

***Jenny Preston Educational Consulting***  
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**Fairview, Texas 75069**  
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November 16, 2017

Jay Stringer, Board President  
Aledo ISD Board of Trustees  
1008 Bailey Ranch Road  
Aledo, Texas 76008

Dear President Stringer:

Thank you for contacting me about the possibility of assisting your Board of Trustees with conducting a search to find a new superintendent. It would be an honor to be the District's partner in this important endeavor.

*Jenny Preston Educational Consulting* has an excellent track record of success in managing the recruitment and selection process as a past partner in a search firm (Horn, Smith, Wood, and Preston) and now as an individual consultant. The processes and tools have been developed and improved over the years. The following pages contain a basic description of the services, a proposed contract, and biographical information.

Recently, we have assisted the following districts with their superintendent searches. We are providing a listing of the primary contact person for these particular searches and would encourage the Aledo Board to discuss our work with these individuals.

Frisco ISD, Ann McCausland, Board President, 972-998-2962  
Rockwall ISD, Linda Duran, Board President [linda.mitchell.duran@rockwallisd.org](mailto:linda.mitchell.duran@rockwallisd.org)  
Graham ISD, Mr. David McClendon, Board President, 940-549-0595  
Mesquite ISD, Gary Bingham, Board President, 972-288-6411  
Lufkin ISD, Keven Ellis, DC, Board President, 936-634-6696

Please let me know if additional information is needed. I look forward to having the opportunity to meet with the board to discuss my qualifications and services.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jenny Preston

# Process Components

## Profile Development

Involvement of community, district, staff and the board in the process: The profile development process, although very time consuming, is the most comprehensive of all the search processes. Although on-line profile development forms can be posted on the district's website, we prefer to meet personally with individual groups as we gather input for the profile. For Aledo, we would suggest the following group meetings in which participants would provide their input into the characteristics that they would like to see in the next superintendent as well as identification of strengths and challenges of the district:

Administrators – 2 meetings: Campus leaders, Central Office  
Teachers – 2-4 meetings: Elementary, Secondary  
Support Staff – 1 meeting  
Community – 1 or 2  
Board

Although all of the meetings are conducted in the same manner, role-alike groups get better responses when discussing the strengths and challenges of the district.

### Nature of the search process:

To recruit the very best candidates, absolute confidentiality is required. Although people will argue that an open process is the best option, the scope of the candidate pool would be severely limited in the recruiting process if confidentiality is not guaranteed.

Guarantee of services: I stand behind my work completely. The last clause in the contract states that: "In the event that the School Board is unhappy with the services provided, they may terminate the contract without financial obligations to *Jenny Preston Educational Consulting.*" Furthermore, I guarantee that if the board is unhappy within two years of the selection, I will assist with the recruitment of a new superintendent without charge.

Fee for services: The fee for the services to assist the Board in the recruitment and selection of a new superintendent is **\$8,000**, which includes **all expenses** for advertising, printing, postage, materials, supplies and travel associated with the search. The fee does not include expenses that the district might incur for the travel of candidates that are selected for an interview.

# **Proposal to Conduct Superintendent Search for the Aledo Independent School District**

## ***Introduction***

The employment of the best search consultant firm to assist the Board of Trustees in finding a new superintendent is a critical first step in finding your district's new superintendent. When employed by a board to conduct a search, I consider the search to be a partnership endeavor.

As your search consultant I will bring:

- Extensive experience working with school boards with a thorough understanding of the role of the Board and the search consultant.
- Access to specialized guidance services.
- Uniquely enhanced recruitment capabilities.
- Proven task management proficiencies.

The search is a cooperative effort of the Board and the consultants with certain functions done together, while the consultant carries some out, and the Board completes others. Both those done jointly and separately are approached within the guidelines and expectations set by the Board.

It is the responsibility of the consultant to advise the Board of the best practice and to act as an agent for the Board in all aspects of the search.

The major tasks, phases, or stages are categorized into five (5) groupings. We refer to them as groupings because some of the activities are clearly sequenced while others are going on simultaneously in a well-managed search.

These categories are:

1. Preparing for the Search - Needs Assessment and Profile Development
2. Recruitment Activities
3. Evaluation of Candidates
4. Details of the Final Selection and Employment
5. Presentation and Orientation of New Superintendent

## ***Preparing for the Search – Needs Assessment and Profile Development Activities***

Tasks:

- Train the Board in the search process.
- Interview Board members, community groups, and staff to obtain their ideas and suggestions for establishing criteria for the new superintendent.
- Develop the profile of characteristics for the new superintendent using information obtained from those interviews.

