



# MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SCOPE OF SERVICES

## BURNSVILLE-EAGAN-SAVAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT 191

***Future Ready. Community Strong.***

**one91**

**Burnsville • Eagan • Savage**

March 20, 2025





*Where Minnesota School Boards Learn to Lead*

March 20, 2025

Anna Werb, Chair  
Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191  
Diamondhead Education Center  
200 W. Burnsville Pkwy  
Burnsville, MN 55337

Dear Chair Werb and Members of the District 191 School Board:

On behalf of the Minnesota School Boards Association, thank you for the opportunity to assist Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191 with its upcoming superintendent search! One of the school board's most important responsibilities is to hire and oversee your district's leader, and MSBA looks forward to working with you to secure ISD 191's next superintendent.

As we move through the process MSBA will assist the school board with crafting the district's leadership profile, facilitating stakeholder involvement, interview processes and procedures, and guiding the board through understanding the impact of Minnesota's Open Meeting Law and Government Data Practices Act on search activities. MSBA's role as a trusted resource for Minnesota school boards ensures our deep understanding of the breadth and depth of issues your board faces, including throughout the superintendent search process.

The information contained in this document outlines MSBA's process in greater detail for your review. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding this process, but keep in mind we will design the search to best fit the needs of Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191 and its constituencies. This is your search, not MSBA's, and we will support the school board in every way possible over the coming months.

Thank you again for selecting MSBA to partner with you on this important endeavor. We are honored to assist, and I look forward to seeing you again soon at the March 28 search planning meeting.

Sincerely,

Barb Dorn  
MSBA Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Scope of Services for District 191

INTRODUCTION and TESTIMONIALS	1
PLANNING THE SEARCH and HIRING CRITERIA	2
STAKEHOLDER INPUT	3
ADVERTISING and RECRUITING	4
INTERVIEW TRAINING and PREPARATION	5
SCREENING, MSBA VETTING, and FINALISTS SELECTION	6-7
CONTRACT and FOLLOW-UP SERVICES	8
SUMMARY OF SEARCH SERVICES	9
ESTIMATED FEE FOR SERVICE and SATISFACTION GUARANTEE	10
HIRING THE RIGHT SUPERINTENDENT WORKSHOP	11
WHY MSBA?	12-14
PROPOSED TIMELINE	15
SEARCH REFERENCES and RECENT MSBA SEARCHES	16-21

## Search Team — MSBA Staff

BARB DORN	22
AMY JORDAN	23
GARY LEE and TIFFANY GUSTIN	24
SHELBY HERRERA and BRUCE LOMBARD	25
MARIA SHINABARGER and JOEL STENCEL	26

## Search Team — MSBA Service Providers

BERNADEIA JOHNSON and JOSH PAULY	27
JOHN WARD and CONNIE HAYES	28
LEE WARNE and BRUCE KLAHN	29
DAVE THOMPSON and PAUL CARLSON	30
SANDI NOVAK and RENAE TOSTENSON	31
GARY KUPHAL and STEVE NIKLAUS	32
BILL TOMHAVE	33

## NASS — A National Search Resource

NATIONAL AFFILIATION OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCHERS	34-36
--	-------



### **PRESENTED BY**

### **Minnesota School Boards Association Executive Search Service**

1900 West Jefferson Ave.  
St. Peter, MN 56082

Phone: 800-324-4459

Fax: 507-931-1515

**[www.mnmsba.org/  
ExecutiveSearchService](http://www.mnmsba.org/ExecutiveSearchService)**

### **Prepared for**

Anna Werb  
School Board Chair

### **Prepared by**

Barb Dorn  
MSBA Executive Search  
507-508-5501 (cell)  
[bdorn@mnmsba.org](mailto:bdorn@mnmsba.org)



# INTRODUCTION

One of the most important decisions a school board will ever make is to choose a new superintendent. As the school district's chief executive officer, the superintendent is responsible for providing district-wide leadership, implementing the school board's policies, and ensuring the school board's priorities are met. Effective superintendents ensure that all students are learning at high levels. Ultimately, hiring the right superintendent — someone who possesses the skills and attributes needed to help achieve your school district's vision and strategic priorities — requires time, thoughtful planning, and sound recruitment and employment processes and procedures.

The Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) is pleased to present the school board of District 191 with this information regarding our executive search services. MSBA has been providing Minnesota school boards with search services for more than 14 years, and as a result brings a strong school board perspective to the search and its outcome. As your association, we have a vested interest in helping your school board find and hire the best person for its superintendent.

MSBA-led searches are based on one clear premise: all searches are conducted through the lens of school board leadership. This means we understand and prioritize the needs of the board, and the district itself, above all else. Also, throughout the search MSBA will professionally handle every detail and guide the school board through the process, allowing the board to concentrate on the most important aspects of the search — interviewing the most qualified candidates and selecting the next superintendent.

## TESTIMONIALS FOR MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICES

*MSBA provided guidance and recommendations that helped the board tremendously with our search. Throughout our work with them, they continually reinforced that this is a board decision that they are assisting with. Giving the board that level of ownership while providing expertise throughout the process was extremely appreciated."*

*- Cory Johnson, Board Chair, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan ISD 196*

*MSBA far surpassed our expectations. They are the perfect guide to help school boards navigate the search process, and I would absolutely recommend MSBA because of their depth of expertise and ability to empower boards to make informed decisions. Also - and this is no small thing - the superintendent candidates they brought forward were exceptional. I cannot imagine how we could have navigated this experience without them.*

*- Dr. Jean Marvin, Board Chair, Rochester Public Schools*

*MSBA was willing to allow our board to customize the process to fit our needs. They were thorough, flexible, excellent listeners, and their patience and dedication brought us to a successful finish line..*

*- ReNae Bowman Board Chair, Robbinsdale Area Schools*

*Throughout the selection process of two superintendent searches in Hastings, MSBA's calm, competent demeanor, and commitment to transparency, schedule, and accountability provided invaluable leadership to our Board. We have been so fortunate to have MSBA at our side throughout the last few years*

*- Lisa Hedin, Board Chair, Hastings Public Schools*



# PLANNING THE SEARCH AND HIRING CRITERIA

## Initial Planning Meeting

An MSBA search begins with an initial planning meeting between the school board and the search team. At the planning meeting, MSBA will work with the school board to establish the search timeline, hiring criteria and leadership profile, as well as determine methods of stakeholder involvement, identify the district's position in the marketplace, select advertising venues, and finalize all processes, procedures, and expectations for conducting the search.

Some school boards also choose to begin their search by participating in MSBA's "Hiring the Right Superintendent" workshop at no additional charge. This workshop may be utilized as a kick-off to the search, providing board members with a solid foundation of what to expect during the entire process. The workshop booklet has also proven to be a valuable resource and useful tool over the months-long search, particularly for school board members unfamiliar with the search process. Again, this workshop is available (but optional) for all MSBA searches depending upon the needs and circumstances of each individual district.

## Determining Hiring Criteria and Leadership Profile

Your district is unique, and an important initial step in the search process is to identify the personal and professional skills and attributes the school board most desires in a superintendent. This in turn will provide the basis for the position leadership profile and hiring criteria. Stakeholder input will also be considered in developing the leadership profile, as will the district's strategic plan and mission.

Early in the process MSBA's search team will lead the school board through crafting the profile, which will then be used throughout the duration of the search as a guideline for selecting finalists, creating interview questions, and assessing superintendent candidates to find the best fit for District 191. In other words, the leadership profile and hiring criteria serve as a beacon to help guide the school board in its search from the beginning to end of the process.



