel watched closely for our mistakes and then chastised rather than valued staff. More must be done to include staff in decisions and a superintendent must listen to and value the staff. Schools are in crisis. Teachers are managing too much. We need in school therapists, more special education teachers that teach not just “case manage,” intervention teachers in every school, and para pros in every kindergarten class. The parents are not holding up their end of the bargain. There are no consequences for not sending kids to school, neglect, and abuse. Kids are coming to school with nothing to give and SST and other interventions by the school are completely unsuccessful. We need parent support.
- Demographics at every school so it is difficult to have the same expectations for every school.
- Stop moving admin around It helps them It hinders teachers, students, and the community
- We lack any type of strong reading program in the elementary schools. It’s like whole language on steroids. We need a systemic, high interest reading series. The pool of teacher candidates is weak. Many new educators just aren’t willing to put the hours in to create a curriculum that is constantly being created in flight. Our schools lack consequences for poor behavior. Everything is a reward. Blind eyes are turned to misbehavior and the students know it. Respect can not be build on a system that does not value respect and following basic rules. Our society can not be sustained without them. Our system is top heavy. We don’t need any more positions that do not directly work with students. Each school needs qualified reading specialists who are passionate about reading. We have lots of teachers with degrees in reading offer them these positions first before giving to a para pro!
- A lot of casual racism/homophobia/xenophobia that intrudes into conversations about curriculum like history and health. Chronic underfunding by the county commissioners. Serious impacts from drug use in the community.
- We need a superintendent that visits schools more than once a marking period at breakfast time to see what staff is dealing with. We are adding padded rooms, chasing eloping students beyond school grounds, and disrespected by parents for efforts given

180 days a year. We NEED someone to step up and find the necessary resources to support our title one one students.

- We have a severe deficit in special education, we need someone who leads us that is passionate about all children and staff who helps them. Behavior support in the field is needed (boots on the ground), not more specialists... Staff is not respected as knowledgeable professionals.
- Cell phones are destroying education, students are physically addicted to them. After the COVID year our students are unmotivated and entitled. The vast majority of students do not care about learning or improving themselves only passing or getting a higher GPA. Many of them don't actually seem to care about anything but rather live a nihilistic existence in which the only goal is the release of endorphins from the approval of others on social media.
- Diversity in teachers and differentiation for teachers is needed. Accelerated learning is difficult for to accomplish post COVID. We have a new math curriculum that takes time to see results. The teacher shortage should help with supportive and retention measures in the actual classrooms. The teachers need support!
- • Blueprint for MD's Future • Addiction • Shortage of family resources • Shortage of mental health providers • Loud fringe groups don't paint an accurate picture of WCPS or WCBOE • Not enough minority educators • Underfunded budget • Fuzzy view of racial and social justice • Stuck in an "old way" of public schools • Recruitment and retention, especially in Title One schools. Lack of continuity hurts students. • Legislators favor public dollars for private schools • Not enough investment in community schools and wrap-around services • True community partnerships are lacking • Too many students leave Washington County to pursue education and employment in other areas. Many never return. • Many commuters. Educators need time during the work day to plan. Too much is asked of educators, especially teachers, after hours. We are are working for free on nights and weekends, and WCPS has come to expect that from us.
- As a district we continue to be underfunded every year by the county. We are lacking in resources for families, especially those with mental health needs, special education, and english language learners. Students with mental health and behavioral issues are increasing and there isn't enough support. There are not enough school and community partnerships and we do not have enough teachers or para-professionals. Our pay isn't comparable to neighboring counties and is causing loss of these positions to the other counties.
- Lack of funding by county commissioners and politicians, which directly impacts the student, school and community needs.
- I feel some schools have a lack of community and social emotional learning for staff and students. Academics are important but many students are struggling with social emotional learning. We need more time and resources devoted to this learning. I also feel this would help with the increased behavior needs we are seeing. Behavior and acceptable consequences has been an increased issue. Many things attribute to this such as increased academic demand, large class sizes, new programs, low planning time for teachers.
- Our schools are old, high school facilities are run down. Drugs are a problem in our high schools as well as violence. Cell phones need to be banned in the classroom and teachers need help enforcing the rules. Administrators in our county don't understand if you fight

small stuff with students (hats, book bags, etc) larger problems won't happen. We more discipline in our schools and creative consequences.

