

Northfield Public Schools Superintendent Search

Public Engagement Superintendent Search Survey

Overview: On March 10, 2026, the “Northfield Public Schools Superintendent Search Survey” was made available to the public both online and in hard copy. The survey remained open for respondents until March 22, 2026, and a total of 251 people completed the survey.

Although this survey was opt-in (meaning individuals must actively choose to participate), MSBA’s analysis of the results do indicate a cross-section of people who are invested in the district were reached through the survey process. Knowing it took time and effort to do so, the school board and MSBA deeply appreciate each and every respondent who participated in the survey. The information these individuals shared through their responses will provide valuable input for the school board to consider as they move forward in selecting the next superintendent to lead Northfield Public Schools.

The results of all quantitative survey responses are summarized in the first five pages of this report, beginning below with those from across the district who participated in the survey.

Self-identifiers: Survey takers were first asked to identify the role that best reflected the basis for their responses. The categories selected by the survey takers are as follows:

- 53.20% of respondents selected “Parent/Guardian”
- 27.20% of respondents selected “Staff Member”
- 8.80% of respondents selected “Community Member”
- 5.60% of respondents selected “Student”
- 2.40% of respondents selected “Other”
- 1.60% of respondents selected “Business Owner”
- 1.20% of respondents selected “District Partner”
- 0.00% of respondents selected “Agriculture”

Areas of Expertise: Those who responded to the survey were also asked to identify the top six desirable areas of expertise they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted areas of expertise are listed below in order of preference.

- Budget and Finance
- Collaborative Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Curriculum Development/Evaluation
- Personnel Management
- Educational Equity

Previous Experience: Respondents were asked if previous superintendent experience is important. Based on the results, 46.66% of the respondents selected "Yes," while 53.33% of the respondents selected "No."

Specialized Skills: The top six specialized skills the new superintendent must possess were identified in the survey results as shown below.

- Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
- Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
- Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
- Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
- Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
- Develops and directs an effective leadership team

Personal Characteristics: Survey takers were also asked to identify the top six personal characteristics they believe the new superintendent must possess. The most frequently noted personal characteristics are listed below in order of preference.

- Effective communicator
- Ethical
- Transparent
- Problem solver
- Personable
- Consistent

The following tables provide another perspective of the quantitative data, categorizing each question's responses by self-identifiers. The number of individual responses per category were:

- Parent/Guardian (133)
- Staff Member (68)
- Community Member (22)
- Student (14)
- Other (6)
- Business Owner (4)
- District Partner (3)
- Agriculture (0)

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

| Parent / Guardian (133) | Staff Member (68) | Community Member (22) | Student (14) | Other (6) | Business Owner (4) | District Partner (3) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Yes: 42.31% | Yes: 56.25% | Yes: 84.21% | Yes: 21.43% | Yes: 00.00% | Yes: 25.00% | Yes: 33.33% |
| No: 57.69% | No: 43.75% | No: 15.79% | No: 78.57% | No: 100.00% | No: 75.00% | No: 66.67% |



TOP SIX AREAS OF EXPERTISE

| Parent / Guardian (133) | Staff Member (68) | Community Member (22) | Student (14) | Other (6) | Business Owner (4) | District Partner (3) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Budget & Finance | Collaborative Leadership | Collaborative Leadership | Educational Equity | Collaborative Leadership | Collaborative Leadership | Personnel Management |
| Collaborative Leadership | Budget & Finance | Budget & Finance | Budget & Finance | Contract Administration & Negotiations | Budget & Finance | Strategic Planning |
| Strategic Planning | Personnel Management | Strategic Planning | Curriculum Development/ Evaluation | Cultural Competency | Curriculum Development/ Evaluation | Budget & Finance |
| Curriculum Development/ Evaluation | Strategic Planning | Contract Administration & Negotiations | Collaborative Leadership | Budget & Finance | Strategic Planning | Collaborative Leadership |
| Educational Equity | Educational Equity | Public Relations | Strategic Planning | Business Partnerships | Educational Equity | Educational Equity |
| Personnel Management | Public Relations | Personnel Management | Social/Emotional Support Services | Curriculum Development/ Evaluation | Special Education | Public Relations |

