



Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in February 2017 for the new superintendent of the San Diego County Office of Education. 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 surveys, 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 and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years. The online survey did confirm desired characteristics shared in the focus groups.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below: *Not all focus groups were a group that was disaggregated for the online survey, nor were some of the categories for the online survey broken out by the titles for the focus groups.*

Groups	Number of personal interviews or attended focus groups	Online Survey
Board	5	
COE Administrators	28	****105
School District Administrators	28	*****27
*Community	17	44
Classified Staff	13	139
Community Forum	54	*27
District Superintendents	24	
COE Teachers	15	78
Total	184	420

*Probation, non-profits, district union leadership, Latino Advisory Group, County Teacher of the Year, Encuentro Leadership

** Parents, teachers' administrators, community organizations, legislative representatives, community leaders

*** This category on the survey were parents of students attending a COE operated program'

****This category on the survey were administrators, and was not broken out by county office administrator or district administrators. They are included with COE administrators

*****This category on the survey were certified/licensed staff and was not broken down by specific title or by county office or district staff. They are included with school district administrators.

The community survey report and analysis of the survey results are included separately for your review.

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 of the County Office

Many stakeholders expressed their appreciation to the Board of Education for the opportunity to provide input into the selection of the next superintendent. This opportunity also was expressed as optimism for the future of the county office. Stakeholders identified numerous strengths of the county office, along with specific examples of individual departments and programs. The general themes include:

Staff Commitment

It was stated often by all stakeholders the staff are to be commended for the orientation to service to the districts, to each other, and to students directly operated by the office. Staff were seen as knowledgeable in their area of expertise and were always available to assist others within the organization, with community partners and school district personnel. The county staff is generally perceived as committed and a competent staff who place the need of students and those who serve them at the forefront of the organization.

Innovation

Stakeholders indicated the COE is perceived to have been in the forefront of innovative practices in the area of instructional services, English Learner department and cited the quality programs in bilingual education and the Seal of Bi-Literacy. Also mentioned was the innovation in technology, but an area where this focus has to be revisited.

Engagement with Diversity

Stakeholders commended the COE for its advocacy of diverse racial and cultural groups and engaging systematically to address gaps in achievement and opportunity for diverse populations. Cited was the Achievement Gap Task Force, strong parent engagement component and support for foster and homeless youth.

In addition to the advocacy on behalf of diversity, stakeholders viewed diversity as a strength and expressed admiration for staff who instilled an equity mind set to their work,

Community Partnerships

Stakeholders cited examples of the county's relationship with community partnerships, non-profits, and public agencies. Community partners enjoys a trusting and positive relationship with the county and often seek out county staff for their expertise and assistance.

Work with Most Vulnerable Youth

Stakeholders stated the COE has demonstrated strong advocacy for adjudicated youth. Probation commented on the strong relationships between COE staff and Probation staff to ensure quality programs are implemented for the youth in their school environment. Programs that allow for seamless transition from custody to home has resulted in less recidivism.

Challenges and Issues Facing the County

Stakeholders believe the challenges they perceive can be overcome with the selection of the right superintendent for SDCOE. The challenges cited focused on the following themes:

Trust and Transparency

The staff, parents, district staff and community members indicated that trust has eroded over the past several years. The lack of transparency on how decisions have been made, the lack of clear hiring practices, and the selection of a new business product, People Soft has left many with a lack of trust and belief that the COE is not serving their needs. Stakeholders provided examples of the unwillingness of leadership to be open to discuss issues or to engage key members of the office and districts to solve problems.

Communication

Adding to the lack of trust, is the lack of a clear and consistent message of work of the COE. Often stakeholders felt the multiple modes communication did not communicate clearly what is expected of staff, clearly state the direction of the county or was able to highlight the good work of the COE.

Feeling Valued

As stated above, parents and district staff often complemented the work of the staff at the county office. Staff members, however shared numerous concerns of feeling undervalued and unsupported. In our conversations with staff members in all employment categories consistent themes of damage done to staff morale under the previous leadership. There is optimism the new superintendent will develop positive working relationships with all employee groups, recognize staff for the efforts, and involve them in decisions that impact their work.

Desired Characteristics

Stakeholders in both focus groups and online survey had common themes regarding the following three characteristics:

Communication and Collaboration

The stakeholders in San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) want an individual who will make improvements in communication and collaboration. They seek a leader who has a deep, unwavering commitment to collaboration and engagement of stakeholders.

Collaboration and a Climate of Trust and Respect

They seek open, two-way communication with the superintendent and want to be kept fully informed of decisions in a highly transparent manner to foster and climate of mutual trust. They view positive partnerships among the staff, with local school district, community partners, as essential to making SDCOE the premier county office in the state. Two top characteristics identified in the survey reflect this: Foster a positive, professional climate of trust and respect among faculty staff, administrators and school districts and provide transparent communication.

Commitment to Diversity

Stakeholders also indicated a strong desire for the new superintendent to have a proven record of a commitment to diversity, a strong background and success in the closing of the achievement gap and experience working with a diverse

Consistent Themes

Stakeholders in both focus groups and the online survey expressed consistent themes on the professional experience expected of the new superintendent:

- A strong track record as a superintendent serving similar demographics as the county.
- An unwavering commitment to diversity.
- Is willing to collaborate with all stakeholders and be inclusive in decision making process.
- Will approach his or her work from the perspective of servant leadership.
- Humility, honesty, and integrity will be essential in building meaningful, engaging relationships with SDCOE stakeholders.

HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the County. The search team will seek a new superintendent who can work with the San Diego County Office of Board of Education to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of the county office, the 42 school districts and broader community.

The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings and/or completed the online survey and the SDCOE staff members who assisted with our meetings, particularly Brenda Gomez and Music Watson who organized the search team's time in the county.

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