

Charlottesville City Public Schools LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT June 17, 2021

Executive Summary


Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in June of 2021, for the superintendent position in the Charlottesville City Public Schools (CCPS). The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when meeting with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings on June 6-12, 2021, and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders between May 19, 2021 through June 11, 2021. 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. Forty-nine stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings were used to collect information regarding the strengths of the division, the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years, and desired characteristics in the new superintendent. The online survey was used to collect data relevant to ranking desired characteristics in the new superintendent as well as suggestions for prospective superintendent candidates. Data collected through the online survey were very consistent with the input of the stakeholder interviews and focus groups.

Participation

The number of participants in interview and/or focus groups sessions, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

Group	Personal Interviews or Focus Groups	Online Survey
Board	7	N/A
Administrators	65	19
Teachers	9	108
Support Staff	15	38
Parents	16	88
Community	22	27
Students	0	67
Total	134	347



The Board of Education members were individually interviewed. Many other central office administrators and elected officials also received group or individual interviews. Many different community members and groups were invited and participated, including the Mayor, Police Chief, Fire Chief, City Council members, and others. Open invitation community forums for parents, staff and community were offered at various times throughout the week both through virtual sessions and in person sessions

The responses provided by the individuals and focus groups during the interviews are listed in two places: 1) “Summary of Consistent Themes. . .” which are listed on pages 7 and 8 of the report, and; 2) “Summary of All Reported Comments and Observations...” which begin on page 9. They are listed alphabetically with no attempt to prioritize them. A draft of desired characteristics for the new Superintendent, to be discussed with the entire Board on June 17, 2021, can be found on page 30 and an addendum A provided by the Albemarle and Charlottesville City NAACP chapter detailing desired characteristics can be found on page 31. Separate documents will provide the Board with the statistical results and open-ended comments of the online survey.

The 347 respondents on the on-line survey represent a good cross sampling of the different groups engaged with Charlottesville City Public Schools. Teachers and students were especially well represented with 175 individual responses to the on-line survey. The on-line survey comparative statistical analysis, ranking desired characteristics sought in the new superintendent, amplifies the findings and themes from the focus groups.

It should be emphasized that the data from the focus groups 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.

Charlottesville City is located in central Virginia at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and is surrounded by Albemarle County. For many people, it provides an ideal environment for living, working and raising a family with access to outdoor and cultural activities, restaurants and wineries, and of course, proximity to the University of Virginia. The area is steeped in history and tradition, yet modern and progressive at the same time.

However, Charlottesville City is also a place where this rich lifestyle and these advantages are not equally available. Within the City, there are neighborhoods in poverty, almost entirely populated by African Americans, and more recently, immigrant families, whose lives are in stark contrast to the majority white, educated and affluent residents. This divide along racial, ethnic and socio-economic lines is a historic, generational and ongoing challenge for the community. And nowhere does it manifest itself more openly than in the Charlottesville City Schools, with a student poverty rate of 46%, that is almost entirely composed of black and brown students.

Strengths of Charlottesville City Schools

Every person and every stakeholder group that was interviewed talked about this divide and the challenges that it brings to the district. There is universal acknowledgement that disadvantaged and marginalized students are not having the same rigorous, high quality educational experiences that are typical for affluent students. However, some progress has been made.

Under the leadership of Dr. Rosa Atkins, the City Schools has seen a dramatic improvement in the graduation rates for African Americans. In addition, pre-K programs were established well before other jurisdictions in Virginia. In recent years, CCPS has stopped tracking students and expanded opportunities for advanced and enriched learning. And, beginning in 2018, the district developed a number of programs and initiatives committed to promoting equity across all groups.


The CCPS schools have continued to provide its students with an academic program enhanced by a renowned fine arts program, a model STEM program, and a large array of AP offerings for high school students. Charlottesville has also been ahead of the educational curve in providing wrap around services for students, with resources to support mental health, social and emotional learning, trauma informed care, and wellness and health. Few school districts have this kind of support and expertise available for their students.

Likewise, few other districts can match the starting teacher's salary, small class size, and technology resources in Charlottesville. When the pandemic hit, many divisions had to scramble to put together what was needed for virtual learning. While Charlottesville was also challenged during the pandemic, from the start every student had a Chromebook and a hot spot for internet connection. These and other advantages demonstrate an enormous strength of this school division. Charlottesville is exceptionally well funded and supported by its community. The School Board and City Council work together to maintain the quality of its school programs.

A final and important strength that must be noted is the staff. Participants in our interviews and meetings talked about the many dedicated, creative, caring teachers in the schools. Currently there is high regard for the principals at the elementary level and the high school, with positive anticipation for the arrival of a new middle school principal. The work ethic of staff across the board, from central office to support services is recognized. And the professionalism and strength of Dr. Atkins who led the schools through some very trying and difficult days during her long tenure is also appreciated.

Challenges

Perhaps because of all these strengths and all the resources and work that has been invested to address racism, equity and inclusion, the community is anxious for change or a fresh look. At this juncture people are tired of talking about these issues and want to see specific actionable plans with defined outcomes. Because what has been tried in the past is not producing the results



sought in student literacy, academic achievement, minority hiring/retention, and parent engagement, new ideas and approaches are desired. People expressed a need for more forward-thinking, innovative, research-based and measurable goals and programs.

The focus groups and interviews brought to light a number of concerns, many of which centered on the need for a clear, focused plan to address the serious, ongoing equity problems, including the unequal participation by Black students in enriched programs, such as band and orchestra and Advanced Placement courses. Hiring and retaining minority teachers and administrators also continues to be a problem. It is hoped that new initiatives to solve these and other issues will be developed collaboratively with input from many stakeholders, but especially principals and teachers. There is much talent at the school level that can be harnessed for the good of the system. The desire for creative problem-solving, innovation and collaboration are not just in regard to equity. As the district begins a new era, with a new superintendent, there are strong hopes for solutions developed in a climate that is more open and respectful of divergent points of view. There is also a strong desire to have a more collaborative approach that let's teachers, principals and all staff give input to the decisions that impact them.