TOP SIX PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

| Parent / Guardian (133) | Staff Member (68) | Community Member (22) | Student (14) | Other (6) | Business Owner (4) | District Partner (3) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Effective Communicator | Effective Communicator | Effective Communicator | Effective Communicator | Transparent | Resourceful | Effective Communicator |
| Ethical | Personable | Ethical | Inclusive | Problem Solver | Transparent | Consistent |
| Transparent | Transparent | Consistent | Empathetic | Sense of Humor | Ethical | Ethical |
| Problem Solver | Ethical | Problem Solver | Enthusiastic | Creative | Consistent | Inclusive |
| Personable | Problem Solver | Transparent | Ethical | Personable | Empathetic | Personable |
| Resourceful | Consistent | Empathetic | Consistent | Resourceful | Effective Communicator | Transparent |

The following two pages directly compares the school board's responses to the specialized skills question. These results do indicate significant alignment between the board and public, as board members prioritized many of the same categories as a majority of the district's constituencies.

Northfield – Superintendent Search

Leadership Profile:

- **Ethical Leadership** – Demonstrates honesty, integrity, professionalism, and ethical leadership in all decision-making and interactions across the district and community.
- **Fiscal Stewardship** – Possesses experience and expertise in school finance, including responsible resource allocation and sound fiscal oversight aligned with the strategic plan.
- **Effective Communication** – Leads through clear, confident, and purposeful communication that informs, aligns, and builds trust with all audiences.
- **Team Leadership** – Develops and supports a collaborative, high-performing leadership team focused on district priorities, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- **Community Engagement** – Builds trust through a visible, approachable, and engaged presence that strengthens relationships within the district and broader community.
- **Labor Relations** – Provides effective, fair, and professional leadership in collective bargaining and labor negotiations.

Northfield Hiring Criteria and Public Input Survey:

Specialized Skills - Board

1. Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
2. Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
3. Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
4. Develops and directs an effective leadership team
5. Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
6. Knowledge of and experience with negotiations and the collective bargaining process

Specialized Skills – Public Input

1. Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
2. Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight
3. Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community
4. Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities
5. Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills
6. Develops and directs an effective leadership team

The following areas of expertise rose to the top in the public input survey:

- Budget and Finance
- Collaborative Leadership
- Strategic Planning

Is previous superintendent experience important?

Board: Yes = 71%; No = 29% Public Input: Yes = 47%; No = 53%

All highlights are to show where there is alignment with both the school board and the community.

TOP SIX SPECIALIZED SKILLS

| Parent / Guardian (133) | Staff Member (68) | Community Member (22) | Student (14) | Other (6) | Business Owner (4) | District Partner (3) |
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| Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight | Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities | Understands the effects of poverty on student learning and achievement | Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities | Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills |
| Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight | Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills | Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight | Uses curriculum, data, and other resources to improve test scores | Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Develops and directs an effective leadership team |
| Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities | Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Experience in implementing practices that support student safety and mental health | Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight |
| Visible and accessible to the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Develops and directs an effective leadership team | Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities | Experience in implementing practices that support student safety and mental health | Promotes business and community involvement in schools | Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight | Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community |
| Develops and directs an effective leadership team | Experience in school finance, including resource allocation and fiscal oversight | Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills | Develops and directs an effective leadership team | Provides written, understandable administrative procedures that implement school board policy | Uses curriculum, data, and other resources to improve test scores | Develops trust and works collaboratively with diverse groups and communities |
| Demonstrates clear, confident, and adaptable communication skills | Possesses a visionary and creative approach to problem-solving | Develops and directs an effective leadership team | Leads with honesty and in an ethical manner with the school board, staff, students, parents, and community | Works cooperatively with the school board; provides options and recommendations | Experience in developing and/or implementing a strategic plan (<i>tie with</i>) Works cooperatively with the school board; provides options and recommendations | Effectively mediates and accommodates different perspectives |

Additional comments: Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to answer open-ended questions in the survey, and on average, 175 of the 251 respondents provided additional commentary. These qualitative results were then reviewed by MSBA representatives, with reappearing ideas identified and grouped into themes. These themes are highlighted below for each of the questions.

The superintendent search survey asked the following four questions:

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Northfield Public Schools today?
2. What challenges do you see ahead for the district over the next five years?
3. What does the new superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?
4. Additional comments.

