

LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

WHEATON-WARRENVILLE CUSD 200

October 11, 2006

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings of the *Leadership Profile Assessment* conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, Ltd. (HYA) for the Board of Education of Wheaton-Warrenville District 200 (Board). The data contained herein were obtained from reviewing approximately 275 completed *Leadership Profile Assessment* forms and meeting with approximately 100 persons identified by the Board, in either individual or focus group settings, on September 12 and 13, 2006. The questionnaire, interviews and focus groups were structured to gather data to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics it might seek in its next superintendent of schools. Through this process, the consultants attempted to identify the personal and professional characteristics desired in the superintendent, as well as the skill sets necessary to maintain what constituent groups valued and to address current and emerging issues which the District might be facing.

Information obtained through interviews and completed questionnaires reflects similar views from all groups with respect to the multiple strengths of the Wheaton-Warrenville School District. Respondents voiced pride in their District's reputation for success in providing a student-centered, high quality educational program with well performing students, while remaining fiscally responsible to taxpayers. Residents are extremely proud of the strong parent and community support for the District as evidenced by the successful passage of a \$72 million bond referendum that funded new field houses at both high schools and additional classrooms which opened this fall. Other strengths cited were the District's good test scores, its comprehensive, well-rounded curriculum and wide-range of extra curricular activities to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Respondents are proud of their strong fine and performing arts programs, competitive sports programs and excellent services for gifted and special needs students. Other strengths mentioned repeatedly were the District's many hard-working, talented teachers and administrators, competent support staff, strong, cohesive Board of Education, motivated students and very involved parents and community, all of whom value academic excellence. The stakeholder groups specifically commended the District's culture of healthy relationships between administration and Board, administration/Board and teachers, and between the District and parents/community.

Other strengths mentioned were the District's efforts to maintain good communication with the community, its strong commitment to improve student learning as the changing demographics increase the need for individualized services, its focus on data-driven decision-making, its encouragement of innovation and its emphasis on student safety. Underlying the above recital of the District's strengths by most respondents was the frequently stated expression of appreciation for the strong leadership of Dr. Gary Catalani and a collaborative, non-micro-managing Board of Education who have brought the

District's focus back to its mission: "to inspire, educate, challenge and support all students to reach their highest level of learning and personal development."

The most frequently cited concerns are both financial and political: 1) the uncertainty of the District's fiscal stability as the need for a referendum to raise the tax rate appears inevitable, given the District's inability to balance the budget in future years without draconian cuts in educational expenditures; 2) the immediate need to resolve the Hubble School controversy, which will require a second referendum for replacement regardless of where a school is built. The disturbing aspect of the middle school issue for most respondents has been its divisiveness. Many residents felt that prolonging the debate merely exacerbates the situation and widens the gulf between the Wheaton and Warrenville communities. The need to bring all constituencies together to agree on a solution, followed by a successful referendum, is paramount.

Other concerns centered on the impact of the increasing number of lower socio-economic and multicultural students in need of special services. The ability of the District to maintain high quality academic programs for all students, given the increased cost of such programs, was questioned. Others emphasized the need for more effective staff training and new initiatives to respond to the needs of the increasingly diverse student population. Still others wondered how the District would be able to increase its test scores and comply with the subset requirements of NCLB in the near future.

Another area of concern focused on the need to improve the articulation of the curriculum between the middle schools and the high schools and to improve preparation of students for the more rigorous academic expectations of the high schools. Respondents felt that the interpretation of the site-based philosophy by many schools caused an inequitable delivery of the curriculum to some students. Others felt that a more comprehensive performance evaluation of principals and staff would ensure more consistent implementation of curriculum. Additional concerns expressed with some frequency were the need to: upgrade the technology infrastructure and update software for classroom use; continue to encourage innovation with cutting-edge programs; retain the trust of the community through improved communication and involvement; maintain high academic standards with the recruitment of talented administrators and teachers to replace retirees; and avoid allowing an emphasis on test scores to sidetrack the District's focus on individual student growth and support for the arts.

