

# Superintendent Community Input Sessions

November and December 2020

Designed and facilitated in partnership by the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the Moultrie Colquitt County Development Authority.

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### Background

In response to the findings of the Colquitt County Schools Parent Perspectives Project coordinated by the Moultrie Colquitt County Development Authority, Superintendent Community Input Sessions were held to gather insights from community members. The sessions focused on thoughts, ideas, and perspectives of the participants as they relate to selecting the next superintendent of Colquitt County Schools.

The Parent Project listed a recommendation of including the community in the selection process of the next superintendent of Colquitt County Schools. With the agreement of the Colquitt County Board of Education, the Authority proceeded with hosting the sessions.

There were two options for the community to provide input in the selection process. The first was an online survey created and distributed by the Colquitt County Board of Education through various online formats and email services. The survey focused on preferred qualifications as listed in the Superintendent Search Announcement. There were over 935 responders to the survey.

The second option for the community to provide input was through three community input sessions. The Authority contracted for services with the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government to coordinate the structure and processes for the sessions, so as to ensure valuable, useful information was received. Dr. Russell W. Cook, Public Service Assistant, Government Training, Education and Development at the Carl Vinson Institute provided the services and lead the session participants through the exercises to receive feedback.

## Process

### *Session Advertisements:*

Citizens were invited to participate in sessions through various media platforms, including The Moultrie Observer, The Colquitt Shopper, and Facebook. Primarily, the Select Moultrie and Moultrie Colquitt County Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages were utilized, and the posts were shared by others. Additionally, Colquitt County Schools used their “Remind” software program to send messages to parents and caregivers as well as teachers and administrators inviting them to the sessions. Attachment A is a sample of the flyer used across all platforms to advertise the sessions.

### *Facilitated Sessions:*

While each session was open to anyone who wished to attend, RSVPs were requested to allow for management of crowd size and COVID safety precautions. Each attendee received a package of information, including an Agenda – Attachment B, Discussion Group Questions – Attachment C, Colquitt County Superintendent Qualifications Community Survey Results – Attachment D, and Preferred Qualifications as Listed in the Superintendent Search Announcement – Attachment E, as well as 5 green sticky dots.

Each session began with an explanation as to why the group was gathered and the planned activities of the session. Following the session opening, Mr. Bill Sampson of the Georgia School Boards Association provided a history and current status of the superintendent search process. This information allowed the participants to understand the steps to come and how the information gathered through the survey and the input sessions would help to inform the Board of Education members as they begin the interview process.

The first activity of the sessions, Preferred Qualifications Activity, asked the session participants to review the Preferred Qualifications as Listed in the Superintendent Search Announcement, and select the 5 qualifications they believed to be the most important. Once selected, each participant attached their sticky dots to their top 5 qualifications on flipcharts placed around the room. This exercise was used to allow the participants to provide a ranking of the qualifications. While all qualifications are important the ranking allowed for consideration of those which are of most importance. The results are included in the Executive Summary section of this document.

The second activity, Small Group Discussion Sessions, involved dividing the participants into groups of approximately 7 – 12 people, depending on crowd size, and using a facilitator to lead each group through 5 questions. The questions, as follows, were designed to offer ideas about the future state of the school system and desirable personal qualities and skills of the individual who will be appointed by the school board to lead efforts to achieve the vision.

*Question 1: What should Colquitt County Schools aspire to --- what difference should Colquitt County Schools make in Colquitt County?*

*Question 2: What would you like Colquitt County Schools to look and feel like in 5 years (2025) --- where would you like Colquitt County Schools to be in 5 years?*

*Question 3: What are some “game changer” ideas that will bring excellence to the Colquitt County School District? (Game changer is defined as something that changes an existing situation in a significant way.)*

*Question 4: Personal Qualities desirable in a superintendent. What are three traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?*

*Question 5: Experience and Qualifications. What are three traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?*

The facilitation times varied according to the amount of feedback provided by each group, though averaged about 40 – 45 minutes in total. Following the group discussions, each group appointed a spokesperson to share their “game changer” ideas, top Personal Qualities, and top Experiences and Qualification they would like to see in a superintendent. Attachment F, Superintendent Search Community Input Session Notes, provides a listing of all responses provided.