# STAKEHOLDER INPUT

## Stakeholder Input

Several stakeholder involvement-related opportunities are included in the search package, including:

- an online **survey**, open to all staff, parents, students, community members, and district stakeholders
  - ◇ This survey will include gathering quantitative information regarding stakeholder priorities for candidate background, skill set, experience, and personal characteristics.
  - ◇ It will also gather qualitative information through open-ended questions regarding the opportunities and challenges facing District 191, and what type of individual could most effectively lead the district.
  - ◇ This survey will be offered in multiple languages per the district's request, as well as hard copies to ensure access for those unable or uninterested in taking the survey electronically.
- an **informational Q&A session** for staff and community members regarding the superintendent search process. This session is hosted virtually by MSBA, and is recorded to ensure all district stakeholders have access to accurate information regarding search processes and expectations. The recording will then be made available on the district website throughout the duration of the search. Launched two years ago, these proprietary **Q&A with MSBA** sessions have proven to be one of the most effective tools a district can utilize to increase both the credibility and transparency of their search, and to limit toxic misinformation. Through leveraging the power of sharing information, these unique Q&A sessions have solidified MSBA's reputation as a provider of clear, accessible, and stakeholder-inclusive superintendent search services.
- finally, stakeholder **Input Forums** or **Interview Committees** may be offered in conjunction with the second round of interviews. Several options will be provided to the board for consideration, along with a review of the opportunities and pitfalls tied to involving stakeholders in the interview process. If selected as an option, MSBA will also train participants to ensure adherence to all legal requirements involved in the process.

## A la carte Options

Additional options for the school board to consider in gathering stakeholder input early in the process is through holding **Focus Groups** and/or **Listening Sessions** across multiple stakeholder constituencies. These group sessions are a traditional methodology utilized by many search firms as the primary source of stakeholder input; however, these sessions must be carefully designed and implemented. MSBA will conduct them if requested, although the board should also consider the value of 24/7 stakeholder access to the survey as the initial (and sole) early feedback opportunity. The availability and anonymity of the survey contrasts significantly with the tendency of group sessions to amplify some voices over others, and the inequities which can result from access (or lack thereof) to participate. The decision of why and how to conduct group sessions must be carefully considered before initiating a search, and MSBA will guide this conversation to ensure the best possible and most equitable decision is made regarding stakeholder input for your district's superintendent search process.

Toward the end of the process the board may also consider additional stakeholder **input** or **interaction** opportunities with the finalists, and if desired, those will be custom-designed in conjunction with the board to ensure that the purpose, goals, and outcomes of these opportunities align with the school board's intentions.

**NOTE:** If requested, MSBA's a la carte fee for these services is \$1,395 per day or \$300 per group.





# ADVERTISING AND RECRUITING

To create, sustain and heighten interest in your district's position, MSBA will utilize and leverage our resources and connections on both a statewide and national scale.

Locally, MSBA's search team will directly contact Superintendents, Assistant/Associate Superintendents, Cabinet Members, Principals, and Assistant Principals across the state to inform them of the vacancy and application procedures. Emails are sent directly to these individuals at regular intervals throughout the search, as well as phone contact to ensure this opportunity remains top of mind particularly for candidates who most closely match the candidate profile as established by the school board. Finally, the vacancy announcement will be posted on the following statewide job opportunity sites:

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA). MSBA's superintendent job openings page receives more than 6,000 hits per month during search season, including many from out-of-state applicants as well as former Minnesota administrators looking to return to the state for their own personal or professional reasons
- Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA)
- Minnesota EdPost (hosted by St. Cloud State University)

Nationally, MSBA will reach out to contacts across the country through our search team's personal and professional relationships, our contacts at the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS), and by posting the position on the following nationwide job sites:

- American Association of School Administrators (AASA)
- National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE)
- Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS)
- Top School Jobs (EdWeek)
- National Indian Education Association (NIEA)
- Revelus (a proprietary application database utilized exclusively by NASS members and accessible to candidates through the highly-viewed school board association superintendent job boards)
- In addition, MSBA boosts our postings through AASA to ensure they reach a variety of diversity-focused jobs boards to share the opportunity with the widest swath of potential applicants possible

Facilitating the complexities of the advertising, recruitment, and application process is one of the MSBA search team's greatest strengths. Not only will we develop all application procedures, handle applicants' calls and correspondences concerning the vacancy, collect and review applicants' files, and develop a recommended pool of candidates for school board consideration, but through our extensive statewide and national contacts MSBA will aggressively market the opportunity to secure a diversified pool of high-quality individuals interested in the unique opportunity to lead District 191 as its next Superintendent.



# INTERVIEW PREPARATION

## Interview Training and Preparation

One of the things unique to superintendent search activities in Minnesota are the ramifications of our state's Open Meeting Law. Therefore, prior to the application deadline the search team will meet with the school board to help it prepare for and conduct the first and second rounds of interviews and reference checks. Interview training will include information to help school board members conduct interviews in open sessions, as well as abide by all requirements of the Data Practices Act.

The search team will also help the school board develop interview questions that fit the candidate profile, that do not violate the law either directly or indirectly, and that standardize the interview process to ensure a level playing field for all candidates. In addition, the search team will assist the school board with planning second interviews and additional reference checks.

Because hiring the superintendent is the school board's role, MSBA recommends that only its members participate in the finalists' interviews with the board. If the school board decides to involve non-school board members in the interview process, however, the search team will help the school board develop a process that makes clear the advisory nature of the non-school board members' roles that does not infringe upon the school board's role as the sole hiring authority for the position of superintendent. The search team will provide guidelines and training for the non-school board members, and review all questions submitted by group members. By following these recommendations, the school board is able to standardize interview questions and format, provide more control over the selection process, and reduce the school district's risk of liability.

Without question, interview training and preparation is key to a successful superintendent search. MSBA's long-standing reputation for high-quality training programs carries over to our executive search services, and in addition to providing a firm foundation for search decision-making, many boards have found MSBA's training and guidance throughout the process to have strengthened their board relationships as well. This result has become an unexpected bonus for those districts striving to become a more high-functioning school board, as the consensus-building aspects of MSBA's search process helps them become a stronger and more unified team.





# SCREENING, MSBA VETTING, AND FINALISTS SELECTION

## Screen Applications, Vet Candidates, and Select Finalists

After the application deadline has passed, MSBA's search team will review applicant files in relationship to the position leadership profile established by the school board in order to identify the applicants who best meet the school board's hiring criteria. The search team will then conduct preliminary verification of references and pre-interviews of the applicants who best meet the school board's identified profile. This vetting process involves MSBA staff as well as former superintendents and school board members serving as MSBA service providers during the executive search process.

**IMPORTANT:** ALL COMPLETED APPLICATIONS will be made available to school board members to review prior to the candidate selection meeting. A foundational belief of MSBA's executive search service is that it is crucial for board members, as the district's hiring authority, to have the opportunity to review all applications in order to make the most informed decision possible. This information is confidential and must be treated in accordance with Minnesota's Data Practices Act, and MSBA's training services during the search will outline all board responsibilities regarding data privacy issues.

Once the screening, preliminary verification of references, pre-interviews, and vetting have been completed by MSBA, the search team will meet with the school board to recommend those candidates MSBA feels best fit your district's leadership profile and assist the school board in selecting those to be interviewed. The next page in this proposal outlines MSBA's vetting process in greater detail.

Following the school board's selection of finalists, the search team will prepare a draft news release for the district to send to staff, the media, and community including the names of those to be interviewed, as well as the schedule of remaining search-related activities.



# MSBA'S APPLICANT VETTING PROCESS

After the application deadline has passed, a team of MSBA service providers and staff review all completed applications. MSBA will look at their licensure, references and recommendations, and work and educational history. We then align each applicant's background, experience and application information with the district's hiring criteria, leadership profile, and feedback gathered from district stakeholders on the next superintendent's desirable skills, traits, and experience.

After reviewing all completed applications, each member of the vetting team rates all applicants on a 5-point scale and an aggregate rating is compiled.

Next the team meets to discuss the ratings and evaluate which applicants have risen to the top and why. Following a lengthy discussion, consensus is reached on which applicants to consider presenting to the board due to their alignment with the hiring criteria and the district's needs.

This results in the team conducting additional vetting on 6-10 applicants. This vetting includes team members conducting a phone interview with each applicant, holding conversations with at least three of their listed references, and a closer look into each applicant's qualifications. The result is the final list of applicants MSBA recommends be presented to the board for interview consideration.