There are other areas of concern worth noting that may not be at the level of urgency that has been described in regard to equity, but are important for the continued success of the district. One is support for Career and Technical Education, and development of and respect for career pathways that may not include college immediately after high school. Around the country school systems are recognizing that many students, regardless of background and ability, are seeking alternatives to the traditional college experience. Providing high quality instruction where industry certifications and other credentials can be earned is an increasingly important aspect of public education. In partnership with CATEC and Piedmont Community College, CCPS can make sure that this option has the same high standards as its traditional academic program.

After many years of discussion, it is time to act on the issues at the upper elementary and middle school levels. De-tracking was an important step. Reconfiguration is even more important. The decision to configure schools as they are now was evidently not based on best educational practice. Rather it was based on a decision to avoid the conflict caused by creating new school attendance areas that cross racial and socio-economic lines. Currently, Charlottesville parents take their children out of the public school at these levels, often re-enrolling them when they reach high school. Upper elementary school to middle school is often a difficult transition time for children developmentally, so middle schools are often viewed as inferior. But in Charlottesville, the discontent is deeper, and the turnover in principals and loss of students at the middle school level speaks to a legitimate need for change.

As school fully reopens this fall, Charlottesville City Schools, like other districts, will be dealing with the aftermath of a world-wide pandemic that impacted every school and every student. Hopefully, with the anticipation of new leadership, this new beginning can be opportunity to re-imagine and revise practices. In the area of equity, participants in focus groups and interviews expressed the need for greater sensitivity and support for the growing population of English language learners and their families, who many believe are now underserved. Likewise, LGBTQ stu-

dents need to know that they are safe and welcome in their schools. While school safety and student behavior were not highlighted as concerns, the removal of the SRO's is a change that needs additional communication and the joint transition plan with the police department explained. Additionally, although facilities did not emerge as a problem now, the age of the schools requires planning for the not too distance future. It is also recommended that there be a careful review of the use of stimulus funds, especially for recurring costs that may not be sustainable.

Desired Characteristics


Whoever is selected as the new Superintendent of Schools in Charlottesville City will face many challenges. What characteristics does this community want in its leader? To succeed in this community, the superintendent must be strong and confident, but not arrogant. Charlottesville has a culture of citizen involvement and activism. People have deep beliefs and are not afraid to share them. The School Board is a diverse group with strong personalities. This job requires someone with political skills who can deal with conflict and make tough decisions without alienating people. He or she cannot attempt to please everyone or expect universal approval. But ultimately, if decisions are made fairly, communicated honestly and based on the best interest of students, the superintendent can garner respect and support.

Charlottesville also seeks a superb communicator who will expect that plans and decisions be made collaboratively and will require all system leaders to model respect and transparency. A new leader must develop trust. This is best done by being honest, approachable, visible and open. Both community members and staff members hope that the new superintendent will spend time in schools and in all the neighborhoods in the City. Many would like him or her to live in the city. Whether that happens or not, building relationships and trust is the foundation for success for whomever is selected.

The superintendent must also have experience with budgeting and financial management in order to maintain the fiscal support that the schools have enjoyed over the years. Since teaching and learning are the core responsibilities of the schools, depth of knowledge and expertise in instruction and curriculum is essential. Someone who will promote rigor for all students with a shift in emphasis from standardized test results to problem solving and critical thinking would be very welcome in Charlottesville.

Finally, unwavering commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is a requirement. Ideally, the new superintendent will have demonstrated success in this area and real passion for this work. If the School Board, school staff, parents and the community bring the same commitment to the table, and pledge to partner with a new superintendent as a new chapter in the history of the division begins, this could be a most promising and productive time for Charlottesville City Schools.

HYA cannot promise to find a candidate who possesses all of the characteristics desired by respondents. However, HYA and the School Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to address the concerns expressed by the constituent



groups. We will seek a new superintendent who can work with the Charlottesville City School Board to continue to provide exceptional education opportunities to all students and to fulfill the division's commitment to equity. The consultants would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey. Also, we would like to thank all of the Charlottesville City Public Schools staff members who assisted with our meetings and particularly thank Leslie Thacker for her efforts in scheduling and facilitating the myriad of on-line and individual focus group meetings.

Respectfully submitted,
Brad Draeger
Ann Monday

Summary of consistently reported Themes

Charlottesville City Public Schools

Strengths

- AP offerings for high school students
- Division-wide equity initiatives
- Dr Atkins' leadership and long tenure
- Eliminating tracking
- Expanding academic enrichment and advancement opportunities
- Fiscal support for schools
- Highly regarded principals
- Improved graduation rates for African American students
- Model STEM program
- Pre-K programs
- Renowned fine arts program
- Resources/expertise in the area of mental health, social and emotional learning, trauma informed care, wellness and health
- Staff work ethic
- Teacher quality
- Technology to support student learning

Challenges

- Expanding equity work to include English language learners and their families as well as LGBTQ students
- Developing and executing a CIP that addresses the ES/MS reconfiguration and addresses renovations of existing facilities
- Growing English as a Second Language program, migrant and refugee families in the community
- Hiring and retaining staff, especially teachers and administrators of color
- Implementing reconfiguration plan
- Lack of sufficient progress in closing gaps in student literacy and academic achievement; need for increased parent engagement for students of color
- Lack of staff collaboration that includes principal and teachers in planning and decision-making
- Maintaining commitment to end tracking of students
- Providing career pathways that include quality, available Career and Technical Ed programs
- Resistance to change, innovation, new perspectives
- Strategic plan needs revision to include measurable benchmarks and defined outcomes
- Transitioning from having a SRO in the building to new security plan
- Use of stimulus funds — present needs and future implications