Following the report outs, the sessions concluded with thanking the participants for their willingness to attend and share. Additionally, participants were told a formal report of the sessions would be developed and provided to all participants, Board of Education members, and the community as desired.

Each session lasted approximately 1.5 hours, depending on the engagement of the participants.

## Executive Summary

### *Goals:*

The Superintendent Community Input Sessions began with the first goal of providing a venue for parents and caregivers, business and industry leaders, and teachers and administrators to provide input regarding the selection process and desirable components of the next superintendent. The second goal is to share the information with Colquitt County Schools' Board of Education members, providing them with specific ideas and desires, based upon participant feedback, to be considered in the interview and selection process for the next superintendent.

### *Objectives:*

Using both the survey and facilitated session process, the objectives of the project include identifying the top personal qualities, qualifications, and experiences to be held by the next superintendent, and to provide the top aspirations, future appearance, and "game changing" ideas which might be considered for future success of Colquitt County Schools. While the top items are provided in this summary, all information collected is relevant and beneficial for the next superintendent to consider in developing the vision for Colquitt County Schools.

### *Participants:*

The participants of the project were self-generated, based on discussions among local citizens and the advertising mechanisms as referenced. While some participants provided an RSVP to assist with crowd size management, some did not, and were still welcomed to attend. Additionally, no sign in sheet was used and there was no method of tracking and counting participants as to allow for an environment which encouraged open sharing.

### *Summary of Input:*

Using the tactics outlined above, the top five Preferred Qualifications as Listed in the Superintendent Search Announcement are listed below as ranked by the participants.

1. The ability to participate in the development of a widely shared vision, target a mission for learning and foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty staff and administration.
2. Evidence of a high level of effectiveness in the following personal qualities: Values, Judgement, Fit for the Position/Community, Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Ability, and Customer Focus.
3. A demonstrated ability to collaborate and communicate effectively with faculty and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs and mobilize community resources.
4. A documented history of experience as a classroom teacher, principal, and as a central office administrator.

Two qualifications tied for the fifth slot, receiving the same number of votes. Those two qualifications include:

- A demonstrated ability to foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Evidence of the ability to promote the success of all students by ensuring, supporting, managing, and overseeing the district’s organization, management of personnel, facilities, transportation, nutrition, technology, and budgeting facets of district operations.

For the facilitated group discussions, all feedback provided is beneficial, and most all topics were discussed multiple times in each group. The lead facilitator has identified the top three discussed items per the questions asked, though each point shared in Attachment F should be considered as valuable and relevant in selecting the next superintendent.

The top three responses per question are:

Question 1: What should Colquitt County Schools aspire to --- what difference should Colquitt County Schools make in Colquitt County?

1. A System of Excellence
2. An Accountable and Productive System
3. A System Producing Qualified and Capable Graduates

Question 2: What would you like Colquitt County Schools to look and feel like in 5 years (2025) --- where would you like Colquitt County Schools to be in 5 years?

1. A system with academics as highly focused and supported as athletics.
2. A system viewed as a desired asset: to business and industry hiring graduates, to parents of children, to those considering a move to Colquitt County.
3. A system focusing on all grade levels at all times and showing success in data, with teachers highly capable of priding these services.

Question 3: What are some “game changer” ideas that will bring excellence to the Colquitt County School District? (Game changer is defined as something that changes an existing situation in a significant way.)

1. Securing a bold leader with skills to connect in all facets of the community.
2. Securing a leader who can communicate with all audiences and gather buy in of all leaders, teachers, parents, and students to support the vision of the system.
3. Creating a culture of pride – “Packer Pride” –, honesty, discipline, and integrity system-wide among all participants.

Question 4: Personal Qualities desirable in a superintendent. What are three traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?

1. Visionary
2. Courageous
3. Innovative

Question 5: Experience and Qualifications. What are three traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?