Respondents agreed on many of the attributes that would assist a new superintendent in addressing the issues confronting the Wheaton-Warrenville School District. They want a student-centered, collaborative educational leader of unquestioned integrity with exceptional communication, interpersonal and organizational/management skills. He/she should have long-range planning skills with the ability to develop a common vision for the District's future direction and a plan to achieve it. The successful candidate should be a consensus builder who can inspire all segments of the school community to work together toward common goals. He/she should be sensitive and proactive in addressing diversity issues, be a strong advocate of effective programs for students with special needs and support staff development

opportunities to assist faculty in responding to the diverse needs of a changing student population. The new superintendent should be open to new ideas, willing to examine all options, seek the views of those affected, and then make the tough decisions. He/she should have the courage of his/her convictions in resolving conflict, supporting decisions and recommendations on the basis of what is best for all students.

The successful individual should have a firm understanding of fiscal management, curriculum development/articulation and the value of technology in the classroom. He/she should be a strong supporter of the arts and programs for gifted students. The new superintendent should have successful experience dealing collaboratively with a Board and establishing agreement on their respective governance and management roles. He/she should have a proven record of hiring competent people, motivating and empowering them to strive for excellence, then holding them accountable by making personnel decisions based on performance evaluations.

He/she should be visible in the schools, enjoy interacting with students and staff, be involved in the community and develop positive working relationships with state and local officials, business and community groups and agencies. The individual should be a personable, accessible, open-minded leader who seeks dialogue with staff, students, parents and the community, keeps them well informed and responds to inquiries in a timely, forthright manner.

HYA will not be able to find a candidate who possesses all of the characteristics desired by respondents. However, HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses many of the skills and character traits required to address the issues described by the constituent groups. We expect the new superintendent to provide the leadership that inspires trust and unites the Wheaton-Warrenville community in its support for the implementation of a vision that produces an even higher level of performance for students and staff in School District 200.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Mikaelian
Joan Levy

Introduction

This report presents the findings of the *Leadership Profile Assessment* conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd. (HYA) for the Board of Education of Wheaton-Warrenville CUSD 200. After the Board selected HYA to assist in its search for a new superintendent, an assessment instrument was prepared to solicit responses which would be used to help the Board clarify the characteristics it should seek in the new superintendent. The Board distributed the questionnaire to a variety of stakeholders including administrators, faculty, support staff, parents, former board members and community groups. The Board invited a number of individuals and groups to meet with the consultants on September 12 and 13, 2006 to discuss these characteristics in greater depth. Approximately 275 completed forms were returned by constituents and reviewed by the consultants. In addition, the consultants met with approximately 100 individuals during their visit in the District.

In developing this *Leadership Profile Report*, the consultants sought opinions, recommendations and general comments with respect to preferred candidate traits and qualifications as well as District strengths, issues and concerns which could bear upon future leadership requirements and influence the selection criteria for the next superintendent of schools. In an effort to ensure that the process was inclusive and transparent, the consultants noted that the Board was seeking the views of a broad range of individuals to assist in the search process. It was agreed that the consultants would report the findings to the Board without revealing the identity of any individual contributor, enabling the Board to use the data as it proceeds to define the leadership characteristics and selection criteria to be used in identifying the next superintendent. It also was understood that the Board had the responsibility to define these characteristics and would use its prerogative to do so.

The responses provided with some consistency by the individuals, focus groups and those who completed questionnaires are presented in this report. Groups represented included Board members, administrators, faculty, support staff, parents and community leaders. The comments are listed alphabetically since no attempt was made 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 District's stakeholders or the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if the consultants believe they warrant the Board's attention.**

The consultants wish to thank Mary Lou Sender for her extraordinarily thoughtful assistance in arranging the interviews, keeping us on schedule and providing valuable historical insights. We also thank those with whom we met for their cordiality and responsiveness, in addition to all who took the time to complete the form.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Mikaelian
Joan Levy
Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, Ltd.