Desired Characteristics

- Budget and finance experience
- Communicator who can build relationships and trust in a diverse community
- Creates and retains a collaborative work environment where divergent perspectives are valued without fear of reprisal
- Deeply committed to diversity, equity and inclusion; relentless in seeking improvement in this area
- Instructional leader who can guide the system in development of more rigorous and relevant instruction for all students
- Knowledge of unique aspects and needs of middle schools
- Political skills to navigate successfully in a diverse, activist community
- Strong and confident enough to deal with conflict and make tough decisions
- Transparent and open
- Understands the need for career pathways that include quality Career and Technical Education
- Visible in school and in the community
- Visionary, optimistic about the future of public schools; can lead and inspire others toward a more just and hopeful future where all students reach their potential

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

“/ “ indicates multiple similar responses from different people

School Board

No. 7

Strengths

- CCPS and Charlottesville attract talented citizens
- CCPS gave chrome book and hot spot to every student
- Changed model of Quest program to provide opportunity for all students to participate in advanced, enriched learning
- CHS has a strong and unique culture
- Close to DC and Richmond - name recognition
- Community at-large has a voice that is progressive and wants inclusion and equity
- Community resources are plentiful, but more is out there to tap into
- Community supports its schools; willing to pay for schools
- Culturally rich community
- Current strong leadership at secondary schools
- Dedicated staff
- Different layers of service providers for the needs of students
- District embraces the village concept of supporting students - everyone, from custodians to superintendent contributes
- Diversity is a strength and a challenge
- Dr A stayed for a long tenure
- Dr A stood her ground; was a successful advocate for parents and community;
- Efforts with diversity and equity
- Excellent fine arts
- Fine arts are a strength
- Good changes in gifted program have come about because of equity approach
- Good facilities
- Good relationship with City Council
- Graduation rate - need to maintain current level and continue to improve; every child will graduate from Charlottesville - we don't give up on anyone //
- High expectations
- Improving instructional consistency
- Livable - wineries - diverse community
- Mental health initiative
- Neighborhood elementary schools
- Offerings at CHS mirror all the offerings in a HS in FCPS
- People can disagree but are still cordial

- People who want to help and be active, to make the community better; PTO fund during the pandemic
- Pre-school program - ahead of the curve, strong /
- School Board itself
- Small district - teachers can really bond with students, smaller class sizes /
- Social and emotional classroom
- Special Ed students' needs are met
- Staff - many employees loyal and committed; people like it here; many great people
- Statue coming down; Unite the Right going on trial
- Strong administrators who relate to students and to community
- Strong fine arts program, a draw for students
- UVa a good resource that Dr A created a good relationship with the university

Challenges


- Advantaged parents who want to assuage racial guilt until they think that their child could be disadvantaged
- African American leaders in the schools are being lost to other jurisdictions; loss of leadership is concerning
- After Dr A was appointed, people started complaining about the schools; when a white male ran schools, people spoke highly about the schools
- Better outreach to families that have been marginalized, i.e., ESL students and their families
- Charlottesville is very expensive to live; many Blacks, many teachers, cannot live here
- City is the epitome of haves and have-nots /
- City manager position is in flux--but long-term look is not good
- Comparisons to Albemarle County are common
- Concern that the exit from pandemic could lead to cramming for the next standardized tests
- Difficult place--racial issues and problems of Charlottesville have crept into the schools and into the Board
- Dr A as an African-American leader was impacted by the issues of Charlottesville
- Equity is not a catch phrase but real issues — student performance; access to gifted ed; standard vs advanced diploma; post grad success; literacy; must maintain and increase equity efforts, with money and resources //
- Funding is challenging
- HR and Academic choices were connected to Dr A--were there better qualified internal candidates
- Issues within the division that are causing employees of color to leave CCPS - especially since Dr A is gone
- Limited in staffing of the central office; we try to accomplish a lot with few resources
- Lots of money and people have been used to address equity problems but outcomes not acceptable
- Low-income parents who don't feel that they have a voice in the system, may have had a bad schooling experience, need help advocating

- Making sure tracking, grouping, clustering of students are for sound reasons with measured outcomes; need to have all levels of students in all classes — not separate students /
- Mentoring for teachers, especially for retention is a critical need
- Middle School - losing students at MS - some of whom we regain at HS; need for support for students at MS going into HS; undoing decisions made regarding school configurations based on socio-economics, racial, class issues — which has added to issues at MS; Parents pull children out of CCPS in MS and then put them back into CHS. //
- Monitoring hiring for diversity and retaining people of color is a challenge
- Need for pathways for students who do not want to go to college — need to respect and support other options
- Need to hold quality staff through this transition
- Need to strengthen math education in 5 and 6 grades to prepare all students for higher level math; all 8th graders in algebra
- Need to understand diversity, equity and inclusion. — diversity does not mean inclusion; people of color must be including in decision making = have a seat at the table
- Opportunity gap
- Parents who care only about their own children not all the children in community
- People of privilege have a hard time making decisions that truly move to equity—such as housing initiatives
- Perceived and real differences between north and south side of CCPS
- Pockets of parents that have assumed privilege; speak at public meetings
- Race - plays out in very different ways--Charlottesville is a traumatized town and it is trying to heal: race could be an overriding issue that may overpower or push out other dimensions of leadership
- Reconfiguration will be an important part of the new superintendent's measure of success
- Schools are competing with affordable housing for funds from the City Council
- SOLS and accreditation, rote memory vs. making sure that all schools are a place of inquiry, higher level thinking
- Some school programs are not diverse--especially fine arts
- Staff is not as diverse as the student body; qualified teachers of color are needed — administrators of color are also needed /
- Status quo is not acceptable
- Teachers need safe spaces and support when there are difficult situations
- Tracking starts at Walker - using band and orchestra as a driver; the divide of schools around race and socio economics has manifest itself in different ways
- True collaborative environment is lacking
- Works with strong Board personality, does not just do what one strong personality says, builds consensus

Characteristics

- Ability to build a broad base of trust
- Ability to work the politics and budget with the city manager and City Council
- Backbone, strength
- Both a public person and someone with depth in curriculum and instruction