1. A history of innovation and experiences in multiple school systems, having previously served as a superintendent, with proof of capabilities.
2. A history of strong communication skills.
3. A history of being business minded, with community experiences of serving and volunteering, and bringing these experiences into the school environment.

### Recommendations

The survey and facilitated sessions generated common themes and desires to be considered when selecting the next superintendent of Colquitt County Schools.

It is recommended that the Board of Education members who are working diligently through the selection process review the information included within this report and apply this information to their consideration of the various candidates.



**Attachment A – Advertisement Flyer**

# Our kids need **your voice** in the future of local education.

## COMMUNITY INPUT SESSIONS COLQUITT CO. SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

Monday, November 30 - 6:00 pm  
For Parents & Caregivers

Tuesday, December 1 - 12:00 pm  
For Business & Community Members

Tuesday, December 1 - 4:30 pm  
For Teachers & Administrators

Although each discussion will be geared toward the above audiences,  
interested citizens are welcome to attend any session.

The Moultrie-Colquitt County Development Authority is hosting community input sessions to discuss the school system's current Superintendent search.

All sessions will be held at the Colquitt County Board of Education Board Room, located at 1800 Park Ave. in Moultrie.



In order to adhere to CDC guidelines for COVID-19, registration is required to attend.  
Email [info@selectmoultrie.com](mailto:info@selectmoultrie.com) or call **(229) 985-2131** to reserve your seat.

**Attachment B – Agenda**

**Colquitt County School District  
Superintendent Search  
Community Input Sessions**

**Monday, November 30, 2020**

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**6:00pm**

**Welcome**

**Why We Are Here**

**Superintendent Search Process and Update**

**Preferred Qualifications Activity**

**Small Group Discussion Sessions**

**Report Out from Discussion Groups**

**Wrap Up**

**Adjourn**

**Attachment C – Discussion Group Questions**

## Discussion Group Questions

### Ground Rules

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- **Check your title** at the door, we're all **equal adults** here today
  - The past is past, **focus on and talk about the Future**
  - Think **school system-wide**
  - **Trust** each other enough to speak and **Respect** each other enough to listen
  - **Respect** each other's differences and perspectives
  - **Talk to each other**.....not the media or the visitors
  - **Think with possibility**
  - **Agreement** on ground rules
1. What should Colquitt County Schools aspire to--- what difference should Colquitt County Schools make in Colquitt County?
  2. What would you like Colquitt County Schools to look and feel like in 5 years (2025)--- where would you like Colquitt County Schools to be in 5 years?
  3. What are some "game changer" ideas that will bring excellence to the Colquitt County School District? (Game changer is defined as something that changes an existing situation in a significant way.)
  4. PERSONAL QUALITIES desirable in a superintendent  
  
What are three traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?
  5. EXPERIENCE and QUALIFICATIONS  
  
What are three traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?

**Attachment D – Colquitt County Superintendent Qualifications Community  
Survey Results**

## Colquitt County Superintendent Qualifications Community Survey Results

As the Colquitt County Board of Education evaluates candidates to serve as the next leader of Colquitt County Schools, the Board Members value public input to help them identify areas of concern and the traits that stakeholders view as important for the next superintendent. To that end, the Board of Education distributed a survey, and 935 responses were received. The Members of the Colquitt County Board of Education thank the community for taking time to provide valuable feedback. The results of the survey are outlined below.

### Most valuable prior experience for a superintendent:

<i>Position</i>	<i>Percent Ranking Position in Top Three</i>
Principal	59%
Teacher	55%
Assistant Superintendent	46%
Superintendent	32%
Curriculum Director	15%
Prior Position Less Important than Skillset	15%
Leadership Outside of Education	14%
Finance Director	11%
Human Resources Director	8%
Special Education Director	6%
Public Relations Director	3%
Non-profit Leadership	1%

### Most important skills for the next superintendent to possess:

<i>Skills</i>	<i>Percent Ranking Skill in Top Three</i>
Visible and Accessible	61%
Communication and Public Relations Skills	47%
Flexible, Comfortable with Change, Innovative	35%
Leadership Roles in Public Education	34%
Instructional and Curricular Expertise	30%
Financial Management and Budgeting Expertise	27%
Experience Closing the Achievement Gap	25%
Experience Serving Students/Adults from Poverty	21%
Demonstrated Ability to Work with Elected Officials	7%