- The city schools have issues with bad fighting, and as an employee of one of these schools, it can be very upsetting to have to deal with. Racial tensions are an issue in the schools. Administrators do not apply the rules consistently among themselves and leave too many rules to be followed up by teachers instead of catching students themselves. I'm tired of hearing about "small fish" problems. If we take care about small fish problems, perhaps they wouldn't escalate to big fish problems. I've heard way too many times that the students are running the school because the administration has given up, and it's true, at least when it comes to the big issues of drugs, fighting, bullying, etc. As teachers we feel punished if we bring something forward because admin doesn't want to know about it.
- Superintendent needs to be aware of the different needs of the "country" schools vs city schools.
- Teacher burnout, lack of restorative practices, a lack of transparency, continuous gaslighting. Student apathy toward academics.
- Student Behavior- As you are no doubt aware, behavior issues have skyrocketed since the pandemic began. Students are empowered to display disrespectful and violent rhetoric to peers and staff alike, and physical altercations occur with startling frequency. Our building administrators are working hard to keep these issues at a minimum, but there are simply too many fires igniting, and not enough firefighters to put them out. We need a superintendent willing to draw firm lines on what is and isn't acceptable, and assist us in enacting swift and actionable change in our buildings. Transparency and Perspective- Many of us have become disillusioned with the board. While many good initiatives have been put into place, there is undoubtedly a rift between CES and educators. Some of the rhetoric on display at board meetings, while good-intentioned, have nonetheless led to dissatisfaction. Communication with CES, be it over e-mail or live conversation, can be very formulaic and reductive- not unpleasant, yet never with much substance. I want to have a positive relationship with the superintendent and CES, and I yearn for the time when there can be open, candid dialogue between all members. I hope that as the new superintendent, you will be able bridge this gap. Teacher Turnover- Educators across the country are fleeing from the profession, and WCPS is no different. While the above factors are a large contributor, we are also tired of being undervalued, overworked, and feeling unfulfilled in our classrooms. While many incentives have already been put into place to help retain educators (such as the quarterly pandemic retainment payments, Nat'l Board Certification incentives, etc.,) these do not resolve the larger issues that are pushing educators away. While I can't speak for every educator, I know that many of us would prefer to see our school days safer and more fulfilling instead of the micro payments. While money is assuredly a motivating factor, there is not enough money in the world to keep educators jobs where they feel undervalued, unsafe, and unfulfilled. While I know that these are all large issues that cannot be solved immediately, I hope that you are able to address these issues and work with us to resolve them. Annual Administrative Switching- I have worked in several districts during my career, and WCPS is the only one I have ever worked in where building administrators are moved around seemingly each year. While I'm sure there is a well-thought out rationale for this practice, our staff and students ultimately suffer from the rotating doors of leadership.

Now more than ever, our students need consistency in their lives, and when our leadership is constantly changing, that means our daily routines are upended every year. While I fully support any staff member wishing to transfer on their own volition, I would ask you to please consider looking into the efficacy of this practice, and considering the benefits of consistency before making any personnel changes. Co-Curricular/CTE/Fine & Performing Arts- Many of our elective teachers have various non or tangentially-related courses assigned to them. While this practice does increase enrollment on paper, in practice, these classes feel very arbitrary, and are often populated with students without regards to their ability or interest. As a result, many of these auxiliary classes can feel like babysitting, and are unfulfilling to both the students and the instructor. I believe there are solutions available that address the issue of enrollment while also keeping courses relevant to the educators specialty, and I hope that you will be open to having those conversations. We have many fine mechanics, chefs, artists and musicians within our district, and keeping their course load relevant to their skillset is paramount in retaining these specialists, as well as setting our students up for success.

- Liberal teachers union, extreme behavior in schools, lack of resources for special education
- The cultural and socioeconomic division within WCPS, rural vs urban schools. There is mistrust that exists between families within the community and WCPS. The value and importance of education within WCPS, especially within the urban schools, is diminishing. There have been several instances of violence within WCPS this past year. There has been no remedy for these situations. Teachers feel unsafe in their classrooms. Declining attendance, participation in extra curricular and sports. A very strong republican base that continues to limit/cut the budget of WCPS.
- Some issues to be aware of is the need to increase the pay scale for tenured teachers. Many teachers that have taught for 6-1 years are making the same pay as new hire teachers. Another issue is the behaviors of students in the school and the lack of parent accountability. Bullying is another main issue in Washington County and also accompanies the lack of parent accountability.
- There are a few areas that really need improvement: The special education dept and process and Behavior Management of troubled young students There needs to be a more programs or a school (like turning the old Funkstown into a behavioral school) for elementary age students, who are behavioral defiant. There needs to be a smaller setting and specific needs met in order to save these children. MORE SUPPORT In the schools!
- Discipline. Teachers need more support. We need to know that our leaders support and value us. We need to be able to expect support when we fairly hold students accountable for their actions. WE need accountability. Our younger students especially are missing vital social skills after missing out on the early years of education due to covid. This year has been so hard for teachers and staff. Parents are not at all supportive and having a lack of support from leadership in the county makes our job even more difficult. The pressures and stress put on us this year has been astronomical. We do not feel valued or supported and the lack of accountability and discipline has led to kids basically having the power in schools. Nothing is being done to hold them or their parents accountable especially in the younger grades. All kids have suffered and if we do not get ahead of this current trend of kids having no consequences for their actions and allowing the

parents to bully everyone to get their way, we are not helping our students. WE cannot allow students to destroy classrooms, be violent with the adults and other students, steal, curse and scream in the classes and so much more....we cannot allow this to continue every single day. Teachers and Paras are leaving the county and profession in large numbers due to this issue. Every kid is entitled to a good education and by allowing these issues to constantly disrupt classrooms and schools we are doing a disservice to all of the students. ESP staff deserves our utmost respect and this county is not giving them that respect or trust. They are professionals who are in their jobs because they love what they do. Most could go to almost anywhere else and receive a higher hourly wage but they stay because they are dedicated and loyal staff. We need to treat them with a higher respect than they are given in a lot of buildings. Our school system cannot function without them and they deserve our respect and a living wage. Paras are being attacked physically by students all over the county and instead of treating them as second class citizens we should be showing them they are valued and that comes from the top. This county needs to get back to being supportive and caring to its employees and not treating them as merely people on payroll. If we all felt valued and respected there would be no other county anyone would want to be in.

