



**San Dieguito Union High School District
Leadership Profile Report
August 9, 2018**

DISTRICT BACKGROUND

With a mission to provide a world class education for all students to be engaged, inspired and prepared, the San Dieguito Union High School District has a rich history of academic, athletic and artistic excellence.

San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) serves students in grades 7 through 12 in North San Diego county. The District has seen a steady increase in enrollment since the 1990s. SDUHSD is widely recognized as an outstanding district throughout San Diego County and the state. This reputation for quality is a result of many factors. First, San Dieguito is a district with a clear, unwavering focus on student learning and improving education outcomes for all students. Our students experience the very best teaching and learning strategies based on research and strong professional development. Student achievement has increased year over year and our students are among the highest-achieving students in the state. San Dieguito Union High School District is committed to developing teachers' skill with and use of instructional and assessment strategies, including technology-based strategies, which develop students' ability to collaborate effectively, think critically, create their own ideas, and communicate effectively in a variety of modes.

SDUHSD provides innovative teaching and modern learning to all of our students to ensure that they are ready for both college and a career after graduation. SDUHSD students are provided opportunities in a wide range of courses, beginning in our feeder elementary schools, continued as they transition to our middle schools and maintained through high school, in computer sciences, STEM, and Career Technical Education that give our students a broad range of experiences. San Dieguito teachers and leaders are committed to continuous improvement, and participate in ongoing professional development focused on developing meaningful and relevant lessons and learning opportunities for our students. Students are engaged in communicating, collaborating, and thinking both creatively and critically throughout the learning process to ensure that they gain these important skills along with the strong content knowledge needed to be successful in today's world.

In November, 2012, the SDUHSD community supported a facilities bond. This work has been focused on creating innovative classrooms that are flexible, adaptable, with a technology-rich learning environment for students and staff.



SDUHSD serves as a model for the Professional Learning Community (PLC) philosophy, in which teachers and site leaders work collaboratively with the shared goal of improving student learning through the use of identified Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) for all students.

In addition, SDUHSD students continue to enjoy exemplary athletic, music, art and enrichment programs that foster well rounded students who are prepared for global citizenship. Social emotional health as well as student safety and connectedness continues to be a priority in our district, as we continuously monitor programs in grades 7-12, to ensure that we are meeting the needs of students.

INTRODUCTION OF FINDINGS

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) on June 25, July 2, 3 and August 1, 2018, for the new superintendent in the San Dieguito Union High School District. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The survey, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District; some of the challenges it will be facing in the coming years and what characteristics the stakeholders desire in the new superintendent.

The consultants commend the efforts of the Board for casting a wide net which generated a clear expression of interest in the District and the superintendent search process, as conveyed by all with whom they interacted or who completed the online survey. Stakeholders demonstrated a clear commitment to the education and success of all of the District's students as they shared what they perceived to be the strengths and challenges/issues of the District. Constituent groups also formulated a preferred list of characteristics and experiences that they felt would be desirable for the next superintendent to possess.

Participants in Focus Groups

Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) met with Board Members, administrators, teachers, parents, and community representatives on June 25, July 2,3 and August 1, 2018, to gather information to assist the consultants in formulating a leadership profile desired of the new superintendent. Additionally, the online survey was up and available for all members of the SDUHSD community beginning on July 2 and ending on July 31, 2018. The number of participants, by stakeholder group, is listed below:



Stakeholder Group	Participants
Administrators	17
Board Members	5
Classified staff	44
Community Members	38
Parents	162
Teachers	79
Total	343

The responses provided by the individuals and focus groups during the interviews are listed in two additional documents that are titled: Consistent Themes and All Responses. They are listed alphabetically with no attempt to prioritize them.

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if, in the consultants' judgment, they warranted the Board's attention.