### Most important personal traits for next superintendent:

<i>Personal Traits</i>	<i>Percent Ranking Trait in Top Three</i>
Honest and Ethical	83%
Communicator	46%
Problem-solver	42%
Transparent	22%
Visionary	20%
Personable	17%
Resourceful	17%
Community/Organization Oriented	16%
Empathetic	14%
Bold	12%
Charismatic	4%
Tenacious	2%



**In choosing the superintendent, which path should the School Board take?**

Find a candidate who will stay with the course and continue the vision and style of the previous administration.	13%
Keep some of the style of the previous administration but with some necessary changes.	56%
Find a very different kind of candidate to go in a new direction.	31%

**Stakeholder status of respondent (respondents selected all that applied):**

Parent of Guardian of Student(s)	53%
School System Employee	50%
Community Member	37%
Business Owner	11%
Prefer not to Indicate	5%
Student	3%

Respondents wrote over 400 comments on various topics related to the system and the superintendent search. In those comments, common themes emerged. Those are outlined below in order of frequency.

**Common themes from comments with the number of respondents:**

The new superintendent should be someone from outside the Colquitt County School System.	94
The new superintendent should have fresh eyes, new ideas, vision. S/he should be unafraid, progressive, and willing to make bold changes.	76
The new superintendent should treat everyone fairly and should show no partiality regarding people or schools.	60
The new superintendent should have an academic focus and be an expert in curriculum and instruction.	51
The new superintendent should be student and teacher focused. S/he should care about students and employees, make them feel valued, should be an encourager, and should be accessible. S/he should be visible in the schools.	51
The new superintendent should be a current employee within the district.	41
The new superintendent should show resolve in the face of opposition, possess grit, and have the ability to make tough decisions.	35
The new superintendent should be a proven leader.	31
The new superintendent should have a proven track record of improvement in a similar system and experience with implementing successful strategies to increase achievement for students from poverty.	30
The new superintendent should be an excellent communicator: clear, honest, transparent. S/he should possess charisma, communicate frequently, and be proactive as well as responsive.	28
The new superintendent should seek input from teachers and school-level administrators and should allow teachers and administrators freedom to meet students' needs.	28
The new superintendent should be a person of integrity—someone who is honest and moral.	26
The new superintendent should focus on school discipline and safety including bullying.	22
The new superintendent should have teaching experience as a classroom teacher in an academic core subject.	19
The new superintendent should display a willingness to listen and to accept ideas from others. S/he should seek ideas and perspectives from a diverse group of stakeholders.	19

The new superintendent should make diversity a priority and should be purposeful about engaging minority communities.	14
The new superintendent should hold teachers, students, and parents accountable. S/he should have high expectations and model exemplary work ethic.	13
The new superintendent should be able to relate to the community. S/he should understand rural communities, be involved, accessible, and possess the ability to strategize with community leaders.	13
The new superintendent should have prior experience as a superintendent.	10
The new superintendent should focus on teacher recruitment and retention including the implementation of an exit interview process and other surveys to monitor employee morale.	10

**Attachment E – Preferred Qualifications as Listed in the Superintendent Search  
Announcement**

## **Preferred Qualifications as Listed in the Superintendent Search Announcement**

Directions: Review the qualifications listed below. Select 5 qualifications that you think ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT from your perspective. Place a check mark beside each one.

Possession of an Ed.S. or a Ph.D. and hold or be eligible for a Georgia Leadership Certificate at the L-7 level.

Documented evidence of experience in the Southeast Region of the United States (AL, District of Columbia, FL, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, LA, TN, VA, W.VA).

A documented history of experience as a classroom teacher, principal, and as a central office administrator.

Has a combination of professional expertise achieved through service in roles of increased responsibility over time.

The ability to participate in the development of a widely shared vision, target a mission for learning and foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty staff and administration.