STRENGTHS

CONSISTENT

Ability to attract and maintain quality staff
Board's collaborative relationship with administrators and staff
Broad range of curriculum to benefit varying capabilities and needs of all students
Data-driven decision-making
District focus on academic excellence and improving achievement of all students
Emphasis on student safety and security in all schools
Excellent communication between schools and community
Fiscally responsible management of resources
Growing multi-cultural diversity of student population
Hard-working, dedicated administrative staff
High test scores
Highly qualified teachers and support staff committed to excellence
Motivated, capable and respectful students
New and updated facilities
Outstanding fine and performing arts programs
Positive relationships established by District with governmental units, agencies and community organizations
Reputation of District as providing a high quality education for all students
Small class size
Solid basis of support and involvement of parents
Strong, cohesive Board committed to implementing District's mission for all students
Strong, proactive, consistent, consensus-building leadership of Superintendent
Supportive, stable community that values quality education
Wide array of clubs/activities and sports to meet the interests of all students

BOARD

Community's trust of District
District-wide commitment to mission statement
Receipt of award for academic improvement
Three-year contract with WWEA
Use of a community survey to improve communication

ADMINISTRATORS

Building-based management
Central office that responds to and supports building needs
Curriculum renewal process identifies and provides resources to support curriculum
Good communication and articulation throughout District
Rigor of curriculum and continued efforts to provide K-12 consistency
Staff members committed to professional development and life-long learning
Success in preparing students for the future
Tradition of engaging the community when District confronts important decisions

COMMUNITY

Aggressive leadership has vastly improved District's educational program
Good communication with community underscores District's "public partnership"
Effective inter-governmental cooperation
Excellent maintenance of physical plants with emphasis on safety
Good articulation among schools
Willingness of administration and Board to listen to community's views

FACULTY

Abundance of support services/resources/materials available to students and faculty
Administrators who listen to staff concerns and collaborate on resolving them
Approachable teachers who promote student interest in learning
Continuous review and updating of curriculum in alignment with state standards
Dedicated faculty committed to what is best for students
Effective staff development opportunities, including teacher mentoring programs
Faculty encouraged by administrators to try "cutting edge" instructional strategies
Focus on student learning when making decisions
Goals for elementary curriculum that permit different teaching styles
High expectations for all students shared by teachers, parents and administrators
Parents involved in students' progress
Progressive, positive, caring learning environment
Unit District organization
Updated technology that enhances student learning

PARENTS

Abundant resources available to serve the needs of students and teachers
Board that is responsive to public opinion and does not micromanage
Culture that inspires trust, cooperation and improvement of leadership skills
Current effort to channel exceptional talents of parents into school support groups
District's good relationship with the Special Education Parent Group
Value placed on arts, sports and extra-curricular activities as essential components of education of the "whole" child

SUPPORT STAFF

Commitment of parents, administrators and Board to the success of all students while remaining financially responsible
Environment of accountability for all aspects of the educational spectrum
Excellent support staff who assist in Title I and inclusion programs
Preventative maintenance strategy in all buildings
Technology updated

CHALLENGES, ISSUES AND CONCERNS

CONSITENT

Ability to maintain high quality academic programs for all students while providing services for growing number of ELL and special needs students
Change perception of Wheaton-Warrenville as a divided community to a collaborating, unified District with shared strengths, goals and resources
Defuse divisiveness of Hubble School controversy with documented cost facts
Demonstrate need and gain support for referenda to replace Hubble School and increase tax rate
Financial and public relations impact of addressing AYP and other NCLB mandates
Lack of upgraded technology infrastructure and software for classrooms
Maintain commitment to excellence in fine and performing arts programs
Need for more comprehensive performance evaluation of administrators and staff
Need for staff training to address special needs of increasingly diverse student population
Recruit and retain high quality administrators and teachers to replace retirees
Retain small class size
Retain trust of community through improved communication
Strengthen rigor of middle school curriculum and improve articulation with high schools
Smooth transition to student-focused leadership of new Superintendent
Uncertainty of future financial situation and ability to balance budgets

