

Stakeholder input during the interview process

MSBA's process offers three options to school boards for including stakeholders in their finalist interviews. Below is a short summary of the board's choices:

1. Rely on the Stakeholder Summary Report to represent stakeholder voices throughout the interview process. MSBA reviews this report with the board during interview training, and boards often choose to use this document for reference throughout the search (i.e. when screening applications, developing interview questions, conducting the interviews, and during board deliberations following both Round 1 and Round 2 interviews). No other stakeholder input is gathered as part of the interview process.
2. Create interview committee(s) – these groups interview all finalists separately in addition to the school board interviews. It is important that members of the interview committees not be chosen by the board – instead stakeholder groups should be invited to send a representative on their behalf. These groups must then be trained by MSBA to ensure adherence to EEOC protocols (interview format, legality of questions, etc.). These committees would report to the board following their interviews, but prior to the board's final deliberations. It's also important not to call these groups "hiring committees," as this creates unfair expectations and potentially deep resentment regarding the hiring process utilized by the school board.
3. Invite stakeholder groups to send one representative to observe school board interviews of the finalists, then those individuals provide feedback through an online Audience Input Form which asks them to share their thoughts on each candidate's top three strengths and top three opportunities for growth. MSBA then provides the board with this data shortly after their interviews, but prior to the board's final deliberations.

There are pros and cons to each of these options, all of which are discussed with the board prior to making a decision regarding stakeholder input in the interview process.

NOTE: Over the past three years most boards have selected Option 1, some boards have chosen Option 3, and only two boards have selected Option 2. This illustrates a shift away from involving stakeholders in the interview process, with most boards relying heavily on the Stakeholder Summary Report as the voice of the stakeholders throughout the search process; however, you should choose whichever option best fits your district.