A documented history of developing procedures for assessing the curriculum and implementing the use of research-based instructional strategies.

A demonstrated ability to foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff and administrators.

Evidence of the ability to promote the success of all students by ensuring, supporting, managing and overseeing the district's organization, management of personnel, facilities, transportation, nutrition, technology and budgeting facets of district operations.

A demonstrated ability to collaborate and communicate effectively with faculty and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs and mobilize community resources.

A demonstrated ability to develop collaborative partnerships with the greater community to support the learning priorities of the district.

A demonstrated ability to promote the success and well-being of all students by adhering to local, state and federal laws and mandates, board of education policies and ethical guidelines.

Understands the team governance model and has the ability to provide leadership for the Board to aid their understanding of this model and the separation of authority of the board and the superintendent.

An awareness of new developments in education and the motivation to read widely and keep current on educational programs and practices.

Evidence of a high level of effectiveness in the following personal qualities: Values, Judgment, Fit for the Position/Community, Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Ability, and Customer Focus.

**Attachment F – Superintendent Search Community Input Session Notes**

## Superintendent Search Community Input Sessions Facilitated Session Notes

Three community input sessions, targeting various sectors, were hosted on November 30, 2020 and December 1, 2020, by the Moultrie Colquitt County Development Authority. Sectors included parents and guardians, business and industry, and teachers and administrators. The sectors were identified as groups who might have similar interests and input, making the facilitation and information sharing process more manageable.

### **Question 1: What Should Colquitt County Schools aspire to – what difference should Colquitt County Schools make in Colquitt County?**

- Excellence
  - Each student reaches maximum potential regardless of ability.
  - Best school in the state – high graduation rate.
  - Not being satisfied with status quo – be a visionary.
  - Aspire to meet state levels in test scores and once achieved, aspire to exceed them.
  - Be a premier system.
- Standard: Set a standard for the community/school and go after it.
  - Get every stakeholder to the table.
  - Use the same standard we hold for football to hold everything else to a high standard of excellence.
  - Academics as high a priority as athletics.
  - Added rigor – cookie cutter education is over.
- Accountable and Productive:
  - All teachers, administrators, etc., must be accountable and productive.
  - All students, who are our citizens, must be taught there is accountability, and they must be productive in everything they do.
  - Create a culture of accountability and productivity for all.
  - Hold teachers/principals accountable; implement specific curriculum and do it.
- Expectations: Have the same expectations for all.
- Competency of Graduates:
- Consistency
- A positive for business recruitment.
  - Give businesses in town good quality employees.
  - Provide students with actual skills to go directly in the workforce if that is their goal.
- Put a focus on CTAE classes – very heavily focus on guiding students to CTAE/technical education if that is best and most productive for them.
  - Advertise CTAE through recruitment, exposure to industry so students know why they are being trained and for which jobs/careers.
- An asset to the community.
  - Create good citizens, creating a “whole child.”
  - More remediation and more volunteers to help kids achieve and provide resources.
- People look at our system as a model to follow.