BOARD

Lack of rigor in Advanced Placement courses
More focus on individual student needs, not “one size fits all” approach
Need to change high school culture: more consistent response to discipline problems

ADMINISTRATORS

Change in School Board membership may erode positive relationship with staff
Changing demographics have caused a “have and have not” labeling of schools
Desire of principals to be site-based undermines implementation of District initiatives
Deterioration of facilities and poor maintenance in some elementary schools
Impact of demands of special interest groups upon limited resources
Keep teachers updated as to best instructional practices
Need for a more comprehensive early childhood program
Need to evaluate current organization and strategies of instruction to be positioned to respond to changing student population, NCLB and new federal/state mandates
Perception that test scores will decline as student population becomes more diverse

COMMUNITY

Expand opportunities for students in less competitive sports and other activities
Increase accountability for student achievement
Increase focus on mid-range students
Lack of racial and ethnical diversity among faculty and staff
Need for increased understanding of racial/ethnic diversity issues
Strengthen efforts to develop District into a world-class system

FACULTY

Broaden scope of curriculum and educational practice to help non-college bound students develop skills for success
Develop new initiatives to ensure adequate progress is made by NCLB disaggregated groups
Increase test scores without sacrificing creative freedom enjoyed by teachers
Improve communication from central administration to and among schools
Lack of consistency among elementary schools in setting expectations and providing services for special education students
Lack of consistency in implementing curriculum and supporting arts programs
Need for a less hierarchical system that welcomes suggestions and feedback from subordinates
Need for comprehensive evaluation of management style/performance of building administrators
Need to increase aides in classroom to assist teachers with special education students
Need to mentor increasing number of young, inexperienced teachers
Overemphasis on district-wide testing
Parental demands perceived as having more weight than teachers' opinions
Perceived inequity in allocation of resources between "have and have-not" schools
Require subject expertise in new teachers as maturing staff retires
Set high academic expectations for all students, regardless of socio-economic level
Shortage of classrooms in middle schools causes increase in class size
Stay competitive with similar districts in regard to technology, facilities, salaries, etc.
Survive NCLB "without losing our humanity"

PARENTS

Ability of large schools to accommodate needs of an increasingly diverse student body
Ability to comply with NCLB standards and other federal/state mandates
Acknowledge that socio-economic and ethnic differences in building populations require different programs, services and teaching strategies to help students succeed
Expand counseling services offered at high schools
Lack of understanding of how cultural differences affect students' academic performance
Need for all-day kindergarten and extended childcare programs
Need to examine building attendance boundaries
Need to strengthen the bi-lingual program and at-risk programs for pre-school children

SUPPORT STAFF

Avoid reduction in extra-curricular opportunities essential to a well-rounded education

Celebrate unique contributions that a diverse student population brings to classroom

Exponential increases in cost of special education should not deter proper identification
of students with special needs

Impact of meeting NCLB standards upon programs for ELL, refugee and special needs students

Improve integration of special education staff with regular education staff

Increase support staff to accommodate increased needs of diverse student population

Need to set priorities in developing budget and allocating funds

CHARACTERISTICS

CONSISTENT

Ability to develop a common vision for District's future and a plan to achieve it
Ability to inspire all segments of the community to work together toward common goals
Ability to make decisions from a global perspective, balancing student needs, community expectations and state/federal mandates
Awareness of importance of technology as a teaching tool
Collaborative management style
Consensus builder who can rally support and unite community
Courage of convictions in supporting decisions based on what is best for all students
Empowers and supports administrators' and staff's efforts to achieve District goals
Excellent communication skills (oral, written, listening)
Experience with and support for effective gifted and special education programs
Firm understanding of fiscal management, budget development, planning and controls
Forward-thinking instructional leader with a high level of intelligence
Involved in the community
Long-range planning skills
Open-minded; accessible; available
Passion for public education; enthusiastic
Politically astute; keen sense of discretion; thick-skinned
Proven success with comprehensive performance evaluation, holding staff accountable
Seeks opportunities to develop positive relationships with students, faculty, parents, community groups, business leaders, state and local government officials
Sensitive and proactive in addressing diversity issues
Strong organizational and interpersonal skills
Strong supporter of the arts as an essential component of students' education
Student centered focus as basis for data-driven decisions
Success in dealing collaboratively with a Board with respect for their respective roles
Understands curriculum development, best practice, new trends
Unquestioned personal and professional integrity
Visible in schools