- 1) There are several schools in the county where fights occur often. There is a lack of consequences for infractions. 2) There are many conservative areas in our county. Some parents will want their child to opt out of the new health/family life curriculum. 3. Some class sizes are too large resulting in behavior issues and less student growth.
- In our school, behaviors are not being dealt with. Students don't have any consequences for their negative behavior. The students know that they can get away with it, so they just continue. It is making it really hard for us teachers.
- Students know there are little to no consequences systemwide for behavior and are reacting negatively as a result and teacher burnout is at an all time high. Bullying is rampant because not EVERY school has ONE full time counselor able to address needs. Counselors are forced to be between multiple schools rather than be there to help students daily. How will you convince politicians to give the financial support we need to give students resources for mental well being, especially for non-title 1 or small schools that get barely any support. Mental well being and daily check ins with administration are so much more important than teaching to the testing standards because until a student feels good they could care less about making academic progress.
- Lack of funding by the county commissioners Apathetic students and parents Discipline issues
- Every single school is dealing with issues from Covid and in general. Please don't dismiss concerns or think everyone is "okay," check-in with everyone. Some schools are fighting stigmas and it's difficult and troubling when people from the central office perpetuate those stigmas instead of helping to overcome them. Schools are dealing with students in real time, sometimes the CES staff forget that and their response to situations reflects that. Every two years it feels like curriculum is overhauled and something "new" is presented that is not fully fleshed out. It causes burnout and is rarely new or super innovative.
- Lack of funding by the county commissioners Apathetic students and parents Discipline issues

- Lack of funds, lack of transparency in spending, bloated Central office staff, poor relationship between board of education and county commissioners, lack of skilled jobs in the area
- The new superintendent should be aware of the old white boys club that still exist. They should know if the nepotism that runs rampant, and be prepared to make every effort to break it up. They need to know that we need to make hiring people of color from outside of the county, a priority. They need to know that the staff administration in Washington County needs to do a much better job of training at staff of multicultural inclusion and diversity.
- Needs to be more equitable. Some teachers have 30 kids in their class but then other schools only have 14 in the same grade. One teacher is doing double the work with no compensation. Lead teachers and guidance counselors are being used as assistant Principals because schools don't have AP but are overloaded with behavior problems.
- We are a diverse community in a rural, conservative area which leads to some clashing between upholding conservative beliefs and honoring the diversity in our classrooms. It is concerning how many school systems around the country are banning discussion of different types of families and are starting to censor children's books in classrooms. Our new superintendent should understand that our classrooms are full of diverse students who represent a wide variety of backgrounds and families. They need to see themselves present in the curriculum and materials we use. Teachers should be trusted to make decisions about the materials they use to present the state curriculum based on their knowledge of the students looking back at them.
- Support for all employees especially those who work directly with special needs and struggling students.
- That there needs to be more focus on trade and technical programs. More emphasis needs to be put on obtaining and hiring special education staff. Staff should also be paid a living wage.
- -Lack of diversity in the teacher population
- many experienced teachers are retiring soon
- Athletic culture has grown vastly out of proportion, and arts programs need more support. Student education needs to become more well rounded. Teachers are severely undervalued, untrusted and even villified. I genuinely feel our school system does not care about teachers. Teachers should be paid more after the first few years. Mental health supports need to be established and continually maintained for students and teachers.
- Renewable energy sources, why aren't we using solar panels on schools? Why aren't we recycling in our schools. I think its very important to set a amazing example for our students. Also teachers are exhausted, we need less on our plates and pay that matches our economy. Everything is going up...sadly not our pay. Teachers want to be creative and engaging but this takes more planning and our curriculum keeps changing which makes it tireless to perfect our craft. Finally holding parents accountable for unexcused absences and behavior of students. The work place is getting tougher than before covid.
- Rural schools are struggling too. Limited resources compared to the city schools impact how students are helped, serviced by Special Ed, etc.
- Behavior in elementary schools is rising and needs immediate attention. Educators are frustrated and exhausted by extreme student behaviors and the lack of change, programs, resources, and the ways extreme behavior is handled. They should also know that

teacher voices should be elevated and regarded as experts of the classroom. If teachers continue to not feel valued, quality teachers will leave.