- Safe learning environment for all students.
- Transparency at all levels: Education, Leadership Discipline
- Stop people from sending their kids to school systems outside of Colquitt County. Starts breaking our community.
- Understand there is 5:1 ratio of working people to graduates.
- Trades community.
- ROI: Property tax/school tax bill is largest; people need to feel like they “get what they pay for.”
  - Produce some type of value.
- Results Driven, Results Focused.
- Turn out a ready workforce, trained, skilled, ability at all levels.
- Make people want to live here. Three prongs: live, work, go to school.
- More graduates invested in coming back here.
- Educate and promote the lower level students, not just focus on higher level students.
  - Be a system that looks at all levels of students.
  - The “middle” students are the ones who are going to stay here – we need to help them more.
  - Help ALL kids – not just excelling and/or underachievers.
- There is a 30% literacy rate, we must strive to improve the rate.
- Make the community one students want to return to if they go off to college.
- Make a decision and stick to it, no waffling, or exceptions.
- The superintendent must be a school leader and a community leader.
- Teachers need to be valued and need more support.
- Need smaller classrooms, we have great facilities and great opportunity to raise money for necessities.
- Need better hires.
- Need ability to fail students – students should be held in a certain level until they achieve what they need to learn instead of just passing them.
- This community is faced with a high poverty level.
- Need programs as early as possible – age 2?
- Be more innovative in finding ways to get past some of the limitations (class size, etc.).
- Be a no tolerance system – if it means making an example of some, okay.
- Reflective of the students the system serves – good representation of all 4 corners in community (workforce).
- Graduating with skill sets/job level readiness. Less focus on just getting a diploma. Perception of high schoolers not prepared for college – they are shocked when they arrive at college.
- Lack of communication with parents about pathways.
- Had to keep going with pathway chosen in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Students not prepared for college if average graduates.
- Keep students at high school longer. Seem to push dual enrollment (1 hour at high school).
- Bypassing rigor at high school to take dual enrollment – getting college credit but such a desire to graduate kids for numbers.
- Focus more on all levels of students, they can all be successful, prepare for college, tech school, workforce.

**QUESTION 2: What would you like to see Colquitt County Schools look and feel like in 5 years (2025) --  
- where would you like Colquitt County Schools to be in 5 years?**

- Consider the tracks students must take...college prep, CTAE, etc.
  - The pathways are limiting to students
- What are we doing to help them move on, make a much bigger focus on CTAE?
- The diploma should mean something – to everyone.
  - If a student gets a diploma, industry should have no doubt the student has some level of skills and ability.
- Access to all arts.
- Post-Secondary Options
  - The system and community should work diligently to explain the full array of options: Go to work, military, college technical school, etc.
- Model all third grade – reading to learn not learning to read.
  - Many students cannot read at middle and high school level.
- Be as well known for our academics as we are for our athletics.
- A school system on the rise for those recruiting to the community and those considering jobs in the community.
  - Those with children need a system they will choose.
  - Not just about the graduation rate, but also test scores, and examples of those going on to other educational options...communicate this data.
- The focus should not be on any one level, elementary, middle, etc. This is all one system and focus should be at all levels.
  - Success of twelfth graders starts at the elementary level. Build a foundation and together to prepare at all levels.
- Students are learning ten different ways at 10 different elementary schools, then one middle school to teach them all.
  - Back up because some have learned differently or not at all. Grades drop in middle school because there is a “fixing” of the differences...this should not have to occur.
  - Expectations are different at each of the elementary schools, and all should be expected to be their best – this concept should be set early on.
  - All schools focus on the same standards so when the student arrives at middle school, they all have the same, required base of knowledge.
  - Reading and math levels when entering middle school are all at extremely varying degrees.
  - The same curriculum should be for all. While there can be different programs, etc., the same curriculum must be taught.
- The system and each school should have a fully functioning strategic plan.
  - Use this plan, keep it active and live.
  - The plan should include building maintenance and progressions as well as technology progressions and all components to be successful.
  - The plan should include community engagement as well.



- There should be a well-defined metric of success.
- Athletic programs are a part of the community, but the school system is not and needs to be.
- Innovation
- Serve the entire community.
- Every second grader should be reading at level and be the top in the state for early learning reading – read to learn not learn to read.
- Students achieving above peer level.
- Qualified school board members.
- Deputies not needed at our schools.
- Compensation in place to attract the best, most qualified teachers.
- Need a recruiting plan and a professional recruiter to attract teachers.
- Performance based teacher pay/bonuses. Change the culture of “tenure.”
- High test scores – competitive to surrounding areas.
- Top of the class – leader of South Georgia.
- Students and parents forget that 9<sup>th</sup> grade counts.
  - High school should include 9<sup>th</sup> grade so they can visually see this too.
- More graduates with scores that will allow them to go to whatever school they want.
- Less elementary schools: if it does not cost anymore/less to combine some of them.
- Specific programs for higher level students – International Bachelorette Program – widely known, acknowledged and carries a distinct meaning.
- Attract better teachers.
- There is something unique in k-4 – 80% or more of those students are more prepared for higher education.
- Eliminate “No Child Left Behind” concept. – make the students learn the material to progress.
- Need “thick skinned” leaders. Teachers are feelers, which makes them good teachers, but the leader must enforce the tactics to ensure success based on data.
- Extend the gifted school through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (GEAR).
- Be a modern facility with all up-to-date technology.
- Second graders need to be able to read.
- Black community more involved.
- More diversity in community activities.
- Need a superintendent that will reach out to the minority community.
- Change the curriculum to where they have a 2-hour study hall so they can get things done because parents do not always help at home.