At the candidate presentation meeting with the board, MSBA will share our recommendations. After hearing short verbal presentations on each applicant, the board will then discuss the applicant pool (by alphabet identifier only to abide by data privacy laws) and request clarification from MSBA as needed (recognizing our responses will also be somewhat limited due to privacy laws). The board then has three options:

- Accept the recommendations made by MSBA for first round interviews as presented.
- Accept some applicants recommended by MSBA but replace others with candidates identified by the school board.
- Forfeit all candidates recommended by MSBA and select an entirely new slate of applicants identified by the school board.

A motion will then be made, seconded, and passed (again, using alphabet identifiers only). Once this motion has passed, the board chair or MSBA will read aloud the names of those selected for first round interviews. These names will be in no particular order and not tied to their alphabet identifiers.

MSBA will then call these applicants to congratulate them, confirm their interest in the position, and inform them they will receive an email from MSBA's application software (Revelus) to schedule their interview. Once all interviews are scheduled, MSBA will send each interviewee an email containing final information for their interview. Finally, applicants not selected for interviews will receive an email thanking them for their interest in the position, and notifying them that the board has chosen to proceed with other candidates who more closely align with the district's hiring criteria.



# CONTRACT AND FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

## Decisions, Contract, and Announcement

The search team will guide the school board through the process of contacting the lone finalist to offer the position. MSBA recommends the school board use the MSBA/MASA Model Superintendent Contract as the basis for negotiating the superintendent's contract, and will provide comparative superintendent salary and benefit information to assist the district in negotiating an appropriate compensation package. MSBA's search team will not negotiate the contract for the school board, however, as it is the board's responsibility to set and negotiate all hiring parameters for the new superintendent. The search team will draft a news release for the district to send to staff, the media, and community announcing the new superintendent.

The search team will also personally contact the non-selected finalists.

## Transition Plan and Follow-up Services

Once the search is concluded and the parties have a signed contract, the search team will continue to provide support for the school board and superintendent. Past clients have found MSBA's search services follow-through to be invaluable in setting expectations and ensuring success for the new board-superintendent team.

For example, to strengthen the school board and superintendent's working relationship, and to provide support to the new superintendent, the search team will:

- assist in developing a transition plan for the new superintendent, if requested;
- facilitate a Transition Workshop to develop goals and/or performance expectations for the school board and superintendent within six months after the new superintendent begins work in the school district;
- visit the new superintendent during their first year of school district employment; and
- be available to answer the new superintendent's and the school board's questions during the transition and beyond via phone, email, workshop, etc.

NOTE: There are **no additional charges** for any of the above transition services.



# SUMMARY OF SEARCH SERVICES

The proposed search for ISD 191 includes the services outlined below.

## **The MSBA Search Team will:**

- Conduct an initial planning meeting with the school board to establish the search timeline, discuss hiring criteria and public involvement, identify the district's position in the marketplace, determine advertising venues, and finalize all processes and procedures for conducting the search.
- Collect public input through an online qualifications and quantitative data survey (in multiple languages as requested by the district). Results will be summarized for the school board by MSBA.
- Hold **Search Preview meetings** with district leadership to share information and answer their questions.
- Conduct focus groups and/or listening sessions with a cross-section of district constituencies if requested by the district. Results will be summarized for the school board by MSBA.
- Host an online informational proprietary **Q&A with MSBA** session regarding the superintendent search process, and provide the recording for placement on the district's website.
- Develop a color vacancy announcement to post on both statewide and national job sites, place in Revelus through the national NASS network, and share with your district for placement on its website.
- Directly contact Superintendents, Assistant/Associate Superintendents, Cabinet Members, Principals, and Assistant Principals across the state to inform them of the vacancy and application procedures.
- Directly contact potential candidates outside the state of Minnesota to recruit and inform them of the vacancy and application procedures
- Develop all application procedures, handle applicants' calls and correspondence, collect and review applicants' files, and receive applicants' credentials.
- Screen the applicant pool against the school board's hiring criteria, leadership profile, and public survey results.
- Conduct preliminary verification of references and pre-interviews and vetting of applicants who best meet the school board's hiring criteria and leadership profile as determined by MSBA's screening team.
- Conduct a meeting with the school board for purposes of interview training, developing interview questions, and clarifying interview schedules.
- Conduct a meeting with the school board for purposes of presenting candidate recommendations so the school board can select finalists for interviews, and clarifying remaining steps of the search process.
- Coordinate with finalists and be present during the first and second rounds of interviews.
- Prepare a news release for the district to send to the media, school district staff, and community that includes the names of the finalists who will be interviewed.
- Facilitate public involvement in the second round of interviews, if requested.
- Prepare a news release for the district to send to the media, school district staff, and community introducing the new superintendent.
- Assist in developing a transition plan for the new superintendent, if requested.
- Visit the new superintendent during their first year of employment.
- Facilitate a Transition Workshop to develop goals and/or expectations for the school board and superintendent within six months after the new superintendent begins work in the school district.



## ESTIMATED FEE FOR SERVICE

The estimated fee range for District 191's superintendent search is **\$19,500 - \$24,500**. This includes the MSBA search team's time and all expenses, in-person attendance at all search-related activities, stakeholder survey facilitation and summary report, **Search Preview** meetings, **Q&A with MSBA** session, development of vacancy brochure, statewide and national postings on jobs boards, all application procedures, applicant screening, finalist recommendations, board interview training, preparation of news releases, and MSBA's Transition Workshop. This range also includes in-depth background checks of all semi-finalists and finalists, comprised of national criminal background checks as well as verification of employment, educational credentials, and professional licensure.

All of the above services are included for the base fee of **\$19,500**. Any additional costs would be due to adding a la carte options of Focus Groups and/or Listening Sessions (held concurrently with the stakeholder survey) for \$1,395 per day or \$300 per group, or the design and implementation of any customized stakeholder involvement in the search process. These options would be added solely at the discretion of the school board and discussed in greater detail to help balance creating the most inclusive stakeholder involvement possible with the board's inherent role as the sole hiring authority for the position of superintendent.

In addition, MSBA does not charge for consultant travel, attendance at interviews, transition services, or any initial or ongoing support of the new board team. As noted earlier, MSBA's "Hiring the Right Superintendent" workshop is also included in our full search services at no additional charge; however, and is offered only if the board would like to participate in this workshop prior to launching the search.

Any language interpretation, refreshments, childcare costs, or school board member stipends or expenses associated with finalists' interviews (i.e. travel and lodging for candidates) are not included in this fee range.

Finally, MSBA has no potential conflicts of interest in providing these search services to District 191, and the level of services and fee included in this proposal are negotiable based on the school board's needs.

### Satisfaction Guarantee

MSBA conducts all superintendent searches from a strong school board perspective, and with impartiality and professionalism while focusing on the board's identified hiring criteria and leadership profile. If, at any time during the first year of the new superintendent's contract the board releases the superintendent, MSBA will conduct a second superintendent search for no additional fee. However, the school board would be responsible for new direct expenses, if any, incurred by MSBA for the second search.

NOTE: this guarantee is dependent upon two contingencies. One, participation in the Transition Workshop, which must be held within six months after the new superintendent begins work in the district. And two, that the candidate hired as superintendent was included in MSBA's recommended slate of applicants. Having seen all applications the board may choose to interview candidates not recommended by MSBA; however, the search guarantee is only applicable if the new superintendent was a part of our original slate of applicants recommended upon conclusion of MSBA's vetting process.





# HIRING THE RIGHT SUPERINTENDENT - WORKSHOP

One of the most important decisions a school board will ever make is to choose a new superintendent. As part of MSBA's commitment to board leadership, we offer a **Hiring the Right Superintendent** workshop to help school boards learn about the process for conducting a successful superintendent search. Workshop topics include:

- Whether to use a consultant
- How to work with a consultant
- Setting a timeline
- Developing qualifications and selection criteria
- Involving stakeholders and the media
- Dealing with internal candidates
- Legal pitfalls
- Interviewing Do's and Don'ts
- Deliberating in public
- Q & A re: superintendent search options and best practices

Each board member receives a booklet with sample vacancy announcement, application form, interview questions, reference check form, and other material board members can adapt for their district's specific needs.

