

Hanover Township Superintendent Candidate Profile
Responses Compiled by search firm Strategic Educational Advantage
Based on District Stakeholder Meeting Feedback

The Hanover Township School District is a K-8 school district system serving the residents of Hanover Township in Morris County, New Jersey. The Hanover Township School District currently operates four schools based on a K-5 and 6-8 building/grade organization plan: the Bee Meadow, Mountview Road and Salem Drive Elementary Schools, which serve grades K-5, and the Memorial Junior School, which serves grades 6-8. The District completed the 2022-23 fiscal year with an average daily enrollment of 1,237 students and is seeking a superintendent who will embrace the strengths of the district, work collaboratively to address the challenges, and bring the Hanover School District to new levels of achievement.

Strengths of the Hanover Township Public Schools:

- Strong reputation as a quality school system and a great place to raise a family;
- There is a strong sense of community and many legacies come back to live in the Hanover Township School district area;
- There are so many things for children to do both in the community and the schools.
- Dedicated faculty and staff who are committed to the students/community and quality education;
- There are many academic programs for students both curricular and extracurricular;
- The schools and community are committed to the fine arts and have a music program along with extensive co-curricular opportunities;
- Fiscally sound school district with no debt and one of the lowest tax rates in Morris County.

Challenges/Areas for Growth:

- There is widespread perception that the district lacks innovation, the faculty, staff and administration are content with the status quo as the community and demographics are changing. There is a growing population of English Language Learners, students facing social and emotional issues, Homeless and displaced families are growing, as well as a growing number of students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch.

- There is a belief by many that Special education needs improvement whereas 22% of the student population is classified and students with behavioral issues or special classification such as autism are placed out of district.
- There is a shared belief that the district does not have a unified curriculum as programs are not consistent across the elementary schools and that the schools are all run differently. There is a desire for better communication between and among schools for greater consistency among the schools.

The Hanover Township Board of Education has listened to input from various stakeholders and is seeking candidates who exemplify the following characteristics:

- Student Support and Success: A commitment to students and their success and well-being with a focus on access to education, health, and the general well-being and needs of students; a willingness to understand student experiences and their unique needs and concerns; an ability to keep students' needs at the forefront when considering institutional priorities and decisions; the ability to recruit and retain students, faculty, staff and administration from underrepresented communities; an understanding of the educational needs and expectations of a new generation of students and nontraditional students, and the integration of new modes of learning; a commitment to engaging with students and ensuring a culture of respect, inclusion and belonging. The new superintendent will place students, and student welfare, at the center of decision-making; express strong interest in the lives, development, and welfare of students; and demonstrate a deep and genuine investment in their success;
- Is an instructional leader who will provide inclusive, challenging, and engaging learning experiences for every level of learner;
- Ensures a rigorous curriculum that prepares students for the 21st Century workforce;
- Uses strategic planning and/or a systems approach to monitor district initiatives /unfinished projects such as technology implementation;
- Understands and is responsive to the social and emotional needs of all students and maintains a focus on preparing every student to maximize his/her potential;

- Supports and enhances the district's commitment to providing a learning environment for every student that is safe, inclusive, just and equitable;
- Is a technology-savvy leader who can advance the use of technology within the schools;
- Leads with a clear focus on the district's current initiatives and goals; assesses and evaluates programs and initiatives as an integral component of the process and makes adjustments/refinements in a deliberate, collaborative and purposeful manner;
- Understands the benefits of a well-rounded education that supports the fine, practical and performing arts as well as extracurricular opportunities that enhance the education for all students;
- Has a focus on preparing every student to maximize his/her potential and is an educational leader who understands the importance of instilling and maintaining a joy of learning;
- Has experience in supporting an effective education for all learners including the areas of Gifted and Talented, Special Education, Least Restrictive Environment and English Language Learners;
- Is able to hold courageous conversations around curriculum, instruction and programs, who will be accountable for the results of this work;
- Passionate about what they are doing and focus on making things better by creating a shared vision and strategic plan.

Communication Skills:

- A listener who responds to input; establishes systems and expectations to ensure information is communicated precisely, consistently, expeditiously and with transparency;
- A superintendent will draw upon principled and transparent discernment practices and decision-making methods to carefully balance the needs, responsibilities, and authority of all stakeholders while keeping open channels of communication to promote a culture of trust;
- Must be a relationship builder whose communication style is open and collaborative;
- Displays strong political acumen and diplomacy, and the ability to work effectively with stakeholders to articulate a compelling case for the HTSD;

- The capacity to cultivate community, including enhancing and investing in shared governance, especially with the faculty, is imperative, as is the ability to elevate trust and mutual respect. Be an educational leader who respects and values the expertise of staff, critically assess programs and initiatives so that only effective programs are in place and will inspire, motivate, and lead all faculty and staff with a continuous improvement mindset;
- Display integrity, courage, sound judgment, self-awareness, self-confidence, empathy and a “person centered” approach to one’s community and stakeholders. A high level of emotional intelligence, prodigious energy, trust and trustworthiness, optimism and openness to new ideas, perseverance and resilience, and a sense of humor;
- Be a person of impeccable character, accountability and integrity who demonstrates ethical behavior, honesty, forthrightness, consistency, authenticity and humility;
- Can readily engage with people in a collegial, open and accessible manner; a strong work ethic who sees themselves making a long-term commitment to our students, the faculty/staff; the district and the Hanover Township community;
- Be a purpose driven leader who is able to support the development of their employees by guiding them to find purpose in their work, building confidence and strengthening autonomy, as opposed to micromanaging;
- Is a transparent, personable, approachable, warm, and welcoming leader who frequently visits schools and classrooms and regularly attends community and school events. Has a proven track record of putting “All Children First;”
- Treats all individuals with dignity and respect. Is open, honest, and has a sense of humor.