Strengths

There were several consistent strengths identified. Most all stakeholder groups identified an outstanding teaching staff with tremendous resources and a strong curriculum. Additionally, there was a strong consensus that the district's instructional program is moving in an excellent direction with cutting edge programs offered to students. A strong and supportive community has consistently provided resources to support student learning both inside and outside the classroom. There is a strong co-curricular program and excellent extra-curricular opportunities for all students. Parents are involved in all aspects of the school from supporting classroom instruction to fundraising for programs. The majority of parents are active contributors to the school.

The relationship with the teachers and their association is seen by internal stakeholders as a significant strength. Collaboration is a guiding value, something to be proud of and to support. District lead initiatives were seen as positive so long as school sites retained autonomy to implement the changes. Employees have tremendous pride for the work they are doing to support students in SDUHSD.



Challenges

Accountability systems do not appear to be in place for the district. Examples that were shared had to do with the budget, personnel, special education and board governance. There was widespread concern about a small group of parents that have been diverting the district from the mission of supporting all students to focusing on the concerns of this group. Additionally, the need for the board and superintendent to work together as a governance team for the benefit of the students in the district was seen as an ongoing challenge.

While some internal stakeholders felt curriculum, instruction and assessment were strong, there were concerns noted regarding a ‘one size fits all’ approach for students. This one-size approach was focused on college readiness and was seen to be emphasized to the detriment of students not interested in attending college. The district was seen as needing to provide and promote opportunities for students who were more interested in non-college options.

The district’s recent deficit spending and a need to return to a balanced budget were seen as an important challenge by every stakeholder group. Data driven decision-making was not seen as the standard practice for the district and the need to focus on strategic planning was mentioned as an ongoing challenge.

Special education systems were identified as needing a significant change with improved communication, programming and transparency in the decision making process.

Characteristics for the Next Superintendent

Stakeholders had many different ideas regarding the characteristics for the next superintendent. However there were several common themes that did emerge. Understanding how to create a strong governance team with the school board and having had previous teaching and administrative experience are important characteristics. Being an excellent communicator and an active listener is expected.

Engaging the community and continuing to keep the students as the center of the decisions made by the board and superintendent will be important. Stakeholders indicated that they did not believe a ‘change agent’ was appropriate but that having good ‘diplomatic’ skills would be essential. It would be preferable that the new superintendent has had a proven track record of success, particularly in finance as the current fiscal issues were noted as challenging.

Being able to build trust amongst staff, community and the board of trustees will be essential. It will be important that the new superintendent sustain the student centered climate and work to have positive relationships with every student in the district. Having a deep knowledge in curriculum and instructional strategies is very important, as is the



ability to work with a professional and sophisticated teaching staff.

HYA consultants agree with many of the identified characteristics that would assist a new superintendent in successfully leading the San Dieguito Union High School District. The focus groups revealed a consensus that they want a leader who is engaging, collaborative, visible, a visionary, and a good communicator. The stakeholders want a leader that will continue and enhance the work being done at the school district. They desire an experienced educational leader who communicates effectively with all stakeholders and has demonstrated the ability to work positively with the Board of Trustees. The new superintendent should have a deep knowledge of innovative curriculum and instruction and be an instructional leader committed to improving student achievement. This individual must be visionary and be able to foster a team concept, treating all people with respect and professionalism. The new superintendent should understand school district finance and be able to balance the budget and move the district forward. It is important that the new superintendent be approachable, accessible, and transparent. The stakeholders want a superintendent who comes to stay and be part of the San Dieguito community for many years.

HYA cannot promise to find a candidate who possesses all of the characteristics desired by respondents. However, HYA intends to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses many of the skills and character traits required to build on the District's successes. HYA will address the concerns expressed by the constituent groups and present them to the Board for its review and consideration.

The consultants thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey. We also thank all of the San Dieguito Union School District staff members who assisted with our meetings and for their efforts in facilitating our time in the District. We would like to especially recognize Cindy Skeber, Cindy Frazee and Joann Schultz for their tireless work to accommodate both HYA associates and the stakeholders who gave of their time to speak with both of us.

Respectfully submitted,

Rudy Castruita and David Cash



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