**QUESTION 3: What are some “game changer” ideas that will bring excellence to the Colquitt County School District? (Game changer is defined as something that changes an existing situation in a significant way.)**

- Smaller classrooms
- Two high schools – but one football team (however this can be done).
- Early graduation for students who know what they want to do.

- Bold leadership.
- Designate system funds for mentoring. Volunteers are great, but educators know how to mentor better than most non-educators.
- Discipline in schools.
- Public Relations:
  - Better marketing – emphasize what we do well so people will see it and will keep their kids here.
- Add homework back.
- Go back to using books,
- Discipline – there are students who are afraid to go to the high school because they do not feel safe.
- Morale of teachers is very low.
- Hire people who are good leaders, and not just because of ethnicity.
- Career Technical and Agricultural Education
  - Tell the story!!
  - Prepare our kids for CTAE, help them to know if the viable options, jobs, and ability to make a very good living in these programs
- Every student should be tested on their natural ability (do this now in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades (Johnson – O’Conner).
- Make the school board meeting become the most interesting meeting in the county – participation, highlight success of students (have them attend, perform, recognize their successes), etc.
- Leadership that can engage students, parents, and community.
  - Including the black community, migrant community, Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- Leadership with an arms-open approach to community involvement.
- Psychological shift – welcome to Packer Nation from birth, not here is a list of services.
- Deliberate effort to fill gaps before gaps cause problems.
- Deliver information in a better way – from schools to parents especially.
  - Facebook and website are not up to date.
  - Info to parents needs to be more cohesive, deliberate, useful, and timely.
- Effective communication of all the positives of the system.
- Transparency: Local, state, and national funds “bribe/drive” us to make non-ideal decisions. Needs to be a policy change on this.
- Federal funds are being tied to how/who you can discipline.
  - People are scared to go to schools and the funding policy influence this.
- Move 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> graders to individual/one grade only campuses that are of similar sizes of the k-5 schools. Wouldn’t this help with discipline and safety?
- People in Colquitt County need to still be saying I went to school in Colquitt County in 20 years.
- Culture change – discipline, disruption, safety cannot be compromised. Kids causing problems need to be removed.
- Business leaders need to be in the schools to teach kids what is needed to be hired – an “Insider Info” approach.
- Teacher recruitment system. Increase depth chart.
- Hold students, parents, and teachers accountable.

- Incentivize – if passing all classes, no school on Friday. Friday is remedial as needed.
- Kids learn interactively. Provide games, technology to match kids in a learning style.
- Critical thinking skills. Need to teach.
- The local requirement can be critical thinking skills.
- Someone to foster the culture – packer community pride.
  - Make people feel valued and appreciated.
  - Teacher appreciation week.
- CTAE is needed in elementary schools for exposure.
- Baby Packer Foundation: An effort to get every baby in school – as much recruitment as the football team.
  - Identify and recruit to make sure child gets services needed.
  - Turn from we have services to making sure people get them.
  - The migrant federal program is an example.
  - \$100,000 could hire 2 people and cover 200 births a year. Reaching the children before school age.
- College and Career Academy
- Two high schools of two campuses, the College and Career Academy could be one – a better way to educate 3,000 kids.
- No need for 10 elementary schools.
  - Consolidate to better utilize resources.
- Use GEAR strategies across all schools.
- Get back to basics.
  - Parents cannot help, do not know how. If a child is smart, they will study but if not a problem.
  - Need a curriculum parents can get involved with.