The foundational knowledge this workshop provides helps school boards feel confident in the board's decision-making process regarding the superintendent search, as well as fully prepared to take their next steps. Cost is \$1,395 in-district (\$1,095 virtual) and includes all time and materials. This workshop is available only to MSBA members.

For more information please contact Barb Dorn, Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search, at 507-508-5501 (cell), or [bdorn@mnmsba.org](mailto:bdorn@mnmsba.org).





# WHY MSBA?

In addition to the factors outlined in this proposal's cover letter, MSBA believes the following distinguishing features truly differentiate our services in both the philosophy and implementation of executive search services.

## 1. LENS OF SCHOOL BOARD LEADERSHIP

MSBA understands not only the best practices of conducting a superintendent search, but also the myriad of challenges and opportunities facing school boards today. In addition we know how to balance Minnesota's Open Meeting Law with our state's Data Practices Act, the increasing pressure on public education to provide an equitable education to each and every student, the impact of data requests on board work, and the vital leadership role a school board must fill in finding its next superintendent. As stated by a school board member after one of last year's MSBA-led searches: *"The best part of the search was MSBA's focus on finding the person that was best for our district, instead of the way other consultants seem more focused on finding jobs for their candidates."* MSBA's strong school board perspective is core to our search process and truly makes us unique among all firms submitting proposals to conduct superintendent searches across the state.

## 2. TRANSPARENCY AND COMMUNICATION

Every facet of a superintendent search depends upon clear and open communications amongst the school board, search firm, and the public. To ensure transparency we offer our **Search Preview meetings** and **Q&A with MSBA** session, and to better inform the board we share ALL applications with board members to ensure you make the most informed decisions possible. We understand the additional work this creates for the district's search firm, but believe our ability to conduct the labor-intensive legwork yet guide the process clearly and appropriately, empowers school boards to confidently take ownership of finding the right leader for their district.

## 3. NO HIDDEN FEES

Search costs quickly escalate when firms charge for consultant travel, multi-language surveys, attendance at finalist interviews, transition services, workshops, etc. MSBA stands behind all fee options as outlined in this proposal so your board can rest assured that total search costs will not exceed your expectations.

## 4. POST-HIRING SUPPORT

A new superintendent's first year can feel overwhelming due to volume of workload coupled with a steep and intense learning curve. MSBA firmly believes our transition and follow-up services provided to the new Board-Superintendent Team make a significant difference in ensuring a successful first year. Our Transition Workshop helps you discuss expectations, clarify goals, and lay the groundwork for that year's superintendent performance evaluation process. We also provide a transition plan outline upon request, visit the new superintendent during their first year, and remain fully available by phone, text, email, or workshop to continue building trust and collaboration among board members and their new superintendent. Together all of these MSBA commitments help a superintendent's first year start (and stay) strong.



# TEAM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

MSBA has compiled a team for the District 191 superintendent search possessing a wealth of experience across numerous fields in public education. These individuals include former:

- School board members
- Superintendents
- Associate Superintendents
- Cabinet-level administrators
- Human Resources professionals
- General counsel attorneys
- Cultural diversity trainers
- Teachers and coaches
- Communications specialists
- Project managers

The breadth and depth of qualifications on this team is enormous, and the experience these individuals have in the realm of public education numbers in the hundreds of years. Beyond the statistics, however, a passion for PreK-12 education drives the work we do. Every single person on MSBA's superintendent search team believes in, supports, and advocates for Minnesota's students who attend our state's public schools, and we will bring that same dedication and commitment to the search for District 191's next superintendent.

But don't just take our word for it, as school board members from last year's MSBA searches had this to say:

*For MSBA to come into a district where tensions were high and structure unstable, was remarkable. They took on the challenge and made everything very straightforward. I will forever be grateful for the time they took to explain things and reach out to those who had questions. Throughout the search their attitudes remained positive and comforting.*

*Working with MSBA on our superintendent search was an amazing experience. The entire process was completed with professionalism and dedication. Everything from preparing the hiring criteria to the interviewing of candidates was done transparently. MSBA is an industry leader and our search was successful because of them.*

As you'll see in this proposal, MSBA team members' tangible qualifications and experience are viewable on our resumes. The collective background of our team members is impressive. However, the intangibles are what we feel make the biggest differences for our clients. We listen carefully, communicate clearly, and deeply understand the complexities and emotions involved in a superintendent search, not only for the school board, but for staff, students, parents, and community members as well.



## WHY MSBA? (FROM OUR CLIENTS)

***A bonus to working with MSBA is the expertise provided in the search process AND the expertise they have in school board law and process.*** - Board Chair, Rochester Public Schools

***MSBA was both easy to work with and made a daunting process manageable and enjoyable. I believe it also helped draw our board closer.*** - Board member, Byron Public Schools

***The process was clear from the beginning and the information supporting the process was extremely organized. There were no extraneous steps or information that complicated the process, so the Board and the community could all be on the same page at all times.***

- Board member, Rochester Public Schools

***MSBA was invaluable in guiding our district's search process. Their training and guidance were exemplary as they helped the board navigate the decisions we needed to make – reminding us that this was our process every step of the way.***

- Board member, Bloomington Public Schools

***Many thanks to MSBA for the work they did to help us focus on our community's needs. This is the best search process we've ever had!***

- Board member, Red Wing Public Schools

***The training and support throughout the entire process was spot-on! MSBA was always available with expert, professional advice.***

- Board member, Intermediate School District 917

***MSBA's integrity speaks to all. They had well-researched candidates, were very easy to work with and extremely trustworthy during the entire process. There were no surprises and I felt very well-informed throughout. This was my second time having MSBA conduct our district's search, and both times they were simply amazing. I would highly recommend MSBA for any superintendent search.***

- Board member, Hastings Public Schools

***The search process was very professional and straightforward, and I always felt we were ultimately in charge of the process.***

- Board member, Austin Public Schools

***MSBA was the best search partner we could have used!***

- Board member, Lake City Public Schools

***The process was very organized and as chair of the board I always felt comfortable working with MSBA. I trusted their advice, appreciated their insights, and felt validated and respected. I can only say good things about the process.***

- Board Chair, Bloomington Public Schools



# PROPOSED TIMELINE

## Late March 2025 to Early April 2025

- School board holds initial planning meeting with MSBA search team to establish the search timeline, review hiring criteria, identify district's position in the marketplace, discuss stakeholder involvement, and finalize all processes and procedures for conducting the search.
- School board approves all materials, including hiring criteria, leadership profile, and vacancy brochure.
- MSBA search team finalizes application procedures, advertises the vacancy, and recruits candidates.
- MSBA hosts an informational **Q&A with MSBA** session regarding the superintendent search process.
- MSBA's search team collects stakeholder input through qualitative and quantitative data survey.
- MSBA prepares summary of stakeholder input for board to review and integrate into the search process.

## Early April 2025 to Mid-April 2025

- MSBA search team continues to advertise the vacancy, recruit candidates, and receive applications.
- MSBA search team conducts initial screening of applicants.
- MSBA search team conducts vetting of applicants, preliminary verification of references, and pre-interviews with candidates most aligned with the district's leadership profile.

## Mid-April 2025 to Late April 2025

- MSBA's search team meets with the school board to conduct interview training, develop interview questions, clarify interview procedures, and facilitate applicant screening conducted by the school board to select finalists for interviews.

## Late April 2025 to Mid-May 2025

- School board conducts Round 1 interviews.
- School board conducts reference checks.
- School board conducts Round 2 interviews and invites stakeholder feedback, if desired.
- School board selects lone finalist.

## Mid-May 2025

- School board negotiates terms and conditions of superintendent's contract.
- School board meets to approve the superintendent's employment contract.

## July 1, 2025

- Superintendent reports to work.

## Late July to Late December 2025

- New Board-Superintendent Team participates in MSBA's Transition Workshop.