- Can and will have hard conversations without bullying
- Can take the heat, does not take things personally, knows that differences can be about perspectives
- Can talk to people with advanced degrees, and those who did not go to college
- Can speak to the details
- Care and love and compassion to all students and staff — does not favor some /
- Change agent — understands that the SB wants things to be different
- Collaborative approach to solving problems
- Comfortable with who they are
- Communicates with the entire Board--not just the chair
- Comprehensive experiences
- Competent, gets the job done — nice to be likable, but more import to get right things Commitment to/experience with quality math and science instruction
- Courage to make changes in leadership positions who are no longer achieving the goals of the district
- Creative, innovation solutions to problems
- Community involvement is critical
- Doctorate preferred /
- Has paid his/her dues — not just wanting to be superintendent for own ambition, but because of love of students
- High expectations
- Honesty, transparency — will tell the Board and community hard things
- Keenly aware of Charlottesville's history and racial issues
- Knowledgeable - and can explain educational content to those without an educational background
- Listens to all students and parents — not just the affluent; listener /
- Mavericks not needed
- Must value racial issues and address them with transparency; committed to equity /
- Not a novice
- Not someone who panders to the “haves”
- Not so much a star. — but a humble hardworking person — like Dr A
- Secondary ed background; understands the curriculum and instructional needs of students at this level; understands ES but also MS and HS; understands the critical juncture of MS and HS; will put time and energy in improve the MS and HS level
- Strong - will take the unpopular stand
- Thick skin — can deal with affluent parents, when making changes that impact all students
- Understand what low-income students and families experience
- Visionary, forward thinking
- Will not rock the boat too dramatically
- Need to have a fresh eye
- Support for staff at all levels
- Think outside the box
- Acknowledging the systemic racism and ability to appreciate the racial history of CCPS and Charlottesville

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- Ability to connect to the community
 - Connecting with city manager and city council is critical

from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

“ / ” indicates multiple similar responses from different people

Administrators, Central Office

No. 52

Strengths

- Arts are supported
- Commitment has been made to mental health and social network for children
- Community resources and culture — university town; close-knit; small but mighty
- District culture — family approach--people wear many hats; small school system that plays big; everyone gets to see the superintendent; superintendent would have coffee with a teacher /
- Diversity of students and city
- Division closed during winter break — very important for employees
- Engineering program
- Equity work started
- Everybody has a voice--both a strength and a challenge
- Excellent salary and compensation--starting salary for teachers is \$50K
- Fine arts and STEM are magnets
- High expectations of parents and community
- Hospital education program — very effective and important
- Moving toward a tiered system of support
- New process started to gather data from exit interviews
- Non-core content respected; whole child emphasis
- Non-resident tuition program--attracts students; non-resident children include city and school employee children
- Police have been removed from schools
- Resilience of community and schools
- Small school approach--enrollment
- Special Ed continuum of programs
- Staff - commitment of staff; curriculum coordinators are very talented; passionate staff determined to provide for a very diverse community; hard working people; staff determined to provide for a very diverse community /
- Support for Early Childhood Education from district and state
- Thirty-one AP classes at high school
- Well-resourced and funded; fiscal support for schools; well-resourced--per pupil \$18,000 per student; extremely well-staffed ///
- Wellness initiatives and health emphasis
- Increase in workplace diversity, in race and ethnicity and skills sets

Challenges

- Academic performance of students — achievement gaps — need to address the issues openly - NOT blame schools and tell them to “fix it”; Buford under federal monitoring; Walker has academic challenges; student outcomes not what they should be; accreditation will be a challenge as testing returns //
- Accountability - school level professionals are evaluated; central office staff is not
- Budgeting for next five years will be a challenge--Covid money has to be weaned away--some has been used for FTE's, salary raises and other recurring cost
- Central administration is not innovative
- City is almost dysfunctional and in flux because of recent events; City has issues with debt service in the future
- Classification issues
- Culture and climate: division slogan and goals focus on equity but the climate required to do this work does not exist; current condition of district — climate and culture of organization; vision (slogan) sets culture, but the climate must be safe for all employees to achieve results
- CCPS has existed for over 100 years, but have we adapted to changing times?
- Decision-making - need to bring more people and groups to the table; favoritism under Dr A led to some poor decisions that need to be undone
- Desire to go green--contracts, finance, HR are not supported in efforts to go green
- Diversity—socioeconomic differences
- Equity and racial issues-lack of staff that looks like students in the building — have started initiatives to remedy this, but not followed through; racism and segregation is our history — still plays out in community today; equity work needs to go beneath the surface-need culturally responsive, anti-racist programming and mindsets; staff is not diverse--issue has been an initiative but more progress needs to happen--80% Caucasian teaching staff; equity has moved forward--but it still is a significant challenge for the future; leadership at school level is not diverse--other than AP's ///
- Equity and retention of staff are directly related — recruitment is not the challenge — retention is
- Family engagement needs to increase
- Old buildings — need a capital plan
- Parents and community — demanding expectations; parents seek control; small group of Charlottesville citizens have too much influence on the Board
- Reconfiguration really needs to happen; reconfiguration of schools — move 5 to ES, Buford 6-8, early childhood center
- Silos keep us from talking about the real issues
- Staff turnover — need to find out why people stay or leave in our division, to have courageous conversations about why people stay and why people leave in our district; staff turns over as spouses complete work at university
- Use of resources — more resources and supports for ESOL students and parents;
- need a welcome center for migrating students and families; lack of equitable resources K-12
- Lack of clear, measurable goals and actionable plans; more focus on equity but with clear plan and actionable steps; outcomes not in proportions to inputs (staff quality and fiscal); doing too

many things but not all super well; focus is needed; strategic plan — but does not connect to the schools; so much in CCPS Strategic Plan, but no focus or actionable steps; district gets buried in resources, needs focus and alignment, evaluate where we are; lack of connection between pro learning and practice; we do a lot of stuff, but do not measure what we do; *district has a slogan, but not a vision* ///