1. What are some of the good things taking place in Northfield Public Schools today?

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| <p>Northfield Public Schools are strengthened by high-quality, caring staff and steady leadership, with respondents highlighting a positive, collaborative culture and strong commitment to students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Great teaching staff - our admin know how to hire quality staff.</i> • <i>Dedicated, passionate teachers with strong backgrounds.</i> • <i>There is a lot of good will with staff. The staff cares about kids and goes above and beyond. The staff feels seen by the administration. Morale is high.</i> • <i>Top-notch teachers.</i> • <i>Caring and committed staff.</i> • <i>The fabulous teachers and leaders at their schools.</i> • <i>Strong leadership, excellent teaching staff, competent and compassionate staff.</i> • <i>Northfield has amazing teachers who work hard and deeply care for their students.</i> • <i>Outstanding teachers.</i> • <i>Excellent staff.</i> • <i>Excellent, consistent leadership and low-turnover staff.</i> • <i>Support for all staff. Know staff members by first name.</i> • <i>Staff are passionate about their work.</i> • <i>Collaborative nature with a positive climate overall. Staff and students are proud to be part of NPS.</i> • <i>Leadership team collaborates consistently and has good working relationship interdepartmentally.</i> • <i>High quality education, excellent teaching faculty.</i> • <i>Excellent teachers and academics.</i> • <i>We have good teachers who care about students and their wellbeing.</i> | <p>70 related responses</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The leadership and staff are, overall, amazing! I appreciate the way that the district invests in its people--because the people are who do the job of educating our students.</i> • <i>Committed educators.</i> • <i>I think morale among teachers is pretty good, and that shows in the classroom and communities.</i> • <i>The teachers and staff are phenomenal!</i> • <i>The teachers work extremely hard!</i> • <i>Empathetic and caring teaching staff.</i> • <i>Strong leadership.</i> • <i>Positive staff, collaboration across departments.</i> • <i>With the recent budget cuts and large class sizes, our staff continue to do their best for the students.</i> • <i>Confident teachers building relationships with students.</i> | |
| <p>Northfield Public Schools provides students with a wide range of meaningful academic, extracurricular, arts, career, and support opportunities that help students explore their interests, develop their talents, and prepare for future success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community education program is wonderful and provides many different opportunities that can appeal to anyone.</i> • <i>The arts are one of the resounding strengths of the district.</i> • <i>The CTE program is growing, providing opportunities for students exploring career fields outside of an undergraduate program.</i> • <i>Number of HS course options, the excellent extracurricular activities and clubs for students.</i> • <i>Companeros program, music education.</i> • <i>Athletics and activities cultivating well rounded adults for the future who are ready for the real world.</i> • <i>Students have lots of opportunities.</i> • <i>The arts at the high school, including the innovative and high-quality production of Rock'n'Roll revival that is created by students every two years.</i> • <i>Starting and supporting FFA.</i> • <i>The programs that have been put in place to support all students to graduation.</i> • <i>Community based experiences.</i> • <i>I love that there are opportunities for all sorts of students to be part of things.</i> • <i>Excellent music program.</i> • <i>Extracurricular activities & clubs.</i> • <i>Continued support of alternative education programming.</i> • <i>The arts. I am continuously impressed with the level at which our arts community shows up and how the NF schools embrace it.</i> • <i>Good education and extracurriculars.</i> | <p>69 related responses</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If kids want to be involved in a sport or other activity they can.</i> • <i>Sports and activities (participation rates and competitive standings).</i> • <i>I like how many opportunities there are for getting more involved in the community, such as extracurricular activities, volunteer opportunities, and community events.</i> • <i>Advancement of Career and Technical Education classes/opportunities.