These activities are the critical foundation of successful recruitment efforts. Most profiles look very similar. However, someone has to determine what the district's most pressing present challenges are, as well as, the more long-term potential barriers to school district success. The chances are

very great that the Board as a whole has a good “feel” for what some of those major challenges are. As your search consultants we will help you reduce those ideas to writing so we can succeed in finding the superintendent who has the skills and abilities to provide the educational leadership to address the needs of your District.

### ***Recruitment Activities***

Tasks:

- Advertise the vacancy online
- Mail application information
- Receive and process the applications
- Acknowledge all applications, advising applicants of the Board’s timeline for the selection process

This is where the “rubber meets the road” and where my experiences have something unique to offer. I know who most of the highly respected superintendents are in Texas, as well as many of the outstanding assistant superintendents in the state. Conducting strategic planning with over 40 school districts, affords me the opportunity to observe superintendents interactions with boards, staff, and community members in order to discern their profiles. When I conduct a superintendent search I am able to use this knowledge to recommend the best fit for a district based on the district’s needs and the candidates qualifications and strengths.

I will use the standard nomination, solicitation of nominees and referral methods in addition to calling on the extra networks to which I have access.

### ***Evaluation of Candidates***

Tasks:

- Train the Board in the interview process, which includes consensus-building and appropriate state and federal laws on interviewing procedures.
- Assist the Board in developing questions to be asked in the interviews.
- Schedule candidate interviews for the Board.
- Prepare interview packets for the members of the Board. These packets will include a schedule for the interview, questions to be asked by Board members, important legal information to follow during the interview and other relevant documents.
- Identify candidates who meet the profile characteristics.
- Perform preliminary reference checks on recommended candidates. [Note: Final Reference checks of finalist(s) are the responsibility of the Board.]

This category of activities includes all matters relating to the receipt and acknowledgement of applications, checking of references, and background inquiries. We will conduct screening interviews of the most promising of the applicants. We will bring to the Board a list of qualified applicants for their review. The Board will determine the number of candidates that it desires to interview and we will provide copies of all pertinent applications and related materials on those candidates to each member of the Board. In addition, the Board will have access to all of the application files for their review.

The Board interviews are in this category as well. I will assist you in preparing for the interviews, interview schedules, and travel arrangements for candidates.

It should be noted from our terminology that we use the term “recommended candidates” and reserve use of the term “finalist” for the person or persons the board has agreed on at least in a preliminary way. In fact, our experience shows that we can get better candidates if several finalists are not named since their identities have to be released once they are listed as finalists. Nevertheless, we can do whatever meets the board and community expectations.

### ***Details of Final Selection and Employment***

Tasks:

- Moderate the Board’s deliberations on selection of the superintendent after all interviews have been conducted. (Optional at no additional fee).
- Work with District’s lawyer to develop the contract and negotiate with the finalist.
- Notify unsuccessful candidates.
- Assist District staff with the development of press releases for announcement of the finalists and ultimately the new superintendent.
- Provide additional assistance requested by the Board.

Your selection will likely be under contract, so we will help the candidate ascertain release dates. Salary and benefits and contract terms will be important. We have the comparative data that you will need. The legal requirements regarding posting of notice for making your final decision are available and we will provide you those requirements.

### ***Orientation and Presentation of New Superintendent***

We have some recommendations regarding how to go about getting your new superintendent up to speed quickly and properly introducing the person to the staff and the community. We would also recommend a time for the new superintendent and you as a Board to develop as a team. These are some things you will need to work out, but we would offer some guidance if desired. We, also, have a great interest and stake in the success and wisdom of your decision.

# Proposed Superintendent Selection Planning Calendar

Aledo Independent School District  
(120 Day Minimum)

<u>Completion Date</u>	<u>Activity Description</u>
12.18.17	Announce vacancy – TASA Net. Etc.
01.22.18	Solicitation of candidate nominations Recruitment of candidates
01.22.18	Deadline for accepting applications
02.05.18	Presentation of candidates to Board
02.12.18- 02.23.18	Interviews
02.26.18	Declare intent on selection (21-day notice)
03.19.18	Make appointment final – announce selection
04.02.18	New superintendent begins service

Note: This is an example of a timeline. If hired, the first meeting with the Board will be to set the calendar.

## **Consultants' Qualifications and Experience.**

### Dr. Jenny Preston

Dr. Jenny Preston retired in December 2006 as Superintendent of the Allen ISD located in Collin County. She has a total of 9 years of superintendent experience having served in Graham for 2 years and in Allen for 7 years. She currently is a co-partner in Strategic Planning for Practitioners and has led over 41 districts in Texas and Oklahoma through the district and community process since launching the partnership in 2009.