- Lack of consistency across grade levels and schools
- Lack of deep commitment to and follow up for development of cultural competencies; important for all staff, critical for principals
- Middle school needs attention--morale, performance, all aspects
- Naming of schools is moving forward--but the decisions have not made it public
- Need to partner with community
- Principals must be culturally competent and responsible for creating conditions that support staff, and keep staff, especially minority staff; principals are key players in the retention of instructional staff
- Some senior staff have used CCPS as a steppingstone
- Special Ed needs to examine the programs in place and grow the continuum of programs; need to include special ed at the table for all programs; ALL does not always mean ALL in Special Education
- Students have a high level of cultural competency and we need to meet them where they are
- Student needs unmet — need for a humanistic approach to ALL students; improved classroom culture; euro-centric approach not always appropriate; lack of clarity of processes — resources available for students and families, but not always in a timely manner /

Characteristics

- Accountable for self and others
- Builds strong systemic culture — equity, mental health, wellness, are integrated into all of our work, not initiatives that come and go; values drive how we do things here — not just buzzwords
- Collaborative - will share leadership; open to changing organization leadership /
- Committed to equity work — fully committed to equity, diversity and inclusion; continues to push forward on equity work; committed to continued diversity in staffing; understands and is committed to equity work needed for division; supportive of all students, regardless of school attended; equitable in terms of resources ///
- Communicator, develops strong community ties-Will maintain and grow community relations and tap into resources; genuinely a part of the community, lives here; visible and part of the community; seen in and around the community; can listen to all of our parents and all of our communities; family engagement — marginalized families need to be brought into the fold //
- Courageous, strong — has courage to address complex problems; can make hard decision in the best interest of all students
- Creative, open to new ideas — open mind, not fixed mind set; brings new ideas; open minded and innovative; has adapted to changes and thinks about changing approaches and need;
- able to anticipate and forecast what is needed to the future
- Proven success as an instructional leader: expertise in areas that impact teaching and learning — understands cognitive practices; has a foundational understanding of tiered support and

systems thinking; recognizes the importance of social-emotional growth; honors education beyond SOL tests; understands the impact of social justice issues on schools; does not put too much focus on the tests; seeks to make the curriculum more relevant to students; values joyful learning; recognizes the need to build resiliency in students; understands the importance of early childhood programming — not just pushing elementary school down ///

- High expectations for students and staff
- Innovative, transformational
- Keeps a virtual platform for those students who thrive with this option
- Keeps eye on the big picture — not focused on whether a 7-year-old passes a SOL test, but that he/she grows to become a healthy, achieving adult
- Listens, observes; thoughtful; not reactive
- Politically savvy
- Respects and values staff members — does not create fear; relates to staff openly and respectfully; does not play favorites; recognizes the importance of every member of the staff;
- takes care of employees, so that the caretakers have the strength to support students; understands that people and the human resource is most important for district success;
- skilled in differentiation for all staff //
- Strong HR lens — longevity of employees, employee development; organizations that take care of employees keep employees; provides quality professional development; succession planning; makes sure that performance management is in place for all employees
- Team-builder - can bring a more cohesive practices, rid system of silos
- Transparent, open, honest — transparent about communication and decision-making; transparent about our needs, about our data — honest about where we are
- Visible and engaged - Has a pulse on what is happening in the division — at all levels from custodians to the “higher ups”; visible in school and in community; sets expectation and provides time for all central office leaders to spend quality time in schools /
- Visionary, clear mission — visionary--especially for equity; need coherent vision, mission and goals; needs a cascading 12-year plan; forward looking; vision — take us there — not a new vision every year, stay the course and be great; can articulate common vision, goals — coherence and alliance; vision is about what happens every day between students and teachers; does not get attracted to shiny things; is highly effective in achieving benchmarks in targeted areas //

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

“ / ” indicates multiple similar responses from different people

Administrators, School-Based

No. 13

Strengths

- Awesome parents and students
- Bright and intelligent community
- Coordinators work hard to unify work across the division
- Excellent environment for raising a family
- Financially quite wealthy
- Gifted and talented improvements are tremendous
- Hired for life, but that has its pluses and minuses
- No need is unfulfilled or not funded
- Professional Learning Community for Assistant Principal
- Small division — everyone is known
- Staff is constantly looking at how to support families, even as society is changing
- Unleveled students at most grades
- Well resourced — high per pupil spending; resources are plentiful /

Challenges

- Achievement gap - Black and Brown students
- Attendance issues
- Cabinet is not stable — use of retired administrators and recent hires are not the solution
- Central office needs to support schools
- City of Haves and Have Nots
- Community does not trust schools
- Dysfunctional City Council
- Environment above ES principals is toxic
- ESL students and families underserved — need for more translators and materials that are translated
- Equity
- Faux praise is not appreciated — it is cruel and manipulative
- Inequities in pay scales
- Leadership development needed for APs and those who are potential leaders
- Many parents/students leave the middle school
- More diversity on staff
- MS principal turnover - 4 in 4 years
- Non-renewal at all levels — principals are not supported when teachers are non-renewed
- parents who have negative experiences themselves in our schools
- Principal have autonomy, both a strength and a weakness

- Principals have to make things work despite lack of preparation and implementation challenges
- School Board too much into the weeds on many issues — questions at the Board level are crossing the line
- School Board is springboard to higher level of politics — not always focused on students; need to focus on equity and on children not on the politics
- School division has chased headlines — what's the new greatest thing — we need to stay the course over a 3–5-year period with programs that make a difference
- Teacher relationships with superintendent violated chain of command
- Too many shiny things have been chased — need for researched based programs that have staying power
- Trauma from Thomas Jefferson to August 12 and beyond — needs to be reckoned with
- What is Board looking for? A change agent? A 15-year person?
- Warm and fuzzy was missing from our past superintendent--harshness and criticism were some of her tools

Characteristics

- Ability to value differences in leadership styles in a non-threatening style
- Collaborative, open; promotes information sharing and collaboration /
- Communicator
- Demonstrates an attitude of “How can I help”
- Expert at managing the Board
- Firm but fair in relation to student behavior
- Needs to live in the community and be a member of the community //
- Organizes and holds staff accountable
- Provides more opportunities for building leadership in the district; superintendent needs to be a mentor
- Supports all students — anti-racist, pro LBGTQ, pro woman, accepting all students, including immigrants
- Strong command and also understands that there are not many people to delegate to
- Strong tactician is needed
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Values direct link between schools and central office; makes sure that central office staff actually sees the curriculum and instructional practices in schools
- Visible in schools- students need to know who the superintendent is; accessible to staff, including assistant principals and others; visibility at all levels would be important /
- Willing to be in the trenches