</i> • <i>What has always been good about Northfield, the in-class education and out-of-class extracurricular activities.</i> • <i>Music education.</i> • <i>The Spanish Emerson programs.</i> • <i>Some very talented youth are provided with opportunities to use those talents.</i> • <i>Many options for students.</i> • <i>Well-rounded, inclusive curriculum. Broad extracurricular offerings.</i> • <i>Strong special Ed program.</i> • <i>Compañeros program.</i> • <i>Our kids have tremendous talent in music, theatre, paint, pottery, drawing, and everything in between.</i> • <i>Opportunities provided to students, options for those requiring learning aids.</i> • <i>Showcases of students' creativity through art shows (Arts a la Carte), stage productions (RRR), etc., are what really makes this district special.</i> | |
| <p>Northfield Public Schools benefits from strong community support and engagement, with families, voters, local organizations, and public partners actively investing in and working alongside the district to support its schools and students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strong district and community partnership.</i> • <i>There is drive to have families be involved and come into the school building.</i> • <i>The district has also been well funded and supported by the community.</i> • <i>Voters support school initiatives and bonding requests.</i> • <i>Support from community.</i> • <i>We have great community involvement and school board that pays attention and really tries to listen to stakeholders.</i> • <i>Strong commitment to education and community support.</i> • <i>The history with passing bonds and levy's to support education for your youth.</i> • <i>We also benefit from an engaged and supportive community that values education and works in partnership in our schools.</i> • <i>Overall our community supports our schools and students which is evident through the positive, measurable outcomes our students produce.</i> • <i>A community that's highly invested in public education.</i> • <i>Strong community partnerships.</i> • <i>Putting the community and parents back into the school buildings.</i> | <p>44 related responses</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Northfield Schools values the community input, regularly provides opportunities for engagement, and maintains high public support for the school system.</i> • <i>An amazing community commitment to education - noted through the participation in budgeting, building planning, referendums, legislative action committee, etc.</i> • <i>The school district is a great partner with the city and the colleges and offers great public education.</i> • <i>We regularly partner with local organizations and both the colleges in a number of ways that are unique to our community.</i> • <i>Support for all student activities from the community, from fine arts to athletics.</i> • <i>Collaboration with the community (art show at the guild for example).</i> | |
| <p>Northfield Public Schools is recognized for strong academics, high expectations, and quality teaching and learning, with solid curriculum, student growth, and preparation for future success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Northfield has pretty good academics relative to other districts.</i> • <i>Attendance and test scores improving.</i> • <i>Students are successful and prepared for the next level.</i> • <i>Well-rounded, inclusive curriculum.</i> • <i>NFLD is academically challenging for students.</i> • <i>Student academic achievement.</i> • <i>The educating being done at Prairie Creek Community School is the most inspiring and innovative part of our school district. Their transformative curriculum could really benefit the other elementary schools in our district.</i> • <i>Student achievement is satisfactory.</i> • <i>High Quality Curriculum Implementation across PreK-12.</i> • <i>We have incredibly strong academics across all subject matters.</i> • <i>I feel the district really strives to advocate for their students and gives them the best education and opportunities opposed to other districts in the surrounding area.</i> • <i>Consistent values of inclusion, high expectations, and focus on learning.</i> • <i>Children making gains in their learning.</i> • <i>Students are being supported and learning.</i> • <i>Foremost for me is the high quality of the education our children receive, as measured by our graduates' post-secondary success.</i> | <p>41 related responses</p> |