**QUESTION 4: PERSONAL QUALITIES desirable in a superintendent – TOP 5 LIST. What are traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?**

- Visionary – Always thinking ahead.
- Courageous, brave, strong, thick skin
- Open Minded
- Demonstrate Communication
- Visible to the public – outgoing, personable, makes connections with people in the community.
- Trustworthy.
- Holds people accountable
- Someone who trusts the administration and empowers them to do their jobs.
- Independent thinker– does not let the school board overrun them.
- History of Experience
- Ability to foster positive environment.
- Ability to promote success of all students.
- Participate in development of mission.

- STRONG Communicator who can communicate broadly to community, parents, students, and teachers.
  - Can sell their ideas and direction to the BOE
- Empowering
- Thinks for themselves
- Thinks outside the box
- Not afraid to ruffle feathers
- Listener, hear what people are saying
- Empowers faculty to take the next step
- Approachable
- Values culture.
- Relationship builder
- Innovative
- Fair
- Good judge of character
- Accountable – for them as a person and others too.
- Transformative
- Game-Changer
- Builder of team dynamics
- Influencer
- Trusting of others and can delegate.
- Do not settle, take your time to get the right hire.
- House Cleaner – clean house of employees as needed and leave it ready for the next person to be visionary.
- Honesty, even when people do not like what they have to say.
- Driven to be better, never settling
- Invested – Someone invested in this community, even if they have not lived here all their life. Must be very willing to ingrain in Colquitt County.
- Still “young and hungry.”
- Innovative
- Fair
- Good judge of character
- Not be anyone’s friend
- If make a mistake, own it, and move forward.
- Not afraid to make people mad with changes that will better the system.

**Question 5: EXPERIENCE and QUALIFICATIONS – TOP 5 LIST. What are traits of particular importance a superintendent candidate should possess?**

- Consider all candidates.
  - Be open to a female candidate, a majority of those working in the system are females.

- Be open to all candidates, choose most qualified leadership/history in education/classroom (education system experiences).
- Show a history of innovation in more than one school system: Different school systems with diverse backgrounds.
  - Innovations in closing the achievement gap.
  - Innovations in closing the discipline gap.
- A specialist degree.
- Previously served as a superintendent.
  - We should not be a trial community.
  - Show turnaround experience, coming from a truly comparable area.
  - Community connections. The new superintendent needs to help make connections in the community to open pathways for teachers and students.
- Crisis response contingency person. Someone who has a plan for crisis response, which can occur at any time.
- Certified and credentialed.
- From OUTSIDE the system with prior superintendent experience.
- A CEO who can hire academics to work with him. A CEO will run the system like a business, and require performance, and accountability, with assistant superintendents who have the content knowledge to inform and bring the necessary content.
  - CEO type who can select great employers.
  - Have good management skills.
- Leadership experience.
- Someone who has experienced success – we are the second largest system
  - Proven successful experience.
  - Diversified experience, teacher to janitor to Superintendent.
- History of working with diverse groups of people.
- Hire from within, to have someone who already knows the problems and people.
- Been in a classroom (knows what teachers deal with)
- Principal
- Business minded – have someone in curriculum, in finance, etc., be the leader of these people.
- Lots of community experience in serving on boards, committees, and volunteering with other community leaders.
- Look at stats and have a vision/plan to get us from A to B.
- Family person, involved in a church.
- Someone who has been in extracurricular – coach, choir, ag animal shows, knows what a commitment it takes outside of the classroom as well to offer well rounded services to students.
- Been a superintendent before in multiple systems.
- Turned systems around.
- Relatable.
- Been in a community similar in Colquitt County, and not just one on paper, but one that really looks like Colquitt County.
- Ability to promote success of all students.
- Strategic Planner

- Our next superintendent should understand how school systems are funded in Georgia.
- Our next superintendent should understand, also, that poverty is not an excuse for lagging student achievement and the growing achievement gap.
  - We have adequate funding to support all learners in extraordinary ways and we have chosen not to. A "C" financial efficiency star rating is inexcusable. I hope our next superintendent has the necessary fiscal skills to correct this travesty.