She has conducted board training throughout Texas and presented on leadership for Region 10 and Region 8. She served as interim superintendent in Forney ISD in 2007 where the district passed a bond to build a second high school and as interim in Allen in 2016. She has conducted The Aspiring Superintendent Academy for TASA for the past 10 years.

The Allen ISD Board recently honored Dr. Preston for her service to education by naming the 18<sup>th</sup> elementary school the Jenny Preston Elementary School that will open in August 2017.

# **SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH SERVICES CONTRACT TERMS**

## **PARTIES**

The first party to this contract is *Jenny Preston Educational Services* (Search Consultants) whose business address is 507 Longfellow Lane, Fairview, Texas, 75069.

The second party is the Aledo Independent School District Board of Trustees (School Board/District) whose business mailing address is 5515 Ohio Drive, Texas 75035.

## **DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES AND OBLIGATIONS**

1. The primary recruitment efforts in this search shall be focused in Texas. The cost of typical in-state advertising shall be born by the Consultants including the costs of mailing, faxing, or e-mailing to selected school leaders in the state. The Search Consultants shall make national contacts and solicitations utilizing their network of contacts in other states. National advertising in such national educational media as Education Week will be done if the School Board directs with all such costs to be paid by the District.
2. The Search Consultants shall process all applications and associated correspondence as well as the candidate assessment tasks as a part of the basic service fee.
3. Candidate profile development shall include a least one meeting with the School Board to capture the Board's recommended or preferred characteristics desired in the candidates to be considered. At the School Board's discretion and direction, the Search Consultants shall conduct sessions with others such as representative administrative and teaching staffs, the leaders of allied organizations (PTA, Booster Clubs, etc.), as well as selected community members. All costs of the meetings described above are included in the basic service and fee structure.
4. The Search Consultants shall provide a list of recommended candidates for the School Board to interview. Additional candidates shall be provided if the Board requests.
5. The Search Consultants shall provide periodic status reports as requested on the progress of the search and shall attend a session for reviewing the applications of those recommended for interview.
6. The Search Consultants shall provide assistance with media relations as needed and otherwise provide guidance in responding to media inquiries. Sensitivity to the wishes of candidates shall be respected at all times by both parties.
7. The School Board shall meet in a timely manner to review applications and to interview applicants. The Aledo ISD superintendent or interim superintendent and his/her clerical staff shall prepare and post all meeting notices in accordance with the open meetings law as directed by the School Board's designee and the Search Consultants. The responsibility for determining the need for special Board meetings rests with the School

Board. The Search Consultants shall help prepare School Board members for the interview process.

8. The search shall be conducted observing all laws and regulations regarding employment of professional personnel in Texas school districts.
9. The Search Consultants shall provide guidance and suggestions for developing employment contract terms with the new superintendent subject to the advice of the attorney for the District and the superintendent's attorney.
10. The School Board may contact the Search Consultants for information and clarification as needed.
11. All applications and resumes shall be considered the property of the Search Consultants and the candidates' names and information contained therein may be released only with the consent of the Search Consultants.

## **LIMITATIONS**

12. The Search Consultants shall act as agents of the School Board only in the regard to the search for a superintendent and may not speak on behalf of or otherwise obligate the School Board in any way. The Search Consultants shall act as intermediaries with the candidates until a finalist is agreed on.
13. The School Board may not hold the Search Consultants liable as long as the search tasks are completed according to the terms of this contract and to applicable state and federal laws. The Search Consultants hereby represent that appropriate sections of the fair credit reporting act will be complied with if applicable. The Search Consultants will provide information from a third party to conduct an initial criminal background check. The District may provide additional checks if it desires.
14. The fee for the complete basic services described in this contract shall be **\$8,000** including expenses for advertising, printing, postage, materials, supplies, and travel associated with this search. The fee does not include candidate travel expenses.

## **PAYMENT**

The School Board shall pay for the services rendered as described in this contract when the search process has been completed and a new superintendent has been hired.

## **DURATION OF CONTRACT**

It is expected that a thorough and competent search process can be completed in three to four months. This contract shall continue in force until the School Board has employed a candidate processed by the Search Consultants or until the contract is terminated by mutual consent of both parties.

**TERMINATION OF CONTRACT**

In the event that the School Board is unhappy with the services provided, they may terminate this contract at any time, without any financial obligations to *Jenny Preston Educational Consulting*.

**SIGNATURES**

*Jenny Preston Educational Consulting* and the Board of Trustees of the Aledo Independent School District as evidenced by their authorized signatures as affixed below hereby enter into this contract.

Jenny Preston Educational Consulting

\_\_\_\_\_   
 Jenny Preston

Date \_\_\_\_\_

For the Board of Trustees of the Aledo Independent School District

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_