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

' / ' indicates multiple similar responses from different people

Community

No. 16 plus NAACP Board (6) - See addendum

Strengths

- Community really supports public education
- Did not crawl into a hole after 2018 NYT article, had forums and meetings
- Diversity embraced by many families and students
- Dr. A: trusted, open, transparent, longevity; cared deeply; partnered with community; looked at children with a strength based and resilience approach; sought and used resources in the university community to learn best practices; worked at the state level on pre-K and other issues; stayed abreast of issues that impact CCPS; successful //
- Entry pay for teachers
- Inclusive Network Framework
- Input from the public welcome - School Board meetings can go on for hours
- Lots of IEPs, ed advocates; needs meet
- Opportunities for students in a small school division
- Parents who can afford private schools select City schools
- Pre-school initiative
- Professionals in schools can feel afraid to make decisions because of pushback no matter what they do
- Some schools create a great community feeling
- Staff - strong elementary principals, upper elementary and high school: principals do a great job of trying to keep the SOL pressure in check; teacher corps strong; some great teachers, willing to go way beyond what is expected; caring; committed to growth and improvement; efforts during COVID have been awesome ///
- Trauma informed care
- Well resourced; a lot of nonprofits, lots of needs met; per pupil expenditure //Wrap around support for students

Challenges

- Achievement gap in spite of resources; reading levels of Afro American students
- Broaden equity to learning styles, backgrounds, people who are often forgotten;
- must think more broadly about all students, meeting diverse needs
- Bunker mentality — questions are threats, react defensively to any criticism
- CATEC is a neglected step-child; need to upgrade and honor CTE, provide equally high-quality instruction in these areas as is in place for traditional academics and the arts; CCPS behind in providing CTE; need to connect to world of work and alternate pathways for students — adapting to changing workforce
- Central administration is reactionary rather than transformative

- Charlottesville is still seeped in its history of slavery, racism
- College entry is emphasized so much that other pathways are not honored
- Community - haves and have nots; wealthy white parents often feel entitled; culture where everyone is an expert on everything; touch, challenging place /
- Curriculum teaches to the test
- Disconnect between the principals and central office/superintendent. Lack of trust and communication.
- Fiscal demands of schools, without sufficient outcomes determined; more and more money, but same outcomes
- Gifted program was born as a response to Brown V Board
- Goal needs to be to keep our families in public schools
- Graduation rate touted, but post grad outcomes not being tracked
- History of Black families who did have not had good experiences in schools
- Impact of COVID on students — learning loss, social emotional issues; not all teachers can teach virtually and not students can learn; COVID aftermath
- Infrastructure needs of schools; funding to address aging facilities
- Is the system working or are people working the system? Too many IEPS, etc.
- Lack of collaborative approach
- Lack of communication
- Lack of support for people at the school level
- Leaders have been very influenced by a small group of people
- Losing quality staff — why?
- More transitions than necessary because of school configuration
- Need to coordinate with County and community partners on important projects, like the pre-school program and CTE program
- Need to consider alternative ways of funding schools — therefore need to build relationships] with people in the community
- Need to hold all staff accountable for the learning outcomes
- Need to look at each child as an individual, and support from where they are, resources based on what they need; children need to be met where they are — cultural, emotional
- Need to teach all students critical thinking, problem solving
- No metric and measurement used to determine return on investment; new people hired to address equity, but what have they accomplished? How is work assessed?
- No plan to address disparities and achievement issues — based on research, not blame
- No culture of trust
- Outcomes have not matched resources or even Dr A's efforts //
- Parent partnerships and inclusion are not strong across the board
- Parental communication in age of technology — parents do not always know how to access information and support their children
- Poor handling of some staffing issues by HR
- Post grad data not being tracked
- Principals and superintendent have not been a partnership.
- Refugee population from all over the world that is not well integrated and well served
- Removal of SRO a knee-jerk, bad decision

- Silos - every nonprofit is out there on its own, need coherence and more cooperative efforts toward common goals
- School system seems to have run out of energy
- Staff turnover — need to learn reasons why teachers are leaving; keeping up the moral of the principals and people in schools — keeping good people in our schools; need to innovate to keep teachers in jobs; history of turnover of principals at certain schools — why? recruitment and retention of Black teachers /
- Student success is defined by academics only
- Stability of work force and instructional staff is an issue
- Superintendent has not been a mentor
- Superintendents have tried, but not always given the authority to do their jobs because of entitled community and weak School Board
- Taking students outside of CCPS, at lower rate that is less than the taxpayer rate
- Taxpayers are making up the difference — and resources diverted from high need students
- Too many IEPs, etc. Is the system working or are people working the system?
- Too much delegation from superintendent to central staff, from central staff
- Too much emphasis on SOLs
- Trauma issues — which mean that schools have to spend money on social issues, i.e., hiring huge number of social workers.
- Transparency is lacking — district leaders are reactive not proactive
- Trust is hard to earn

Characteristics

- Approachable, no bunker mentality
- Builds strong relationship with City and region — broad understanding of business community — understands the linkage between economic health of community and schools; engages with UVA and Piedmont; taps into all resources in community, broaden use of volunteers to support students who are learning to read; works with Albemarle School District and Piedmont Community College - especially in regard to providing quality career and technical education
- Benevolent dictator — someone who really cares about students, staff and families, but is tough enough to make the hard decisions and say “no”
- Coaching style — understands that the Superintendent is supervising different generations
- Collaborative and Inclusive, seeks out advice and input Includes others in development of vision; listener. — incorporates feedback from public and partners; connects with the teaching staff — open to meeting and collaborating with teachers //
- Continues to work with community partners (United Way, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.)
- Communication with community about the costs of education and the benefits, outcomes
- Courageous, risk taker; strong enough to claim their space, can say “no” when necessary; does not let the strongest voice dictate //
- Deeply committed to solving issues of racism, inclusion and equity for all marginalized students; intentional about every action as it relates to equity; capacity to meet the needs of black and brown students
- Durable, committed