*NOTE: This timeline provides a starting point for considering and adopting a superintendent search timeline. Specific dates and times will be determined at the initial planning meeting.*



# 2024-2025 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

\* AS OF 3.3.25

- Albert Lea Area Schools
- Brainerd Public Schools
- Byron Public Schools
- Crosby-Ironton School District
- Eden Valley-Watkins ISD 463
- Elk River ISD 728
- Kasson-Mantorville School District
- Kelliher Public School District 36
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools
- Lake of the Woods School
- Lynd Public School
- MACCRAY Public Schools
- Mahnommen ISD 432
- McGregor ISD 4
- Melrose Area Public Schools
- Montevideo Public Schools
- Nevis Public School
- Northwest Service Cooperative
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools
- Proctor Public Schools
- Red Lake County Central ISD 2906
- Red Lake Falls Schools
- St. Croix Preparatory Academy
- Saint Peter Public Schools
- Worthington ISD 518

## MSBA 2024-2025 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES \*

\* AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

The searches listed above are currently underway or recently concluded. MSBA does not request reference check contact information until the end of search season; however, if you know board members in any of these districts, feel free to reach out and inquire about their experiences with MSBA's search services thus far.

All new searches will be added to the above list as we continue to serve our membership with MSBA's Executive Search services for the 2024-2025 search season, and reference information will be provided when search season wraps up this spring. In the meantime, please contact Barb Dorn if you would like contact information for any of those references sooner than that and it will be made available.



## 2023-2024 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- AFSA Charter School
- Badger Independent School District
- Brainerd Public Schools
- Cleveland Public School
- DaVinci Academy of Arts + Science
- East Grand Forks Public Schools
- Greenbush-Middle River-Tri County Schools
- Hill City School
- International Falls Independent School District
- Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools
- Lac qui Parle Valley School District
- Litchfield Public Schools
- Montevideo Public Schools
- MN River Valley Education District
- New York Mills Public School
- Ogilvie Public Schools
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools
- Red Wing Public Schools
- Robbinsdale Area Schools
- Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan District 196
- Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748
- St. Charles Public Schools
- St. Louis Park Public Schools
- St. Paul City School
- Warren-Alvarado-Oslo School District
- Win-E-Mac Schools

## MSBA 2023-2024 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES \*

\* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Cory Johnson, School Board Chair, **Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan District 196**, [cory.johnson@district196.org](mailto:cory.johnson@district196.org)
2. ReNae Bowman, School Board Chair, **Robbinsdale Area Schools**, [renae\\_bowman@rdale.org](mailto:renae_bowman@rdale.org)
3. Colin Cox, School Board Chair, **St. Louis Park Public Schools**, [cox.colin@slpschools.org](mailto:cox.colin@slpschools.org)
4. Kevin Boyles, School Board Chair, **Brainerd Public Schools**, [kevin.boyles@isd181.org](mailto:kevin.boyles@isd181.org)
5. Kent Harfmann, School Board Chair, **Kasson-Mantorville Public Schools**, [k.harfmann@komets.k12.mn.us](mailto:k.harfmann@komets.k12.mn.us)
6. Tricia Meling, School Board Chair, **Sartell-St. Stephen ISD 748**, [tricia.meling@isd748.org](mailto:tricia.meling@isd748.org)





## 2022-2023 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- Chisago Lakes School District
- Crookston Public Schools
- Dawson-Boyd Public Schools
- East Grand Forks Public Schools
- Foley Public Schools
- Hastings Public Schools
- Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools
- Kaleidoscope Charter School
- Lake City Public Schools
- MACCRAY Public Schools
- Northwest Suburban Integration School District
- Pipestone Area Schools
- Red Wing Public Schools
- ROCORI School District
- Thief River Falls Public Schools
- Tri-County/Greenbush-Middle River Schools
- Wabasha-Kellogg School District
- Winona Area Public Schools
- Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools

## MSBA 2022-2023 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES \*

\* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Lori Berg, School Board Chair, **Chisago Lakes School District**, lberg@isd2144.org
2. Frank Fee, School Board Chair, **Crookston Public Schools**, ffee@rrv.net
3. Bruce Lund, School Board Chair, **Dawson-Boyd Public Schools**, blund@dwby.k12.mn.us
4. Lisa Hedin, School Board Chair, **Hastings Public Schools**, lhedin@isd200.org
5. Heath Oeltjen, School Board Chair, **Lake City Public Schools**, hoeltjen@lake-city.k12.mn.us
6. Jim Bryant, School Board Chair, **Red Wing Pubic Schools**, jrbryant@rwps.org
7. Phil Rosendale, School Board Chair, **Wabasha-Kellogg School District**, philrosendale@wkfalcons.org
8. Nancy Denzer, School Board Chair, **Winona Area Public Schools**, nancy.denzer@winona.k12.mn.us
9. Angie Bredehoft, School Board Chair, **Zumbrota-Mazeppa Public Schools**,  
angie.bredehoft@zmsch.k12.mn.us



## 2021-2022 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- ACGC Public Schools
- Albert Lea Area Schools
- Bemidji Area Schools
- Cass Lake-Bena Public Schools
- Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Schools
- Dover-Eyota Public Schools
- Fosston Public Schools
- Greenway Public Schools (Limited)
- Kingsland Public Schools (Limited)
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools
- Long Prairie-Grey Eagle Public Schools
- Menahga School District
- Mid-State Education District (Limited)
- New London-Spicer School District
- Ortonville Public Schools
- Pequot Lakes Public Schools
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools
- Proctor Public Schools
- Red Lake Schools
- ROCORI School District
- South St. Paul Public Schools
- Stillwater Area Public Schools
- Swanville School District (Limited)
- Thief River Falls Public Schools
- Tri-City United Public Schools
- Tri-County / Greenbush-Middle River Schools
- Ulen-Hitterdal Public Schools
- Underwood School District (Limited)
- Verndale Public School (Limited)
- Waconia Public Schools
- Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Public Schools
- West Central Area School District
- Windom Area Schools

## MSBA 2021-2022 SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES \*

\* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Neal Skaar, School Board Chair, **Albert Lea Area Schools**, neal.skaar@alschools.org
2. Carol Johnson, School Board Chair, **Bemidji Area Schools**, Carol\_Johnson@isd31.net
3. Eric Morken, School Board Chair, **La Crescent-Hokah Schools**, eric.morken@isd300.k12.mn.us
4. Kim Bolz-Andolshek, School Board Chair, **Pequot Lakes Public Schools**, kbolz@isd186.org
5. Jennifer McDonald, School Board Chair, **Proctor Public Schools**, jennmcd777@gmail.com
6. Alison Sherman, School Board Chair, **Stillwater Area Schools**, shermana@stillwaterschools.org
7. Dana Geller, School Board Chair, **Waconia Public Schools**, dgeller@isd110.org
8. Gary Michael, School Board Chair, **W-E-M Public Schools**, sba.email@yahoo.com



## 2020-2021 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- Austin Public Schools
- Bloomington Public Schools (Limited)
- Byron Public Schools
- Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley Schools
- Cook County ISD 166
- Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Public Schools
- Greenway Public Schools
- Houston Public Schools
- Intermediate School District 917
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools
- Lac qui Parle Valley School District
- Lake Park Audubon School District
- Lynd Public School (Limited)
- Montevideo Public Schools
- Rochester Public Schools
- Royalton Public Schools
- Tri-County Schools
- Ulen-Hitterdal Public Schools

### Member districts:

Bloomington, Burnsville-Eagan Savage, Farmington, Hastings, Inver Grove Heights, Lakeville, Randolph, South St. Paul, and West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan

## MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES 2020-2021 SEARCHES

\* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Kathy Green, School Board Chair, **Austin Public Schools**, [kathy.green@austin.k12.mn.us](mailto:kathy.green@austin.k12.mn.us)
2. Nelly Korman, School Board Chair, **Bloomington Public Schools**, [nkorman@isd271.org](mailto:nkorman@isd271.org)
3. Harvey Bergh, School Board Chair, **Byron Public Schools**, [harvey.bergh@byron.k12.mn.us](mailto:harvey.bergh@byron.k12.mn.us)
4. Lindsey Leach, School Board Chair, **DGF Public Schools**, [lleach@dgf.k12.mn.us](mailto:lleach@dgf.k12.mn.us)
5. Dr. DeeDee Currier, School Board Chair, **Intermediate School District 917**, [dcurrier@isd191.org](mailto:dcurrier@isd191.org)
6. Kelly Snell, School Board Member, **Montevideo Public Schools**, [ksnell@montevideoschools.org](mailto:ksnell@montevideoschools.org)
7. Dr. Jean Marvin, School Board Chair, **Rochester Public Schools**, [jemarvin@rochesterschools.org](mailto:jemarvin@rochesterschools.org)



## 2019-2020 MSBA-LED SEARCHES

- Adrian Public Schools
- Alexandria Public Schools
- Browns Valley Public School (Interim)
- Carlton Public Schools (Interim)
- Detroit Lakes Public Schools
- Hastings Public Schools (Interim)
- Hastings Public Schools
- Hermantown Community Schools
- Kenyon-Wanamingo Public Schools
- LeRoy-Ostrander Public Schools
- Lewiston-Altura Public School District
- McGregor Public Schools
- Mora Public Schools
- Ortonville Public Schools
- Pine River-Backus Schools
- St. Clair Public School
- St. James Public Schools
- St. Peter Public Schools
- Thief River Falls Public Schools
- Tri-City United Public Schools
- Warren-Alvarado-Oslo School District

## MSBA EXECUTIVE SEARCH SERVICE REFERENCES 2019-2020 SEARCHES

\* MORE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

1. Kelsey Waits, School Board Chair, **Hastings Public Schools**, [kwait@hastings.k12.mn.us](mailto:kwait@hastings.k12.mn.us)
2. Ben Leonard, School Board Chair, **St. Peter Public Schools**, [ben.leonard@stpeterschools.org](mailto:ben.leonard@stpeterschools.org)
3. Dean Anderson, School Board Chair, **Alexandria Public Schools**, [dadds7@gmail.com](mailto:dadds7@gmail.com)
4. Dianne Mathews, School Board Chair, **Hermantown Community Schools**, [dmathews@isd700.org](mailto:dmathews@isd700.org)
5. Marsha Franek, School Board Chair, **Tri-City United Public Schools**, [MFranek@tcu2905.us](mailto:MFranek@tcu2905.us)
6. Jack May, School Board Chair, **St. Clair Public School**, [jmay@stclaircyclones.org](mailto:jmay@stclaircyclones.org)
7. Chris Cunningham, **Pine River-Backus Schools**, [ccunningham@prbschools.org](mailto:ccunningham@prbschools.org)



## SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

MSBA's search team is comprised of experienced MSBA staff and service providers. Search team members understand that selecting a superintendent is one of the board's most important duties and have a vested interest in the success of your search. Below are brief résumés of MSBA's search team.

### ▪ **BARB DORN**

Barb will be serving as Search Lead for the District 191 superintendent search. She has more than 30 years of experience in nonprofit leadership, marketing and communications, consulting, and process facilitation. She has worked across public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build collaborative and viable partnerships, deliver high-impact workshops, and produce outcomes based on common goals and shared decision-making processes. Barb has also served on the Boards of Directors for Greater Mankato's City Center Partnership and the area chapter of Leave a Legacy. She joined MSBA in 2019 and is a member of the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers.

#### **WORK HISTORY**

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Director of Leadership Development and Executive Search
- YWCA Mankato: Executive Director
- March of Dimes: Division Director
- Minnesota State University Mankato: Adjunct Professor
- Pathways Marketing: Owner / Marketing Consultant
- DLR Group: Business Development / Referendum Consultant

#### **RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Individual school board in-services: Superintendent Search, Mutual Expectations, and Superintendent Evaluation
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences:
  - o Superintendent Evaluation
  - o Superintendent Search
  - o Various other topics
- Program and Brand Management, Marketing, and Public Relations
- Daily telephone/email responses to MSBA school board member questions
- Contributor to The MSBA *Leader* newsletter
- Presenter at other professional workshops and conferences:
  - o Leadership Development Series including:
    - Collaboration and Teamwork
    - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
    - Conflict Management
    - Resiliency
    - Communication and Team-Building
  - o Community Relations
  - o Strategy and Visioning



## SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

### ■ AMY JORDAN

With more than 25 years of leadership experience primarily in the nonprofit sector, Amy is a collaborative leader committed to serving the public, with a focus on youth. She has experience in recruitment, training, creating partnerships, policy and compliance, and program management and evaluation. As an empathetic partner, Amy is skilled at finding commonalities and consensus amongst diverse groups. The development of her action plan led her team's work to receive national recognition for exceeding key performance indicators in diversity and inclusion while working for a national nonprofit. With strengths in execution and relationship building, she is a natural cultivator of the potential in others and strives for continuous improvement. Amy is goal-oriented, ethical, deliberative, and possesses basic language skills in both Spanish and ASL (American Sign Language).

#### WORK HISTORY

- MN School Boards Assoc. (MSBA): Associate Director of Leadership Development & Executive Search
- Miracle League of North Mankato: Executive Director
- YWCA Mankato: Director of Programs for Women and Girls
- Girls on the Run of Greater Mankato: Council Director
- The Artisan Gallery: Manager

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Leadership of and engagement with multiple community groups
- Collaborator with cooperative working relationships with multiple stakeholder groups
- Leadership of multiple community programs for women, girls, immigrant and refugee women and their families, and people with disabilities
- Policy development and compliance
- Evaluation management
- Plan development to put best practices into action
- Brand management and communications
- Facilitated the national training for hundreds of leaders on:
  - Inclusive language and conversations
  - Facilitation
  - Context
  - Conflict resolution
  - Relationship-building/Teambuilding
  - Mastery experiences for self-efficacy
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Daily telephone/email responses to MSBA school board member questions
- Contributor to The MSBA *Leader* newsletter





## SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

### ▪ GARY LEE

Gary has 30+ years of experience in private business — both in a large corporate setting and as an owner/president of small rural businesses. Gary is a former member of the Fertile-Beltrami School Board. Gary also served on the MSBA Board of Directors, the Northwest Service Cooperative Board of Directors, the Minnesota Service Cooperatives Board of Directors, the MSBA Insurance Trust Board of Directors, and the Big Three working group. Gary joined MSBA in 2009.

#### WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Deputy Executive Director
- Lee Nursery, Inc.: Owner and President
- Lee Nursery Supplies, Inc.: Owner and President
- Sondreli Business Services: Owner
- UNISYS (formerly Sperry) Defense Systems: IT Manager

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Individual school board in-services: Superintendent Search and School Board-Superintendent Relationships
- Presenter — MSBA workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Analyze superintendent employment contracts and negotiations

### ▪ TIFFANY GUSTIN, MBA

Tiffany has 15+ years of experience working in and with public schools. She served as a school business official for ten years before joining MSBA in 2019. Her experience with district operations includes responsibility for all aspects of finance and human resources, as well as oversight of food service, transportation, and facilities. She is pursuing a doctorate in Leadership in K12 Administration.

#### WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Director of Management and Insurance Trust Services
- ISD #1 – Aitkin Public Schools: Business Manager
- Technical Services of Duluth: Programmer/Data Analyst
- Aitkin County: Administration and Human Resources Specialist
- Computer Associates International: Software Engineer

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- School board in-services: Negotiations, Leadership Foundations - School Finance and Management, Officers' Workshop - Treasurer
- Facilitation and oversight of the MSBA Insurance Trust
- Presenter: MSBA webinars, workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Presenter: Other professional organization workshops and conferences



## SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

### ▪ SHELBY HERRERA

Shelby has more than 20 years of experience in education — as a classroom teacher, a paraprofessional, and a teaching assistant at the university level. Shelby joined MSBA in 2019.

#### WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Administrative Assistant to Strategic Governance
- Mankato Public Schools: Science Teacher
- Mankato Public Schools: Paraprofessional
- Minnesota State University, Mankato: Teaching assistant

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Conduct research and compile data
- Handle information requests
- Interact with a wide range of staff, business partners, and members
- Prepare reports, memos, letters, and other documents, using word processing, spreadsheet, database, etc.
- Assist applicants and board members with Revelus, MSBA's proprietary application platform

### ▪ BRUCE LOMBARD

Bruce has more than 15 years of experience providing a full range of administrative support services. Bruce joined MSBA in 2008.

#### WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Associate Director of Communications and Marketing
- Mankato Free Press: Copy Editor
- Washington Unified School District (West Sacramento, California): Substitute Teacher
- Sogon University Language Program (Seoul, South Korea): English Language Instructor

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Answers and directs phone calls to appropriate parties
- Handles information requests
- Posts job openings on MSBA Jobs webpage and in MSBA Leader newsletter
- Posts job openings on national job sites, if necessary
- Interacts with a wide range of staff, business partners, and members



## SEARCH TEAM — MSBA STAFF

### ■ MARIA SHINABARGER, JD

Juris Doctor and educator with over 10 years' experience as a community servant. Maria joined MSBA in 2018.

#### WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Associate Director of Management Services and Charter School Liaison
- Marshall Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project Fellow
- Law Clerk at Hennepin County Attorney's Office
- Cambridge Academy East (Mesa, Arizona): Fifth/Sixth Grade English Teacher, Director of Professional Development
- Milan C-2 School District (Milan, Missouri): Fifth/Sixth Grade Reading Teacher

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Facilitate community, staff, and student input sessions
- Ensure compliance with data privacy statutes by redacting resumes
- Consolidate staff and community responses to surveys and interviews
- Help members interpret state and federal statutes regarding human resources, data practices and contracts

### ■ JOEL STENCEL, CPA

Joel has more than 20 years of accounting and auditing experience providing a full range of support services. Joel joined MSBA in 2017.

#### WORK HISTORY

- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA): Director of Association Finance
- Eide Bailly LLP: Audit Manager

#### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- School District Auditor
- Answer and direct phone calls to appropriate parties
- Interact with a wide range of staff, business partners, and members
- Gathers salary information for Districts selected
- Assists with EMD analysis submitted by school board members



# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ▪ **BERNADEIA H. JOHNSON, EdD**

Dr. Johnson's extensive background includes leadership roles in several districts in Minnesota and Tennessee ranging from 36,000 to 125, 000 PK-12 students. Her last district position was serving as Superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools. Recent work includes coaching school principals and superintendents, teaching, advising, and researching leadership and school district policies that impact students' mental health and academic achievement across Minnesota. She has been a keynote speaker, panelist, and presenter, and has served on local and national Boards to promote education as a public good. She teaches in the graduate school, in the administrative licensure graduate program, and advises doctoral students through the Department of Educational Leadership at Minnesota State University, Mankato, Twin Cities Campus. Bernadeia received her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and her undergraduate degree from Alabama A & M University. Today, Bernadeia turns her efforts to speaking on her experience living with Stage Five kidney disease and the importance of prevention of kidney disease. She received a kidney transplant in April 2024.

### **SUPERINTENDENT EXPERIENCE**

- Minneapolis Public Schools
  - ◇ Superintendent of Schools
  - ◇ Deputy Superintendent of Schools/Chief Academic Officer
- Memphis City Schools
  - ◇ Deputy Superintendent of Schools

## ▪ **JOSH PAULY**

Josh has 13 years of experience in education. He completed Georgetown's McCourt School of Public Policy Education Finance program, Minnesota's Education Policy Fellowship program, and was a Fellow at the Center for Policy Design. During his educational career, Josh served as a teacher and school board member. While working in the private sector he advised companies on partnerships and solutioning for K-12 schools and nonprofits. He also mentors school board members across the country through School Board Fellows and co-founded the Get on Board Minnesota program. He received the University of MN's Rising Alumni Award in 2018.

### **WORK HISTORY**

- Get on Board Minnesota: Co-Founder
- Future Focused Solutions: Director of Strategic Partnerships
- Books on Wings: Executive Director
- Minneapolis Public Schools: School Board member (Chair of Policy Committee & Supt Evaluation Committee)
- People Sourced Policy: Executive Director
- Minneapolis Public Schools: Teacher

### **RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Created a leadership development program to support individuals as they consider running for school board.
- Developed school board policies, created an evaluation tool with metrics for board members to use with their superintendent, and provided leadership in district strategic planning and goal-setting processes.



# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ▪ JOHN WARD, JD, Ph.D

John holds 30+ years of experience in Minnesota public education, with his last 25 spent working for the Mounds View Public School District. There he served in a variety of leadership roles, finishing his career as Assistant Superintendent. John also holds a bachelor's degree in political science from St. John's, his Juris Doctorate from William Mitchell College of Law, and a Ph.D from the University of Minnesota.

### WORK HISTORY

- MN School Boards Assoc. (MSBA): Associate Director of Leadership Development & Executive Search
- Mounds View Public Schools
  - ◊ Assistant Superintendent
  - ◊ Director of H.R. and Operations
  - ◊ Director of Secondary Schools
  - ◊ General Counsel/Assistant to the Superintendent

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Leadership team participant in district strategic planning, implementation and assessment initiatives
- Negotiation of over twenty labor contracts with teachers and other bargaining groups
- Leadership of district/community task force groups in facilities, community education and athletics
- Led district safe school initiatives and response preparation
- Managed student behavior issues and advised and managed district policy and legal issues

## ▪ CONNIE HAYES

Connie has 40 years of experience in education, including 23 years as a superintendent. She retired from Northeast Metro 916 after 15 years. During her educational career, Connie also served in coordinator positions and as a school psychologist. While working in the private sector she advised districts on public financing.

### WORK HISTORY

- Northeast Metro 916 Intermediate School District: Superintendent
- Springsted: Vice-President
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools: Superintendent
- McGregor Independent School District #4: Superintendent
- Lynd Public School District and Marshall Public Schools: Superintendent and Curriculum Coordinator
- SW/WC ECSU: Coordinator and School Psychologist

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Provided leadership in district strategic planning and goal-setting processes
- Built consensus across participating school districts in a long-range facility planning, financing, and construction of three specialized facilities for unique learners
- Facilitated construction of a major addition to a secondary building and improved district finances



# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ▪ LEE WARNE, Ed. S.

Lee has 48+ years of experience in education, including serving as a superintendent, high school principal, service cooperative executive director, Minnesota Rural Education Association executive director, and Association of Educational Service Agencies executive director. Lee has served at all levels of leadership in local, state, and national organizations, and has been leading MSBA searches across the state for more than five years. Lee has also received numerous awards at the regional, state, and national levels.

### WORK HISTORY

- Greenway Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- RTR (Russell-Tyler-Ruthton) Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Association of Educational Service Agencies: Executive Director
- MN Rural Education Association: Executive Director
- Lake Benton School: Interim Superintendent
- SW/WC Service Cooperative: Executive Director
- West Central Area Schools: Superintendent
- Norman County West: High School Principal
- Halstad Public School: High School Principal

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Facilitated numerous superintendent searches and school district strategic planning sessions
- Provided assistance to school boards and superintendents in various aspects of leadership and training

## ▪ BRUCE KLAEHN

Bruce has recently retired from 41 years as a Minnesota educator, serving as a teacher, coach, principal, and superintendent, as well as an adjunct college instructor in educational administration. He has extensive experience in financial budgeting, school construction projects, administrative mentoring, and contract negotiations.

### WORK HISTORY

- Southeast Service Cooperative: Educational Consultant
- Winona State University: Adjunct Instructor
- Dover-Eyota Public School District: Superintendent
- Grand Meadow Public Schools: Superintendent
- Granada-Huntley-East Chain School District: Principal
- Madelia Public Schools: Teacher and Coach

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Experience facilitating superintendent searches
- Mentor of new superintendents in southeast Minnesota





# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ■ DAVE THOMPSON, Ed.D.