BOARD

Ability to develop leadership
Accepts conservative values of community
Balanced perspective
Comfortable in a social setting
Creates a culture in which all pursue their passion for excellence
Energetic, personable
Sense of humor
Values input and responds to ideas of Board members in a timely manner
Willing to hear all sides of an issue; fair, decisive

ADMINISTRATORS

Ability to handle controversy and other difficult situations in a professional manner
Articulate speaker with ability to respond spontaneously and deliver a clear message
Considers District's accomplishments before proposing changes
Consults principal before responding to a parent's complaint about building level issues
Deep understanding of student achievement, curriculum and school improvement
Embraces diversity
Exhibits and models trust; willing to admit mistakes
Genuine servant leadership in attitude and action; consistent follow-through
Global leader who sees the big picture and has the vision to guide the District
Inspires people to improve
Risk taker; encourages others to try new ways to meet needs of diverse learners
Solid core values
Successful experience as a superintendent in a district with similar demographics
Successful experience in passing referenda
Understands the problems and needs of a unit district

COMMUNITY

Aspires to take District 200 to a "world class" level
Child advocate; believes all children can learn and improve
Engages students, parents and community as partners in education
Innovative in education process and financial matters
Open to suggestions from parents and community
Recognizes the value in change

FACULTY

Ability to delegate and hold staff accountable; does not micro-manage
Believes in and supports site-based management
Classroom experience
Clear vision to implement long-term goals
Commitment to strong staff development opportunities
Creative thinker
Courage and tact to stand up to strong, vocal parental complaints
Experience in a large unit district
Facilitates communication and problem solving between groups in disagreement
Firm in his/her core beliefs and philosophy
Focus on quality education and student learning experiences, not just test scores
Genuine care and concern for the diverse needs of students and community
Poised presenter; good speaker
Respects and values all employees
Seeks and considers diverse views from constituent groups, then makes decision
Stays informed as to happenings in the buildings; holds principals accountable
Team-builder; people oriented
Understands how inclusion of special education students affects classroom teachers
Understands the unique challenges in early childhood special education
Willing to listen to concerns of teachers and values their opinions

PARENTS

Ability to listen and willing to admit what he/she doesn't know
Collaborative yet decisive when consensus fails to emerge
Enjoys interacting with students and parents
Experience in seeking corporate partnerships and other assistance for schools
Inclusive view of special education as integral part of "Educational Services"
Innovative, fair, not always trying to please everyone
Recruits administrators who are experts in their field and lets them do their job
Supports parents; listens to their views; responds promptly to their concerns

SUPPORT STAFF

Ability to unify District with building administrators working together
Ability to delegate and hold staff accountable
Accepts new ideas; willing to try new approaches
Appreciates existing strengths of District before implementing change
Data-based decision maker, who then takes ownership of consequences/results
Effective as liaison between the Board and District employees
Fiscally responsible
Willing to defend proposals that are in the best interests of students and staff

Ranking Summary

Respondents were asked to rank the following characteristics in order of importance from 1-14 with 1 being most significant.