- Embraces technology but provides support to parents who do not have skills to use these learning tools
- Fiscally responsible — willing to cut or curtail programs where evidence of success if not there; laser-targets the programs that impact achievement with proven results great listener
- Innovative - will think out-of-the-box and try new things; will seek resources and relationships outside preK-12; recognizes that new approaches to solving problems are needed; innovator of process and content; need for innovation, cutting age programs to support staff; innovative thinking — open to difference of thought /
- Like Dr A - impeccable integrity; person-to-person skills; impressive; exceptional judgement; hired strong people; listener; liked the challenge; had the needed “fire in the belly”; provided stability; stayed
- Master of process
- Mentors and supports school administrators; empowers administrators in each school to unleash his/her creativity — let talented principals use talent
- Metric driven; will establish measures to justify spending on programs; need for data to measure what we do; data drives innovation and CCPS is lagging /
- Open communication style
- Skill with budget management and outcomes
- Support and build on the efforts of previous admin in regard to trauma, mental health, wellness
- Strategic thinker
- Strong instructional leader — have not had this kind of leadership, no exceptional leadership at the Central Office
- Transparency; tells us what is working and what is not working and why; honest about what is possible; transparency in planning
- Trust critical; unifier
- Will intentionally reach out to parents and bring them into the schools — especially those parents who have not had influence
- Visible in schools and community; known; “walks the beat”; visible in the schools and community; lives in the Charlottesville; is connected, engaged; out there, engaging with community and people /
- Visionary; keeps eye on a long-term vision

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

“/” indicates multiple similar responses from different interviews

Parents

No. 16

Strengths


- Diversity
- Staff- teachers are strong; some very good administrators in schools /
- Work begun on equity

Challenges

- Awareness and acceptance of changing demographics
- District communication is only spin and news releases; only wants to brag about what it did right
- Equity is an issue
- Families who do not have their material needs met — are going to continue to have greater needs
- International population is not integrated
- Keeping and supporting quality staff — turnover in administrators (i.e., Buford)- why?
- Lack of innovation — more out-of-the box ideas needed
- Micromanaging talented administrators
- Need to bring in Asian and International community; PTO is not the only way to involve parents
- No annual report card
- Not a united community — unequal outcomes, different needs and perspective; socio economics and race are dividers /
- PTO is not representative of community; Black Parent Association - will it be a positive step?
- School systems makes decisions that are too knee jerk — not always thoughtful
- Students who leave in middle school

Characteristics

- Can unify the community
- Can work with School Board successfully — divide between SB and Supt became obvious during pandemic
- Communicator, relator — willing to engage with the community at large; can sell the value of CCPS; someone comfortable in public //
- Crisis management was not strong during the pandemic — too many “experts”, not enough coherence and communication
- Innovative
- Listens to teachers and administrators, as well as community
- Prepared to understand this unique community — part of the community /

- 
- Strong financial leadership
 - Strong, makes decisions based not only on community input, but with sound rationale; has educational expertise
 - Transparent - informs parents about what is going on /

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

“/” indicates multiple similar responses from different people

Support Staff

No. 15

Strengths


- Central Office staff rocks
- Covid has made Schools include City Transportation in planning, hope this continues
- Exposure
- Lots of diversity, both a plus and minus /
- Pride in longevity of employees
- Unique, special place
- Whole child focus of the schools

Challenges

- Achievement gap
- All students need to be taken care of, and some need a lot of support
- Bus drivers disconnected from the schools — rarely does the Supt even see drivers
- Central Office staff
- Community member — shops, goes to church, maybe even has children in community
- Corporate approach rather than teamwork
- CCPS has become the city of “yes” — every request of parents is told yes, even when the staff cannot always provide what is wanted
- CCPS community can be challenging — all walks of life, different needs, beliefs, attitudes; the capital of the liberal movement /
- Diversity
- Elementary reconfiguration: \$3 mill allocated for planning — problem has been kicked down the road for 11 years
- Everything is additive; nothing is taken away
- Lack of family engagement
- Safety and security model to implement - SRO’s removal
- Strong personalities on School Board, staff and in community, makes it difficult to change anything
- Working productively with City Council and Manager

Characteristics

- Addresses needs of all children — not catering just to the most demanding parents; cares about all students
- Builds trust — is trustworthy and trusts staff
- Communication is a key /

- 
- Consistent expectations
 - Experience working in a school district — at a high level, in an urban environment
 - Genuine
 - Has a vision and can communicate it
 - Knows about Charlottesville, its history
 - Loves kids, not here for the paycheck
 - Not “my way or highway”
 - Personable and accessible
 - Respectful toward everyone, no matter what their job; tries to know support staff, doesn’t look past us and gets our names right
 - Sets expectation that all central office staff communicates well
 - Strong enough to set standards and make all staff abide by them
 - Superintendent experience needed to deal with resistance to change
 - Visible to all members of the community, including bus drivers who interact with students and families /
 - Will include bus drivers as part of the team, builds on connections made in COVID -

Comments from Interviews and Focus Group Meetings

Listed in alphabetical order

“ / ” indicates multiple similar responses from different people

Teachers

No. 7

Strengths

- Beautiful city
- Community of opportunity
- De-tracking initiative
- Downtown mall
- Extremely diverse population
- Farmland
- Great potential
- Mountains, beach
- School staffs work well together and take care of their students
- Small community and school division, but vital
- Sports, culture, concerts
- Support of the arts programs in schools
- The arts, culture in community
- The University
- Thomas Jefferson’s legacy
- Wonderful place to live; fantastic for families /
- Working to improve our equity lens
- Working to make progress on our racist past