- Here are my main issues with Boonsboro: Vaping Cell phone distractions Drug use Issues with Other schools in the county Disrespect to staff No accountability for student behavior due to lack of parental involvement Fighting in school Students wondering the halls, not going to class and causing disruptions for those who are there to learn Vaping Drug use Cell phone use/video taping fights at school/ distracting from learning
- That behaviors are not felt with immediately.
- I think the new superintendent should come from inside the system and make objective observations about our system and processes. We need fresh ideas and approaches.
- Teachers feel that there is a lack of communication between those working at the central office and in the schools. There are issues that exist in the schools that the folks at the central office are either clueless about or have no idea how to handle. There is a huge turnover of teachers in this county for a reason. There is a huge lack of discipline within our schools. We need a superintendent that will stand up to the state and its ideas and mandates. We need someone that isn't so far detached from education that they acknowledge and act upon the existing crisis. We need more planning time. We don't need more programs or canned ideas. Honestly, most teachers would tell you that they have no idea what most folks at the central office do all day long to justify their jobs. There needs to be less of "fluff" positions at CES and more teachers and support staff in schools.
- 1. Over-testing. Trust teachers as professionals. Too much testing takes away from instructional time. 2. Curriculum Writing of Reading Instruction. The High Impact Practices and Progression does not follow research of best practices in teaching reading and how to teach reading. We need explicit and routine instruction that follows sound research in teaching reading.
- Needs to be more equitable. Some teachers have 30 kids in their class but then other schools only have 14 in the same grade. One teacher is doing double the work with no compensation. Lead teachers and guidance counselors are being used as assistant Principals because schools don't have AP but are overloaded with behavior problems.
- There is a growing need for mental health supports in our county. Community resources are struggling to keep up with the demand. Counselors and school based mental health are taking on students and situations that typically would require much more intensive supports in a hospital facility. Instead, with the lack of community resources, these very mentally ill students are returning to our school buildings.
- There's a lot of distrust, all of which is politically motivated. We need a superintendent who can block out the noise and focus on legitimate concerns.
- -Staffing issues
- Staffing - teachers, counselors, custodians CES - Does CES heavy on staff and not in the schools.
- Disconnect between the staff and CES
- That people don't stay long and are constantly getting shuffled around. What can a superintendent do to keep stability for students, teachers, staff and administration?
- * An active "Patriot Parents" group with an agenda to censor books and ideas that celebrate cultural diversity and teach about history accurately. * Individuals and groups who spread misinformation and disinformation about curricula and political agendas. *

White supremacist cultural ideals in the community that continue to affect our schools. (Note: even within the some WCPS staffers, this is an issue.) *Anti-LGBTQ efforts by some communities (and some staffers) hinder our ability to provide harassment-free and bully-free environments for all. *A teaching staff whose input has not been sought in meaningful ways regarding issues on how and when to collaboratively plan, how to address mental health issues, how to support students' brains and bodies, and how to transform the 20th-century industrial model of education to a multi-faceted 21st-century vision that provides flexibility and support for teachers to do their jobs and students to do their learning in innovative and meaningful ways.

- Teachers are fed up with increasing workload and decreasing real wages. We are going to lose very many talented people soon if this is not reversed.
- Many of the older schools that have open floor plans have many outdated features that do not support student learning in the way other schools are able to. Many classrooms are over crowded and schools do not have the support they need to support behaviors and students' academic growth. There is a severe sub shortage, which results in critical Supporting teachers being pulled (EL, Spec. Ed, GATE) and services not being provided.
- There is a lot of poverty in some schools. It is a real struggle. The students have a lot of apathy toward completion of work. The way the tech school is set up has made it VERY difficult for students who need job training to get it. It seems as though tech high has become this very high academic place and the kids who go there are kids who have potential for college. Tech school seems like it should be for the kids with lower academic desire who want to take up a trade. Those kids can't get into tech high so they sit in classrooms and refuse to work or are filling time till they turn 18 and can drop out to go to work. Their future is at risk because they get very little training in the trades which is what they want to do.
- How are we going to address low reading scores?
- Issues are that about 1% of students are not willing to learn, teacher burnout is real and other staff in buildings are overworked.
- Special education as well as students who are struggling need to be a top priority! We have a lot of great programming for those that are at the top. We need to help our struggling students. Smaller class sizes and teacher autonomy would greatly help. We need play based early learning as much of the research is showing early academics hinder students in the future.
- Administrators do not want to do more work than what is necessary. Discipline is a major problem. Drug use is increasing. Students using vaping devices and not getting in trouble is increasing. Students know they can get away with not school appropriate actions so it continues and is getting out of control. Consequences are hard to come by for inappropriate behavior.
- Quite racist, xenophobic, homophobic, quick to believe conspiracy theories about CRT, etc., growing behavior problems; the teacher observation process is very lengthy and requires so much paperwork for teachers and admin - could be very pared down when compared to other counties in MD; teacher and admin burnout is real here; our grading requirements are antiquated - still using 100 point scale in secondary
- Class size is always a concern, student behavior has gone downhill since COVID, never enough teacher planning time, Washington County is not a 1 size fits all county, but you still have to be equal because everyone will be watching and listening.