Dave has more than 45 years of educational experience including serving as superintendent (Stewartville Public Schools, 2000-2017), director of secondary education and middle school principal (Farmington Public Schools, 1993-2000), high school principal (Stewartville Public Schools, 1986-1993), high school principal (Goodhue Public Schools, 1984-1986), and athletic director, teacher, and coach (Elgin-Millville Public Schools, 1977-1984). Dave has served on several local and regional organization committees.

### WORK HISTORY

- Kasson-Mantorville Interim Superintendent
- Kenyon-Wanamingo Interim Superintendent
- Stewartville Public Schools: Superintendent
- Farmington Public Schools: Director of Secondary Education & Middle School Principal
- Stewartville Public Schools: High School Principal
- Goodhue Public Schools: High School Principal
- Elgin-Millville Public Schools: Athletic Director/ Teacher / Coach

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Led four successful operating levy campaigns and two successful bond levy campaigns
- Led and implemented district's long-range facility plan and Strategic Plans
- Coach/Teacher of Minnesota Aspiring Superintendent's Academy

## ■ PAUL CARLSON

Paul has 38 years of experience in education as a teacher, principal, and 21 years as a superintendent. He is committed to delivering effective guidance for educational excellence to ensure optimal education opportunities for all students.

### WORK HISTORY

- ACGC Public Schools: Interim Superintendent (8 months)
- Hancock Public Schools: Part-time Superintendent (4 Years)
- New London-Spicer Schools: Superintendent (17 years)
- New London-Spicer Schools: High School Principal
- Sleepy Eye Public Schools: High School Principal
- Sleepy Eye Public Schools: Business Education Teacher

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Implemented long-range planning and goal-setting processes gathering community input and student achievement data resulting in facilities maintenance and energy project
- Led five successful operating levy campaigns and two successful bond levy campaigns
- Budget skills including all facets of revenue and expenditures planning and implementation



# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ▪ **SANDI NOVAK, Ed. S.**

Sandi has 40 years of experience as a teacher, principal, curriculum director, assistant superintendent, acting superintendent, education consultant, and author. Specifically, she served as the acting superintendent in Butterfield-Odin School District (February-June 2016), as assistant superintendent in the Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Schools (2004-2010), and has served on the Board of Minnesota ASCD.

### **WORK HISTORY**

- Butterfield-Odin Schools: Acting Superintendent
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Schools: Assistant Superintendent
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Schools: Curriculum/Professional Development Director
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Schools: Principal
- Owatonna Schools: Interim Principal
- Burnsville-Eagan-Savage Schools: Teacher/Coach
- Mazeppa Elementary School: Teacher

### **RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Presenter at NSBA, MSBA, ASCD and other national conferences
- Coached leadership teams across the country on effective literacy instructional practices

## ▪ **RENAE TOSTENSON, Ed.S.**

Renae has nearly 40 years of experience in education. She has served as superintendent (Lac qui Parle Valley Schools, 2011-2017), principal (Appleton Elementary School, 2007-2011), teacher coach (Lac qui Parle Valley Schools, 2005-2007), and as an elementary school teacher.

### **WORK HISTORY**

- Lac qui Parle Valley Schools: Superintendent
- Lac qui Parle Valley Schools: Principal
- Lac qui Parle Valley Schools: Teacher coach

### **RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Presenter at MASA and MSBA conferences and workshops
- Facilitated superintendent searches



# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ■ GARY KUPHAL

Gary has 47 years of experience in education, all but four years in Minnesota. He has served as a high school principal in Henderson, assistant high school principal and middle school principal in La Crescent, and superintendent in Southland, LeRoy-Ostrander, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, and Mabel-Canton.

### WORK HISTORY

- Mable-Canton Schools: Superintendent
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Kingsland Public Schools: Interim Superintendent
- Southland School District: Superintendent
- LeRoy-Ostrander School District: Superintendent
- Plainview-Elgin-Millville Community Schools: Superintendent
- La Crescent-Hokah Public Schools: Middle School Principal
- Henderson School District: High School Principal
- Henderson School District: Counselor
- Cleveland School District: Counselor
- Union-Whitten School District (Iowa): Teacher

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Facilitated superintendent searches, board development, and school district strategic planning sessions
- Facilitated community task force on facilities planning

## ■ STEVE NIKLAUS

Steve Niklaus brings 43 years of experience in education including serving as superintendent (Annandale Public Schools, 1992-2017) and principal (Annandale High School, 1986-1992, and Atwater-Grove City High Schools, 1980-1986). Steve has served on several state and regional professional boards and committees. Steve has worked in both Minnesota and North Dakota school districts.

### WORK HISTORY

- Annandale Public Schools: Superintendent
- Annandale Public Schools: Principal
- Atwater-Grove City High Schools: Principal
- Welcome High School: Principal
- Oakes High School, Oakes, North Dakota: High School Teacher

### RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

- Led six successful operating levy elections and four successful building bond elections
- Experience facilitating with superintendent searches



# SEARCH TEAM — MSBA SERVICE PROVIDERS

## ■ **BILL TOMHAVE, Ph.D.**

Bill has more than 45 years of extensive experience in education starting as a high school mathematics teacher and including 40 years in higher education involved with teacher preparation. Bill was elected to the Moorhead Area Schools Board of Directors in 2001, serving through 2018. He was also recognized with the Minnesota All-State School Board award in January 2015.

### **WORK HISTORY**

- Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota: Assistant/Associate/Professor, Mathematics
- University of Minnesota, Morris, Minnesota: Assistant Professor, Mathematics
- Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa: Instructor, Mathematics
- Oregon Consolidated Schools, Oregon: Teacher, High School Mathematics

### **RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Director of Moorhead Area School Board 2002-2018, held positions of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer
- Board of Directors for Lakes Country Service Cooperative 2007-2018
- Experience assisting with community discussions and candidate screenings and interviews
- Ambassador, Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA), 2006—2009
- Region 1 Joint Powers Board, 2010—2018; Vice Chair 2012—2018

# NATIONAL AFFILIATION OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCHERS



August 2, 2023

Dear School Board Members:

You are facing one of the most significant decisions you will make as a school board member – selecting a superintendent. No other staff member will likely have a more long-term impact on your school district. Choosing the most highly qualified individual, who also represents the ideal fit in your community, will be critical. Please consider using your state school board association's superintendent search service to facilitate your next search for a superintendent.

The members of the National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS) stand ready – as the most experienced network of search professionals in the United States – to execute a national campaign to find your district's next superintendent. NASS consultants are located in 39 states and include more than 100 consultants serving as superintendent searchers for school board associations throughout the country. NASS harnesses the skills and experiences of many search professionals with proven track records of accomplishment. Consultants in NASS are characterized by integrity, passion, and focus. Your state school board association's search professionals know state and local laws, know your district, and appreciate that each search is unique. They know your school board wants a customized search to meet your community's specific needs, and understand the need to maintain a successful, long-term relationship between your board and your state school board association.

NASS members serve school boards every day. As Chair of NASS, I can promise you will receive individual, customized attention and a commitment from your NASS professional to assist in a dedicated and confidential manner, following the specific laws of your state. The successful executive search begins with a strong team of professional search consultants and ends with a solid, long-term relationship between the school district and its top administrative leaders. The NASS mission is *finding top executive leadership for school districts throughout the United States through our core values – ethics, integrity, leadership, and teamwork*. If retaining a successful, long-term leader is a priority for your district, rely on a NASS consultant!

Regards,

*Shari Becker*

Shari Becker  
NASS Chair



# NATIONAL AFFILIATE OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCHERS



## National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers (NASS members)

Alabama	New Hampshire
Alaska	New Jersey
Arizona	New Mexico
Connecticut	North Carolina
Florida	North Dakota
Georgia	Ohio
Idaho	Oklahoma
Illinois	Oregon
Indiana	Pennsylvania
Kansas	South Carolina
Kentucky	South Dakota
Maine	Tennessee
Maryland	Texas
Massachusetts	Utah
Michigan	Vermont
Minnesota	Virginia
Mississippi	West Virginia
Missouri	Wisconsin
Montana	Wyoming
Nebraska	

## NOTES

[illegible]