Challenges

- A new idea or initiative each year, no sustainability — no logical model for improvement, no follow through
- At the leadership level, students are known as data points, not as individuals; the upper-level staff do not know the uniqueness of our students, but reduce all to data
- Central leadership is threatened by innovation, squelches initiative; has knee jerk reactions
- Central office staff do not live in CCPS so decisions don’t affect them
- Curriculum-not embracing project based or problem-based learning activists for all students
- Disconnect with neighborhoods and central office
- Extremes of poverty and affluence in the same community and schools
- Face of the division is very White elitist, hides the reality
- Fine arts still quite segregated; high attrition in orchestra as students move up the grades, especially children of color
- Gender identity and family changes — not allowed to teach a course with 2 moms; leadership has not been progressive on gender issues
- Image has been more important than substance; efficiency is prized over quality

- Issues around race — ugly racist past; not enough Black teachers, especially Black males; Day of Equity - keynote speaker was a white male, without a strong equity background
- Lack of equity for ESL - need for information, family outreach, inclusion; EL students thrown into HS English classes
- Lax grading during the pandemic
- Leadership is surface level, does not stay with initiatives or take the time to build capacity and sustainability
- Lots of talk by smart people about issues, but nothing happens
- Need for better parent engagement
- Need new message around race and equity — fresh evidence-based plan; messaging in the past has been a defensive posture — after the 2018 NYT article district was defensive, not acknowledging
- Opinions from schools are ignored
- People in schools and at some levels of leadership have been silenced and are afraid to talk
- Poor communication — problem extends beyond the pandemic

Characteristics

- A connector — builds relationships with people in schools — views teachers as valuable contributors, but voices are welcome; values rather than ignores Ideas from teachers, those “on the ground”; uses the power of school-based people
- Confident, not arrogant
- Comfortable in our poorest neighborhoods
- Communicator
- Does not get caught up in the news — thick skinned
- Loves the community — lives in and is involved in the community; vested in the City and the area //
- Makes trust and respect the norm in all relationships, requires all leaders to develop trust and respect with all colleagues, regardless of their position in the district
- No steppingstone candidates
- Sees the activism of staff and students as a plus not a threat
- Sees the issues of race as challenges not obstacles
- Sees UVa as an asset, not a threat; can work with UVA to find resources to help families who work for the university in lower echelon jobs and have children in our schools; will make more use of UVA
- Talks clearly and strongly about equity and racism, using data research and best practices
- Treats teacher better
- Understands that there are parents who lack trust because of how they were treated in school
- Visible - in the schools and community /
- Will recognize that the ESL population is being underserved

DRAFT FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Superintendent of Schools
Desired Characteristics**

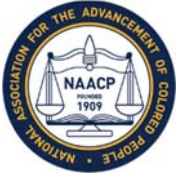
After seeking input from its Board members, parents, staff, students and community via focus groups, interviews, and an online survey, the School Board of Charlottesville City seeks a strong educational leader who possesses the following characteristics:

- Budget and finance experience
- Communicator who can build relationships and trust in a diverse community
- Creates and retains a collaborative work environment where divergent perspectives are valued
- Deeply committed to diversity, equity and inclusion; relentless in seeking improvement in this area
- Instructional leader who can guide the system in development of more rigorous and relevant instruction for all students
- Knowledge of unique aspects and needs of middle schools
- Political skills to navigate successfully in a diverse, activist community
- Strong and confident enough to deal with conflict and make tough decisions
- Transparent and open
- Understands the need for career pathways that include quality Career and Technical Education
- Visible in schools and in the community
- Visionary, optimistic about the future of public schools, can lead and inspire others toward a more just and hopeful future where all children reach their potential

With regard to leadership experiences and accomplishments, the successful candidate:

- Is or able to be certified as a Virginia superintendent
- Demonstrates a solid track record of increasing responsibilities and success
- Experience and success improving educational outcomes for students of color
- Has experience as superintendent or high-level leader in a diverse school district
- Doctorate preferred

ADDENDUM A



ALBEMARLE-CHARLOTTESVILLE BRANCH

P.O. BOX 1522
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22902
434-220-1493

Albemarle-Charlottesville NAACP Proposed Charlottesville School Superintendent Leadership Profile

The Albemarle-Charlottesville Branch of the NAACP believes that the elimination of the academic achievement gap is the top priority for the incoming Charlottesville School Superintendent. Our branch believes this gap can be eliminated by strengthening student's sense of identity; promoting equity and inclusivity in the classroom; engaging all students at the highest level of course material; encouraging and demanding critical thinking; and for all students performing below their grade level in reading and math - providing specialists accomplished in the science of teaching reading and math.

Below is the Leadership Profile required of the next Charlottesville City School Superintendent to ensure African American students are empowered to accomplish the above.

Courage and confidence to take risk. Boldly set goals, such as all students completing the third grade will be able to read, and perform arithmetic, at grade level by the end of the third-grade school year.

Instructional leader who is knowledgeable of the best practices for maximizing achievement for all students. For example:

- Incorporating Culturally Responsive Teaching strategies in the classroom instruction; and,
- Incorporating and implementing the recommendations of the Virginia Commission on African American History Education in the Commonwealth, especially, the professional development and instructional supports to equip all educators and administrators to create and sustain culturally responsive pedagogy and gain appropriate foundational knowledge in African American history.

Clear vision for the district.

- Working with the school board, teachers, students, parents, and the community, sets a clear vision, goals, and objectives for the district on how to narrow and eliminate the performance gap; maintain focus on this vision; and sees to it that the goals are achieved.

- Make significant, demonstrable progress in fulfilling Charlottesville City School Division's Equity and Anti-Racism policies, which define education equity as all children receiving what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential.

Effective communicator.

- Using all available tools, including social media, to communicate effectively with, listen to, and connect with African American students, parents, teachers, community and religious leaders and influencers.
- Be an advocate and a proponent of the academic needs of the African American community to the school board, Virginia Department of Education, and city government.

Manages Finance. Prioritize all financial and personnel resources, and all facility upgrades, reconfigurations, and new construction, in order to meet equity goals.