	Board	Admin.	Comm.	Faculty	Parents	Supp. Staff
Effective communication skills: verbal, written and listening	1	1	2	2	2	2
Ability and willingness to deal directly and fairly with faculty, staff, students and parents	2	2	1	1	1	1
Collaborative	3	4	7	3	7	4
Belief in data based decision-making that focuses on the individual needs of students	4	6	14	9	4	5
Organizational/management skills	5	7	3	5	9	10
Experience as a superintendent	6	10	9/10	11	11	12
Understands the respective, yet complementary, roles of the Board and the Superintendent	7	9	8	12	13	11
Decisive	8	3	12	6	6	7
Fiscal management expertise	9/10	8	5	8	10	6
Personal interest and involvement in the community	9/10	11	6	10	8	14
Accountable, and holds everyone in the organization accountable for his/her respective area of responsibility	11	5	4	4	3	9
Knowledge of emerging research and best-practice in the area of curriculum/instructional design and implementation	12	12	9/10	7	5	3
Experience in a multi-cultural environment	13	13	13	13	12	8
Awareness of instructional and administrative applications of technology	14	14	11	14	14	13

Ranking of Criteria – Average Ranking

Respondents were asked to rank the following characteristics in order of importance from 1-14 with 1 being most significant. The average rankings given to each item are presented in this chart.

	Board	Admin.	Comm.	Faculty	Parents	Supp. Staff
Effective communication skills: verbal, written and listening	2.20	3.78	3.40	4.43	4.62	4.91
Ability and willingness to deal directly and fairly with faculty, staff, students and parents	2.80	4.23	3.00	2.76	2.69	3.18
Collaborative	5.60	6.23	7.90	4.74	7.62	5.91
Belief in data based decision-making that focuses on the individual needs of students	6.40	6.58	10.40	8.38	6.00	6.27
Organizational/management skills	6.80	7.38	5.50	6.83	8.23	8.27
Experience as a superintendent	7.00	8.10	8.60	8.47	8.69	10.09
Understands the respective, yet complementary, roles of the Board and the Superintendent	7.60	7.75	8.30	9.73	10.92	9.64
Decisive	8.20	5.58	9.90	7.45	7.08	7.00
Fiscal management expertise	8.60	7.60	6.80	8.05	8.38	6.82
Personal interest and involvement in the community	8.60	8.63	7.10	8.41	7.69	11.18
Accountable, and holds everyone in the organization accountable for his/her respective area of responsibility	9.00	6.53	5.90	6.80	4.92	7.82
Knowledge of emerging research and best-practice in the area of curriculum/instructional design and implementation	9.60	9.10	8.60	7.64	6.92	5.27
Experience in a multi-cultural environment	10.60	11.40	10.20	10.22	9.85	7.64
Awareness of instructional and administrative applications of technology	12.00	12.10	9.40	11.14	11.38	11.00

Ranking of Criteria – Range for Rankings

Respondents were asked to rank the following characteristics in order of importance from 1-14 with 1 being most significant. The range of each respondent groups' responses are presented in this chart.

	Board	Admin.	Comm.	Faculty	Parents	Supp. Staff
Effective communication skills: verbal, written and listening	1-3	1-10	1-9	1-13	1-11	2-13
Ability and willingness to deal directly and fairly with faculty, staff, students and parents	1-6	1-11	1-5	1-10	1-6	1-10
Collaborative	2-10	1-14	3-13	1-13	2-14	1-14
Belief in data based decision-making that focuses on the individual needs of students	2-10	1-12	8-14	1-14	1-13	2-12
Organizational/management skills	1-12	1-14	1-9	1-14	2-13	2-14
Experience as a superintendent	5-9	1-14	1-14	1-14	3-14	1-14
Understands the respective, yet complementary, roles of the Board and the Superintendent	3-13	1-13	3-13	1-14	3-14	2-14
Decisive	6-11	1-13	4-14	1-14	1-14	3-13
Fiscal management expertise	5-13	2-12	1-14	1-14	1-14	1-11
Personal interest and involvement in the community	2-14	1-14	1-14	1-14	1-14	4-13
Accountable, and holds everyone in the organization accountable for his/her respective area of responsibility	3-13	2-13	3-10	1-14	1-13	2-11
Knowledge of emerging research and best-practice in the area of curriculum/instructional design and implementation	7-13	2-14	4-14	1-14	1-12	1-10
Experience in a multi-cultural environment	4-14	3-14	2-14	1-14	5-14	2-12
Awareness of instructional and administrative applications of technology	9-14	3-14	3-13	1-14	9-14	7-14