Strategy and Vision:

- Supports effective instruction, respects the expertise of staff, and critically assesses programs and initiatives so that only effective programs are in place;
- Is not afraid to make difficult decisions based on an educated perspective informed by consultation and collaboration;
- Demonstrates a forward-thinking, innovative approach to leadership; exhibits flexibility and willingness to take measured risks and look at problems in new ways while using data to inform the decision-making

process; embraces new tools, technologies and thought leadership to support decision-making and delivery of service;

- Is a dynamic, empathetic, and transparent educator with proven leadership experience, preferably at multiple levels, who excels at mentoring, developing, assessing, and fully utilizing the talents of staff and faculty;
- Has expertise in special education and can maintain the district's commitment to educating all children in the least restrictive environment;
- Demonstrated ability to motivate faculty and staff by creating an empowered, collegial work environment and a record of working collaboratively, transparently, and productively with all constituencies; an ability to bring together units and people around a common vision so that all work together in a way that makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts; a record of advancing excellence in all respects and of cultivating creativity while never losing sight of the organization's mission, culture, and history; an entrepreneurial aptitude and a willingness to take considered risks and seize opportunities; and a passion for exploring and defining what education will look like in the future are essential.

Educational Leadership:

- Works to establish a shared vision of excellence to assist the district in its pathway to continuous improvement;
- Supports curriculum and instruction initiatives that will be based on best practices found in other high performing districts;
- Creates programs addressing the options for students who are not college bound that will be explored both in and outside the district;
- Encourages student voice, values their perspective, and uses a system-wide, child-centered approach to support the needs of all children;
- Understands the balance of giving people autonomy and knows the balance of when to provide guidance- when doing so, give definitive advice;
- Demonstrates a forward-thinking, innovative approach to leadership; exhibits flexibility and willingness to take measured risks and look at problems in new ways while using data to inform the decision-making process; embraces new tools, technologies and thought leadership to support decision-making and delivery of service; willing to consider new and innovative partnerships and programs that position the

institution to recruit and retain top teachers, administrators, staff and students;

- Understands the importance of the investment in professional development of faculty/staff and will utilize and capitalize on the talent within the district to turnkey training for all staff.

Operational and Managerial Acumen:

This is most clearly demonstrated by experience managing a complex organization, and it encompasses financial acumen, including the ability to allocate resources in a strategic manner that is aligned with institutional priorities; budget experience, including a working understanding of finance and the realities of tax revenue and state aid dependency; and a capacity and aptitude for crisis management are also essential.

- Has experience in the oversight of a district budget with an understanding of being a sending district; has experience with predicting enrollment trends as well as the implications of those trends;
- Has a strong understanding of school finance that will help the district maintain a course of financial stability and fiscal accountability, and is adept at exploring additional ways to fund educational programs and preserve and enhance infrastructure;
- Oversees a comprehensive school safety plan that focuses on planning and prevention to maintain a school environment where students experience strong social and emotional learning;
 - Ability to manage older facilities as well as oversee capital projects while keeping the focus on teaching and learning;
 - Understands protocols of school safety and security and will ensure consistent procedures in all schools and related activities;
 - Can work with strong labor groups while keeping students a priority;
 - Someone who will be the face of the district and understands the importance of branding, marketing, networking, and public relations;
 - Has personnel management skills, including expertise in the hiring/recruitment and retention of staff as well as the induction of staff. Can hire and maintain staff that are representative of the student population.

Personal Qualities:

- People person who builds relationships;
- Has the confidence/ humility to say “I do not know” as well as admit to making mistakes;
- Personable, friendly and interested in all students and staff;
- Treats everyone with respect and individuality;
- Builds trust and is courageous;
- Visible, accessible (should be visible in classrooms, schools and community,) honest and transparent;
- Acknowledge issues that have been shared- let everyone know they are heard;
- Have care and concern for all members of the school community;
- Puts students first!;
- Passionate about what they are doing and focus on making things better;
- Knows the political process, yet remains apolitical;
- Someone who is not afraid to do the right thing;
- Someone who will trust and value the staff.

Additional desired attributes include:

- A person of impeccable character, accountability and integrity who demonstrates ethical behavior, honesty, forthrightness, consistency, authenticity and humility, and readily engages with people in a collegial, open and accessible manner; a person with high energy and a strong work ethic who sees themselves making a long-term commitment to our students, the district and the Hanover Township community;
- Can effectively work as a team member of the Board of Education and keep a unified focus on the shared vision for the future;
- Is ready to make a long-term commitment to the district.

All candidates are asked to send a cover letter describing how they meet the above criteria, together with their resume to:

Strategic Educational Advantage
Attn: Dr. Michael Kuchar/Dr. Frank Auriemma
Hanoversuptsearch@gmail.com

ALL APPLICATIONS WILL BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.

The Hanover Township School District is an EEO employer.

Receipt of resumes and cover letters are preferred by 12:00 pm on May 13, 2024