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| <p>Northfield Public Schools is marked by a welcoming, inclusive, and caring culture where students feel respected, supported, and connected to their schools.</p> | <p>38 related responses</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The culture feels healthy and inclusive. There is an expectation that we are all pulling on the same oar.</i> • <i>Students are respected and heard.</i> • <i>Friendly, safe place. My children love their school.</i> • <i>Supporting one another and celebrating goals and milestones.</i> • <i>Good sense of community.</i> • <i>The schools are a reason for people to consider moving to the area (it was for us).</i> • <i>Welcoming to students.</i> • <i>Kids like to go to school.</i> • <i>Care and compassion.</i> • <i>The ongoing commitment to ensuring that ever student feels like they belong is important and must continue.</i> • <i>Works together to learn new things, community of learners eager to learn.</i> • <i>Positive learning culture.</i> • <i>Inclusivity.</i> • <i>The community is nice.</i> | |

2. What challenges do you see for the district over the next five years?

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| <p>Respondents believe a major challenge facing Northfield Public Schools is declining enrollment, which is closely tied to housing, population trends, and families’ decisions about whether to choose the district. This decline creates growing pressure on the district’s budget, staffing, and ability to maintain programs, services, and opportunities for students.</p> | <p>102 related responses</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Declining Enrollment (This phrase was used 13 times)</i> • <i>Declining student registration due to housing costs.</i> • <i>The district has been experiencing incremental declining enrollment.</i> • <i>We need to figure out why families are leaving the school or not choosing to attend school and work with the community to turn around enrollment.</i> • <i>Enrollment (and therefore budget) is a significant concern and does require collaboration with city council/economic development and major employers.</i> • <i>The shrinking student numbers are clearly causing a financial strain for the district.</i> • <i>Decline in enrollment due to the cost of living in Northfield.</i> • <i>Declining Enrollment: We will need to continue to evaluate staffing and programming to meet our changing enrollment.</i> | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Smaller enrollment --> tighter budgets, but please don't stop offering any of the student-oriented services that are currently available.</i> • <i>Declining student enrollment. These realities make it difficult to maintain programs and resources that benefit students.</i> • <i>The effects of declining enrollment will have a big impact on the budget.</i> • <i>Less enrollment with declining birth rates.</i> • <i>Enrollment is certainly a challenge. I'd like to see the city grow more. To do that, we need to have attractive schools, literally and figuratively, to bring more families to the area.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment will be an issue if the community cannot solve the housing issues.</i> • <i>Reduced enrollment and the effects on classrooms and staffing.</i> • <i>Declining enrollments and therefore state funding.</i> • <i>General funding loss due to population decrease will affect the opportunities for kids.</i> • <i>Budget concerns will only continue as costs increase and enrollment declines.</i> • <i>Getting enrollment numbers back up.</i> • <i>Finances due to enrollment continue to be a challenge.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment impacting financial stability.</i> • <i>Remaining financially stable despite declining enrollments.</i> • <i>Budget and enrollment will continue to be challenges over the next five year.</i> • <i>Enrollment challenges will persist, some of those drivers we can try to influence and some others we can't.</i> • <i>Increase enrollment--some houses being built in the district will help.</i> • <i>Decreased funding from a declining enrollment.</i> • <i>Declining enrollment combined with rising costs.</i> | |
| <p>Financial stability is a significant challenge for Northfield Public Schools as rising costs, funding uncertainty, and tax pressures continue to strain the district's budget. This pressure may make it harder for the district to maintain staffing, student supports, programs, and the overall quality of educational opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Budget/Budgeting. (These single word descriptors were used 10 times.)</i> • <i>Budget cuts/issues/shortfalls/challenges/concerns. (These phrases were used 10 times.)</i> • <i>Funds/Funding. (These single word descriptors were used 4 times.)</i> • <i>Unfunded mandates that put unnecessary budget restraints on the district and stress on our teachers and staff.</i> • <i>Budget cuts, lack of federal funding which affects students and staff, especially in special services.</i> • <i>Funding: The basic math problem of school finance will continue to be a struggle. Lack of appropriate increases to keep pace with inflation, declining federal resources and expenditures that continue to increase. We need to</i> | <p>96 related responses</p> |