- -The county as a whole (not the school system) does not value education. The commissioners fail each year to provide the money it takes to educate the students. Each year the superintendent will have to go to bat for the children of this community and face a battle to get them what they need. It is truly sad that this happens all the time. -The community at large can be very closed-minded. They are not into diversity, thinking outside the box, etc. It is a very conservative community and they hold tight to their beliefs. -There is not much diversity (especially in the school system)
- Our teachers feel undervalued, and overworked.
- This district is becoming more diverse and we need a superintendent who can lead us to be a more progressive, open and empathetic school team. Many of our communities are grounded in the same ideals their grandparents and great-grandparents also had, and people have a tough time adapting to change. A superintendent for our district needs to be willing and ready to support change as necessary. Our superintendent also needs to be willing to be seen in our schools and at community events, as being a part of the community is very important in this county.
- An extremely high need for mental health and other community resources for low income and high need families
- Lack of staffing among elementary schools, lack of substitute teachers, low salary complaints, lack of consistency between schools and discipline policies
- Teacher retention- with newer admin. who follow all the rules and are stressed themselves, they nit pick and micromanage teachers, causing us stress. I currently have a more seasoned principal who trusts teachers as professionals and treats us well, because they are not stressed by the pressures put upon them. Lack of respect from students and parents and behavior problems are rising and we are burning out because of it!
- There are far right (extremely far right) persons painting WCPS as an organization/system that sponsors pedophilia and pornography in its libraries. False. ...Pushes "social engineering." False. ...Restricts parental access. False. The county commissioners are perennially labeled "low effort" by the state of Maryland for their unwillingness to fully fund public education. Even underfunded, educators to amazing work, but that can't last forever. No APFP to hold the Commissioners accountable. They are in bed with developers, selling their souls and ignoring the students. Millions for Amazon warehouses, but nothing for schools. Shameful. Staff are burning out and seeking employment in other districts and outside education due to the stress and workload. Too many people gain an education in WCPS, but leave the community for work (as commuters or by leaving outright). That doesn't bode well for the community. Teacher/educator shortage is looming. Not just a local issue, but it will be the next Super's local issue to tackle, and Blueprint isn't the golden buzzer.
- CES needs to be more respectful of teachers and other staff. That's one of the main reasons, that a teacher of 22 years, is currently job hunting out of county.
- Lack of work space/Running out of work space... Planning Staff overwhelmed with more and more demands and SLOs on top of them...Increasing aggressive behaviors of students. Positive note....they are coming into a good school district and the staff care about the kids in our county.

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

- I think that someone who is willing to get their hands dirty and really turn this school system around is so important. We have played by the same rules for so long and we aren't seeing positive results. Although test results are important and seeing growth in students helps us to see if we are teaching effectively, ignoring the trauma that these kids go through on a daily basis is only hurting them more. Someone who wholeheartedly believes in having more certified therapists in schools or addressing the mental health crisis across the county and actually puts thoughts into actions would be so beneficial to our community. We are in charge of producing good, well rounded humans and we are doing them such a disservice by moving them along and not helping to teach them how to handle their emotions before trying to teach them how to add fractions. We need someone who is willing to get down to the bottom of this and rebuild our educational system in Washington County from the ground up!
- We do need someone committed to the community not using us to move up career wise. He should be child driven not test driven .He should be invested in the staff as his best asset
- We need a superintendent who has experience as a classroom teacher and understands the current pressures and expectations that teachers operate under. We need a strong communicator who includes all stakeholders into policy decisions and conversations that affect our students. We need someone who seeks to put smart, talented people around them who have experience and expertise in areas they don't. They need to be willing to listen and incorporate new, better ideas instead of the status quo. We need someone who puts equity at the forefront of what they do, improves the diversity of our staff, and seeks to improve outcomes for our students and not just test scores.
- Willingness to be out and about in the schools, flexibility, working with all groups (EL, SpEd, GATE), compassion, good communication skills, honesty, transparency
- The new superintendent should be approachable, collaborative, and dedicated.
- I think it is always reassuring to know that a superintendent was a teacher at one point. The longer, the better. Teachers work the frontline in education, we are the direct connection with the students. It goes a long way to know that the superintendent understands what it's like to teach. Teachers and other staff need to feel supported, appreciated for what we do. Employee retention and happiness go hand in hand, there are many small things one can do and say that make a huge difference in our lives. Students should know who the superintendent is - they should be personable, approachable and down to earth. They should be a people person but also someone who can manage people and set clear expectations for teachers, students and parents.
- Willingness to reign in "test mania" and stop making the "cohort on time graduation rate" the most important objective. We need Mastery learning.
- Someone who has classroom experience and understands the competing demands we have in our classrooms, and the fact that we can only do so much as one person, (because we are currently buried with an untenable workload and the BOE doesn't "get it").
- A caring attitude towards teachers
- Former long time teacher, period.
- People person and good leadership skills