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| <p><i>rethink how we create the budget to ensure we aren't on a perpetual rollercoaster.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Funding - taxes are TOO high.</i> • <i>Tax burdens are a concern on the community and business owners.</i> • <i>In terms of real challenges, I think school finances will continue to be an issue.</i> • <i>State funding and requirements.</i> • <i>Funding is a constant issue.</i> • <i>Budgetary restrictions.</i> • <i>Budgeting is an ongoing issue for our district. Our town is already heavily taxed, so it will be very hard to convince voters to support future levies.</i> • <i>Cost control.</i> • <i>Financial challenges is probably the largest obstacle due to rising costs of everything and less money from the state.</i> • <i>Special ed requirements and costs.</i> • <i>Under/unfunded mandates.</i> • <i>The costs keep rising. How are you going to manage it?</i> • <i>Overspending and tax increases.</i> • <i>Funding cuts risk jeopardizing the quality of the education students receive.</i> • <i>Worsening economic conditions impacting public funding and the community at large.</i> • <i>Budget concerns will only continue as costs increase and enrollment declines. Eventually, cuts will impact the core things that make Northfield, Northfield.</i> • <i>It is frustrating to see funds decline and teaching positions cut.</i> • <i>Continuing implications of budget reductions.</i> • <i>The increase in demands for special education especially when the true cost is not reimbursed.</i> • <i>Loss of state funding and the rising taxes within the school district that are stretching homeowners.</i> | |
| <p>Maintaining strong and relevant learning opportunities is a significant challenge for Northfield Public Schools as academic support, rigor, curriculum quality, and access to a broad range of programs all need continued attention. The district also needs to navigate tensions around inclusion and school culture while ensuring students with different needs, interests, and perspectives feel supported and well served.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continuing to work on supporting those students who need additional academic support without leaving those who are academic high flyers to fend for themselves.</i> • <i>Our elementary school student hasn't had the same pull out high math and reading groups her older siblings had because the staff roles are no longer there.</i> • <i>Students' learning styles and needs continue to change. Many students struggle with engagement and with developing the ability to persevere through productive struggle.</i> | <p>60 related responses</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Keeping existing staff updated with latest teaching methods.</i> • <i>We have to figure out a way to support Tier 2 academic supports at the MS level.</i> • <i>Keeping focus on acceptance of all and equity.</i> • <i>Offering courses to meet needs of all students in all grades.</i> • <i>Support for the top 10% of a class academically has basically vanished.</i> • <i>Consistently supporting implementation of high quality curriculum and instruction (teachers need training, support, and time to do this well).</i> • <i>Equitable inclusion of all students in programming, both academic and extracurricular, needs more focus.</i> • <i>There is a decrease in services for additional support especially in reading with the Read Act. This means we will really need to strengthen our Tier I.</i> • <i>Better elementary science teaching and curriculum planning.</i> • <i>Keeping challenging classes available.</i> • <i>Prioritizing the fine arts.</i> • <i>Lack of online school options within the district.</i> • <i>Reductions in elective options at the MS and HS.</i> • <i>The ability to keep a strong arts, athletic, and classroom instruction, including advanced classes if cuts continue to be needed.</i> • <i>Kids need education no matter what track. Train for what the world needs.</i> • <i>Continuing to support diversity, equity, and inclusion in the current political climate.</i> • <i>Over the next five years, the district will likely see increasing diversity in its student population. This will require a stronger focus on inclusion and ensuring that all students feel respected and represented.</i> • <i>Keep political views and opinions away from students. Students shouldn't know teachers political stance or fear retribution for differing opinions.</i> | |
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3. What does the next superintendent need to know about the history of the school district and community to be successful?