- Former long time teacher, period.
- Easy to talk to, willingness to listen and hear the concerns, understand that teachers are professionals and deserve real respect, trust in the professionalism of the staff, understand that what you see when you walk into a classroom is only a minute portion of what goes on, be less judgmental and more open-minded.
- a good listener and leader
- Honest and open communication must be paramount skills thus person has. Being able to listen and truly consider stakeholders' input is necessary. Facilitating communication by providing technology for teachers to communicate with families would be helpful (e.g. bring back google voice). Supporting administrators and developing teacher skills would be most useful.
- We need a collaborator. Someone who listens to all stakeholders. We need an innovator and a problem solver. We need someone who can find solutions to our shortages that we keep facing due to our county commissioners.
- Realistic expectations, flexibility and tenacity.
- Stop pandering to the people at the ces who couldn't teach well, decided they didn't want to and got a better degree, listen to teachers and help them teach
- Listen! Wisdom to see the forest through the trees. We have been working in a system who only wants to hear the positive. Growth doesn't occur with our questioning and addressing real issues.
- A commitment to student success, not to particular programs/resources. A willingness to attend teacher trainings and have meaningful interactions/conversations with teachers. A commitment to clarity in how decisions are made.
- Involved. Interested in needs of teachers. Know what is happening in title one schools. Visits and observes what is happening in our school. And for goodness sakes, ask teachers what we really need to spend money on.
- Knowledgeable in education - prior teacher. Willing to learn about children's needs. Shows passion and empathy towards children of all backgrounds and needs. Is willing to listen to what teachers need to help students. Treats teachers and school staff with respect and care.
- Selflessness, honestly, someone who will not bend to activists on the far left or right.
- Diversity, support, able to hold admin accountable for facilitating a welcoming environment
- • Must be open-minded • Great communicator • Servant leader • Cannot cultivate a culture of fear • Value site-based management • Must respect all units, i.e. underpaid ESPs, overworked A&S (no collective bargaining rights) • Demonstrate respect in actions, not just in meetings and soundbites • Accessible to all • A true partner with bargaining units; open to ideas, discussion, collaboration because it's the right thing to do, not just because the state mandates a joint committee • Must be open to community schools and wraparound services. • Must be open to embracing diversity of students and staff • Equity is a norm, not a "well, the state says we have to use an equity lens" • Negotiations don't have to be adversarial. Bargaining for the common good • Willing to entertain multi-year agreements • LGBTQ students and staff should not be made to feel second-class (or worse) *Since I can pick only one response for question number five, I am both a parent and an educator. I am married to an educator. I live in the community.

- We need an open minded, open to all cultures, religions, ethnicities, genders, etc leader for our district. We need someone that is willing able to put our students first and isn't afraid to ruffle some feathers in the community, while still being respectful of the traditions, as our community culture is changing. We need a great communicator that is able to be flexible and is a good problem solver. A person that respects all staff and is accessible to all.
- Flexible in meeting the many different needs of each community school. Ability to interact with a wide variety of groups of people in each school Be visible in the schools and frequently visit to interact with students, staff and administration.
- The new superintendent should be familiar with the classroom and demands put on teachers and students. He/she should be open to listening to teachers and families about the needs in schools. They need to be willing to take risks that ultimately benefit teachers and students. I think this person needs to be working for every student and understand that teacher mental health directly impacts students. We need support to best support our students. I also think this person should be willing to hold teachers and staff accountable for respect of all students.
- They need to be community oriented, support staff and students in achieving success, not be wasteful with money, a problem solver, innovative.
- An affective and positive communicator. A superintendent that recognizes that motivated teachers create motivated students. A superintendent that recognizes that a few good words of recognition to a teacher go a long way! A superintendent who doesn't make all decisions based off of data or numbers. Not everything is quantitative.
- Someone with knowledge and work with schools in poverty.
- Transparency, a student first mindset, a desire to increase parental involvement, open mind to changing the status-quo.
- Transparency, integrity, objectivity, and perspective.
- Fair and not political.
- Transparency Honesty A growth mindset Culturally diverse
- The new superintendent should continue to be a part of our classrooms. They should be hands on with the students and teachers while offering support to both. While it is important to work closely to satisfy parents' needs and concerns, the superintendent should be most focused on hearing from teachers and supporting the teachers in anyway that they can. Teachers always want what is best for the children and should have the respect to maintain their classroom as they choose. The micromanagement coming from most of the administration blocks teachers creativity and hinders their want to go above and beyond.
- Willing to make a change, tough skin (there always going to be someone that disagrees but you have to do what is best for students)
- Someone who possesses the ability to value and respect their employees. Someone who is strong enough to hold students and their parents accountable. Who is able to portray that we are educating our future leaders and productive citizens and will hold them up to a high standard of behavior and accountability. Someone who can hold the students accountable for their actions at all ages (appropriate to the ages of course) and support their staff in doing this. Even at the Pre-K level kind and loving discipline and holding them accountable for their actions leads to more productive schools and a better education for all. Administrators need to know that they can support their teachers

against angry parents (if appropriate of course) and not lose support from above. The culture in the county needs to change, yes parents are absolutely vital to the education system but they need to support and work with their teachers and school and be involved positively in the education process. Respect among teachers and parents should be reciprocated and expected! A strong and caring

- The ability to listen to, and work with parents as well as teachers and staff is a must. The superintendent needs to be able to find creative ways to allow more flexibility for both parents and teachers. It would be helpful for the superintendent to listen to the local community needs before the state's.
- Putting students first, listen to teachers input, and holding students accountable.
- Are you resourceful and able to allow all stakeholders at the table in decision making, especially teachers, as we are directly involved in what makes or breaks learning for students. We are tired of elected officials and politicians who continue to fund the bare minimum and do not understand what happens daily in schools.
- Teacher centered Cooperative focus with WCTA
- Approachability, we do not need an overlord we need a solid leader that can listen to ideas and does not need to be the sole creator of them. Empathy, teachers, admin, and students are all dealing with traumas of different kinds and our new leadership needs to take that seriously (not in a “watch this hour long video about relaxing” way). Resourceful, willing to recognize quality instruction and programs and not just rip out all the old programs we've been building. Competence, third person needs to have a real working understanding of education, someone who has been in the classroom and could step into one tomorrow if necessary, that is how you earn respect from your people.
- Teacher centered Cooperative focus with WCTA
- A recent classroom teacher who will bridge the divide between our school system and county commissioners. Someone local who knows the area
- New superintendent should value diversity of all kinds, particularly ethnic and racial. They need to be willing to challenge the status quo, and make hiring people of color a priority. They need to fully understand that teachers are the experts in their classroom, and give them the breath and academic freedom to allow them to do their jobs to the best of their ability. The new superintendent should've also had many years in the classroom him or herself. We do not need another superintendent who talks about putting kids first, and they have no idea what the actual classroom environment and challenges entail.
- Listen and care rather than intimidate
- The superintendent should be able to stand up to pressure from parents and other outside forces to always do what is best for students, period. I have appreciated and respected how Dr. Michael would pop into our classrooms every few months to keep in touch with what is happening in our classrooms. No other superintendent I've ever worked for has done that. It made me feel like I knew him better and could trust that he knew what was happening in schools. I would like to see a superintendent without strong political influences on their decisions. They should be willing to stand up for what is right, not just what is popular.
- Compassionate
- Open minded to change and persistence in doing what they know is right for students. Take risks to think outside of the box to support all stakeholders.
- Relatable Active in county PD Visits schools often

- compassionate, knowledge of teaching techniques and current practices, open minded to inovative ideas and practices
- Willingness to work in the trenches with staff. Prioritizing well-rounded education.
- Open minded, well educated in science and math, environmental aware and brings the county forward. Listens to the teachers, has empathy for all, kind, hard working. Keeps staff and students safe if there is an uptick in covid cases.
- Strong sense of community Ability to be objective Ability to stand behind decisions and explain WHY Ability to listen and hear multiple stakeholders with genuine interest
- They should be open, willing to change our system and their own thinking. They should be responsive and a good listener. They should have been an educator or worked within school walls. It is important that they are in this to help students of all backgrounds and be focused on equity. Lastly, they should regard teachers and school staff's needs. They should put a focus on listening to the needs presented by schools and take action to help.
- SUPPORT TEACHERS have a plan for violent/disruptive students make schools safe Hold students accountable Cell phone limitations
- That decisions on scheduling should be in the best interest of students and staff.
- Fresh ideas and approaches to the challenges facing WCPS. I really think we need an outsider. I usually like to see promotion from within but at this point, I think we need new blood and a new perspective. We waste so much time, effort and money with our current practices. I sure wish the opinions, observations, and input of senior teachers were valued for items like this. They most definitely are not.
- Worry about your teachers and support staff. Those are what make schools function. We're treated as disposable people who are easily replaced by a sub or a new hire.
- Care about staff and students, not just the data and test scores.
- Listen and care rather than intimidate
- I believe a superintendent should have experience within a school building, either as a teacher or other staff member providing direct services to students. I'd like to see a superintendent who listens to and cares about their teachers and paraprofessional staff. These staff members are the foundation to the school system and understand what is actually going on in our schools. Lastly, there is a political/cultural war occurring in many school districts across this nation. I think it is of utmost importance that the new superintendent be prepared to make choices that will support and keep students safe--especially our students in the LGBTQIA community. As a mental health professional, I see many students who report that school is their "safe space" to be their true selves and we need to preserve the ability to keep it that way. The new superintendent needs to be committed to resisting the cultural push to ban books and micromanage lesson plans. Protect our students and protect our staff!
- We need an effective communicator who can see that the big picture shouldn't be all about test scores. We want to produce well-rounded community members.
- -Flexible -Compassionate toward students and teachers alike (they should be equalized in decision making) -Technologically- savvy -Open-mindedness -Up to date with educational practices -Visionary, he should have a clear vision for our county -Excellent communicator- and also a great listener that uses the feedback for the good of the county -Works well with other and values others opinions -Has an excellent work ethic
- Be be able to be prepared and not reactive. Students and Teachers first---money used wisely and not at the expense of teachers, ESPs, or students.