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| <p>Northfield is a community with a strong history, a close connection to its schools, and a broad mix of backgrounds, viewpoints, and expectations. Success in the district depends on understanding both the community's commitment to high-quality education and the strong opinions and traditions that continue to shape local expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Northfield is a special place. With that come high expectations.</i> • <i>Northfield is a very mixed population in the sense that it's not fully urban nor fully rural.</i> • <i>The values that have run through this town since its founding.</i> • <i>Northfield is a multi-layered community, more complicated than just an education-friendly college town.</i> | <p>65 related responses</p> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It's still a fairly conservative community.</i> • <i>This is an overall progressive community with intelligent, engaged families.</i> • <i>The district benefits immensely by the two colleges and the high education level and socio-economic status of the many of the town's residents.</i> • <i>This is a community that values education and feels strongly about how great our schools are.</i> • <i>That Northfield is not monolithic- there are conservative patches, liberal patches, highly formally-educated folks, and folks who are not formally educated and feel more self made.</i> • <i>This is a great town for education - lean into that.</i> • <i>People's ties to the Midwest tend to be generations deep, so there can be a real suspicion/mistrust of outsiders, new ideas, and breaking from tradition.</i> • <i>The very high expectations in this community.</i> • <i>Northfield is very cliquy and not super welcoming to new families. There is a wide range of political affiliations and a large variance of opinions about what is or is not important for schools to address.</i> • <i>We are a community who cares deeply about people.</i> • <i>Historically Northfield has been a top performing district over many areas.</i> • <i>That we are a multicultural liberal inclusive community.</i> • <i>It has a legacy and traditions.</i> • <i>It's a tricky mix of high intellectual academics and rural practical professionals.</i> • <i>Northfield has a highly educated population with a unique interest in and support of the public schools.</i> • <i>We have pride in the high quality of education provided to our youth and do not want that diminished.</i> • <i>Its a strong, intelligent community.</i> | |
| <p>Northfield expects a superintendent who is visible and able to build strong relationships across the district and community. Success in this role depends on leading with integrity, listening carefully, communicating clearly, and balancing collaboration and transparency with the confidence to make difficult decisions when needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Calm presence and know-how are helpful.</i> • <i>Personable, transparent, good communication.</i> • <i>Strong communication skills, both written and verbal, are a must.</i> • <i>We want someone genuine who will do the right things and make the right decisions for the well-being of our students and staff.</i> • <i>Leadership has to provide strong vision and skills, listen to the community but also not be afraid to take action despite opposition at times, and hold all parties accountable.</i> • <i>We work best with collaborative leadership.</i> • <i>The need to lead with Minnesota niceness as well as Minnesota determination and toughness.</i> | <p>56 related responses</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We want someone genuine who will do the right things and make the right decisions for the well-being of our students and staff.</i> • <i>The next leader needs to be relational, empathetic, and humble.</i> • <i>It will take a strong and empathetic leader to navigate this community.</i> • <i>Communicate with the taxpayers.</i> • <i>Start each day at a school building talking to staff, meeting regularly with the leadership team, and regularly ask the community to provide their input. Maintaining those partnerships is going to be important for both the district and the community.</i> • <i>This community is used to transparency and being invited to the table to contribute to decision-making in multiple areas.</i> • <i>The community on Facebook is a loud minority. Don't listen to them, listen to the people who show up in person to give comments.</i> • <i>Continue to work on being transparent with all stakeholders.</i> • <i>Good communication and transparency will be needed to rebuild trust after being somewhat blindsided with budget deficiencies last year.</i> • <i>We are a tight community and expect partnership and voices being listened to and heard.</i> • <i>Be more involved.</i> • <i>Continuously involve the community by asking for perspective sharing.</i> • <i>Be very transparent and developed open lines of communication with the community.</i> • <i>Community expects to see Sup. at many activities and to remember people that he/she meets--maintain local radio updates too.</i> | |
| <p>Northfield's community is deeply invested in its schools and remains an active, supportive partner in the district's success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Keep the community involved and keep the community in the schools or feeling as they are welcome.</i> • <i>The community is invested in education.</i> • <i>The community supports its schools!</i> • <i>This is a community of involved parents, community members and leaders. We want what's best for our kids and our wider community!</i> • <i>They will have the full support of the community.</i> • <i>Community involvement and local traditions play a key role.</i> • <i>We are a highly collaborative community and school district.</i> • <i>The community overall supports the district and there is high engagement in education.</i> • <i>Education is important to community and community members are involved in the schools.</i> • <i>The community is highly involved.</i> • <i>That the district and community work together as partners.</i> • <i>The overwhelming majority of the community there is unwavering support for the school district.</i> | <p>28 related responses</p> |

4. Additional Comments:

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| <p>Northfield's next superintendent needs to be a strong, ethical, and approachable leader who communicates clearly, listens well, includes others in the process, and can thoughtfully navigate the district's complexity and fiscal realities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I really think that an understanding of legislative processes and the fiscal realities that spring from it are going to be of utmost importance for the new superintendent to succeed for Northfield.</i>• <i>I would love to see a new superintendent that is accessible.</i>• <i>Please find someone the teachers and principals respect and trust</i>• <i>The new person will need grace and the ability to be their own leader.</i>• <i>I am looking forward to working with a superintendent who is a creative thinker and who has a vision about how our schools can work even more diligently to bring 21st century opportunities into our secondary schools.</i>• <i>We need someone that can balance a budget.</i>• <i>I would hope the next superintendent would be approachable and knowledgeable.</i>• <i>Northfield is a complex intersection of communities and needs. Ethical, engaged leadership is the beginning but we need someone who will be visionary in how we can all work together for our children.</i>• <i>Irreproachable ethical standards. Great empathy. Humor and humility. A sense of what's right without a hint of self-righteousness. Careful financial stewardship. A core belief in doing what's best for kids.</i>• <i>We love our quirky little town but it's a complex place that needs a patient person.</i>• <i>Personable, problem solver who communicates well and is visible would be crucial</i> | 25 related responses |
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