- Communication and a willingness to teach in a classroom
- She needs to listen and create solutions for real problems like cell phones and the use of technology in class by students. It is out of control. The administration needs to know that they need to support teachers in any way they can.
- *Willing to give more than lip service to collaboration with the teachers association.
 - *Less focus on the data-driven model to drive decisions; more focus on the social-emotional needs of students, creating schools where restorative practices are in place with appropriate supports. *Able to build support for education in the community and influence the local county commissioners to support and fund public schools. *A candidate who understands the difference between strategic communication and the "public information model" that disseminates information without regard to assuring that two-way communication (and true collaboration/understanding) has occurred in order to change the current practices of CES and the Board of Education (for both internal and external communication). *Able to provide leadership to internal and external stakeholders that will result in the implementation of a new strategic plan. *Able to manage a divided elected school board. *A refocus from a top-down, authoritarian to a pro-active, pro-public education professional who can be trusted to work with all stakeholders to ensure quality public schools for our all of the communities in Washington County.
- The superintendent must learn to recognize that most people in WCPS leadership are extremely responsive to flattery. The CES people make exorbitant promises to their superiors without checking with the people who have to carry out their half-baked ideas. Nothing that has come out of CES in the last decade has done a thing to help teachers be more effective, and most of what comes down actually hinders us. I know this is an extraordinary statement, but it is absolutely true. We need a superintendent who will listen to classroom teachers, and not the sycophants over at CES, or the teachers hand-picked to carry the message that those sycophants want the superintendent to hear. An effective superintendent absolutely must connect with ordinary classroom teachers in a meaningful way.
- The superintendent needs to be focused on students, as well as supportive of teachers. They need to realize the limitations schools and teachers face when the budget is not fully funded. They need to be present in the schools, as well as reflect the values of the community.
- Good communication skills. Someone who advocates for and supports the teachers.
- I think a new superintendent should be well versed in special education law and trends.
- 1. Good manager 2. Distributed Leadership 3. Persuasive with the stakeholders 4. Innovative
- Collaborator, understanding of education from the bottom to the top, kind, morally and ethically in good standing
- Stand your ground! Establish a good work culture for success! Adults and students both need a set of rules to be successful!
- Is seen in schools and listens to those who work and learn in them; takes unnecessary tasks off plates of teachers and administrators; pays attention to progressive practices in grading and testing; doesn't assume teachers need to be micro-managed
- Be familiar with both elementary and secondary and the likes and differences in those levels. Visit schools and be seen by the faculty and students. Communicate with teachers.

Work with the teacher's association (WCTA) and the Educational Support Personnel (WCESP). DO not let technology take the place of good teachers.

- The new superintendent has to be able to stick to a decision and not fold because of pressure. He/she must also be visible to the staff in the schools. It is important that this person know what is going on in the schools and what the students are doing. He/she should also know the curriculum and what is expected. I also think this person needs to be flexible and listen with an open mind.
- We need a strong leader, with fresh ideas to troubleshoot problems such as behavior issues, teacher time, etc.
- I think the most important skills or qualities that a new superintendent should possess are quality communication skills, a progressive approach to problem solving, and truly caring about and listening to the concerns of educators across the county. The new superintendent should be approachable and friendly, but should also be able to command a group confidently and stick with facts and data.
- Someone who doesn't forget what it's like to be in a classroom and who understands that teachers cannot solve all of the systemic problems, especially without adequate resources; the knowledge that too much emphasis is placed on test scores and learn in without students' mandatory physical and emotional needs being met
- Someone who will put personal opinion aside and listen to those who are with students all day, every day. Fight for teacher and student needs. To be successful, we need a superintendent who is involved with all schools and can take time to check in, attend events, etc.
- I would like a Superintendent that has been a teacher before, understands Title 1 students and families, and values and supports admin. and teachers. A person that is not here to push an agenda or certain program.
- Open-minded. Willingness to truly work with and engage with stakeholder groups. Ability to partner with collective bargaining groups, beyond negotiations. Include them IN the decision-making process. Don't make decisions, share with the employees and say, "you've been included." The Super must demonstrate respect via actions, not just in emails or videos. Show it in decisions, policies, and actions. A willingness to examine school schedules, calendars, and frameworks that are truly best for the brains and bodies of the students and the staff. Doing it "they way it's always been done" does not mean it's the best way. Must be willing to invest in the changing demographic and be willing to make difficult decisions and to say "no" to overbearing parents and community members who wish to meddle in public education by white-washing curriculum and banning books. We are better than that!
- Values time of instructional staff so that we may have self directed time to get more accomplished within our contracted hours.
- An Education background would be good (experience as a teacher and principal etc...); Good communication skills with everyone (approachable, Down-to-Earth - not intimidating as we felt with some. There were ones we felt comfortable to say something to and they gave opportunities to do so); Able to work with community members/county commissioners in regards to budget; Willingness to listen to WCTA personnel about the issues facing Teachers and ESPs;