

Pezanoski Education Consulting

Cathie Pezanoski - Owner/Consultant

2009 Eastlake Drive
Ottawa, IL 61350
(815) 488-8455

Central Unit School District #301

Superintendent Search

May 2025

Content:

- Introductory Letter
- Executive Summary
- Management Summary
- Consultants Profile
- Superintendent Searches and Strategic Planning Experiences
- References
- Proposed Search Plan
- Consultant Recommendations and Communications
- Consulting Fee and Included Services

Dear Members of the Board of Education:

Thank you so very much for offering my education consulting practice the opportunity to present a proposal and share a conversation with you about an effective search process that we could facilitate with your district for your new superintendent. We are confident we could work together to find a successful leader for Central Unit School District #301. We are very much aware of the great pride the district takes in always providing for your community and students an effective and successful leader.

I am a retired superintendent from Will County after serving as Elwood CCSD #203 Superintendent for nine years. I have been retired now for four years. I facilitate my own consulting business and have also served in two interim capacities since I retired. More details on my background are provided for you in this proposal.

We define our success as a consultant by the success our mentees and constituents have in the education position they are serving. We will begin to understand your strengths and needs through conversations with the members of the Board, staff, and your entire constituency, if the Board of Education wishes to have a variety of stakeholders involved in the superintendent search process. Our recruitment and interview process will result in well-vetted, highly qualified candidates from which the Board of Education will make their selection of a new superintendent.

Thank you for considering our proposal for your superintendent search. Again, we would feel very honored to work with the Central Unit School District #301 Board of Education to achieve the mutual goal of finding great leadership for the students you serve.

Sincerely,

Cathie Pezanoski, Owner

Pezanoski Education Consulting

cpezanoski@gmail.com

815-488-8455

Executive Summary

Proposed Timeline

(This tentative timeline can be altered based on Board of Education input.)

- Phase A: July - August 2025
- Phase B: August - September 2025
- Phase C: September - October 2025
- Phase D: October - November 2025
- Phase E: December 2025

Costs

- Consulting Fee : \$12,000 to \$15,000 (Fees vary based on Board decisions.)
- Any posting of position costs will be the responsibility of the district.
- Any copying of materials costs will be the responsibility of the district.

Details for the search process costs can be viewed in detail on page eleven of this proposal.

Management Summary

Below is a summary of the search services that will be provided by the consultant:

- Mutually plan and tailor the search process and timelines with the Board
- Work closely with the District staff members who assist the Board
- Prepare and provide written materials needed for the search process
- Assist the Board in establishing a process for collecting criteria for a New Superintendent Profile including desired qualifications and leadership attributes
- Accept applications from the various locations the Board wishes to post the position
- Implement a salary study for area unit school districts for the Board to use in the final phase when negotiating a contract
- Conduct in-person screener interviews for all state of IL candidates and zoom screener interviews for any out of state candidates
- Present a slate of qualified and well-vetted candidates to the Board
- Prepare the Board for first and second interviews
- Facilitate Board first and second interviews at the Board's request
- Prepare Interview Committees for finalist interviews (per direction from the Board)
- Recommend an in-depth vetting process for the final candidate. Options may include a site visit, Board reference calls, and a deep criminal background check
- Assist the Board, if requested, with contract negotiation and compensation recommendations
- Communicate diligently with the Board and staff through the search process
- Assist, if requested, in the creation of the news releases announcing the new superintendent

Consultants Profile

Cathie Pezanoski is the retired Superintendent of Elwood CCSD #203 in Will County for the past four years. She served as Elwood's superintendent for nine years prior to retiring. Before serving as a superintendent, Cathie was the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for Downers Grove ESD #58, Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction for Plainfield CCSD #202 and building principal for three different districts for eight years. Cathie also served as a teacher for twelve years prior to entering administration. During her time as superintendent in Will County, Cathie served as the President of the Three Rivers Association for the IASA (Illinois Association of School Administrators). She was also named Superintendent of Distinction for the Three Rivers Region in 2021.

Since Cathie's retirement in 2021, she has initiated her own consulting business and also serves as a consultant for the Grundy/Kendall Counties Regional Office of Education. She mentors new administrators and supports schools who are considered targeted schools because they are not meeting their academic growth goal for one or more of their subgroups. Cathie facilitates superintendent searches, strategic planning and supports districts in the curriculum instruction arena. She has also supported districts in their business department. Prior to retirement Cathie served as a consultant for Taft Elementary School in Lockport supporting their bookkeeper and superintendent in public school finance with responsibilities of creating and facilitating the annual budget and the levy along with monthly balancing and investment support. She served as the Interim Senior Director of Human Resources for Oak Park ESD #97 and the Interim Director of Business and Operations for Frankfort SD 157C. Cathie has also facilitated four strategic planning processes with Lockport #91, Rockdale #84, East Coloma School District, and Fairmont #89. She is currently working with Will County #92. Cathie is a servant leader who enjoys supporting public school districts in any way she can while being retired.

Superintendent Searches

1. **Central CUSD #4**
 - Winter/Spring 2025
 - Co-facilitated with Associate
2. **Manhattan SD 114**
 - Fall/Winter - 2025 - 2025
 - Individually Facilitated Search
3. **Three Rivers Education for Employment Services (TREES) Search**
 - Fall/Winter - 2024 - 2025
 - Individually Facilitated Search
4. **Lemont High School District #210**
 - Fall 2024
 - Individually Facilitated Search
5. **Genoa Kingston CCSD #424**
 - Fall 2023
 - Individually Facilitated Search
6. **Streator Township High School**
 - Fall 2021
 - Co-facilitated Search with School Exec-Connect Colleague
7. **Mokena School District #159**
 - Fall of 2020
 - Supported Dr. Tom Madden who was the lead facilitator for this search with School Exec- Connect

Strategic Planning

1. Will County SD #92

- FY 25
- Dr. Kirsten Frankovich - Superintendent - kfrankovich@d92.org

2. Fairmont SD #89

- FY 25
- Dr. Tamela Daniels - Superintendent - tdaniels@fsd89.org

3. Lockport SD #91

- FY 24
- Dr. Kathleen Wikey - Superintendent - kwilkey@d91.net

4. Rockdale SD #84

- FY 24
- Dr. Michael Merritt - Superintendent - mmerritt@rockdale84.org

5. East Coloma - Nelson CESD #20

- FY 23
- Dr. Chris Lensing - Superintendent - clensing@ecoloma.net

References

1. Mr. Scott Nemanich - Attorney for Klein, Thorpe and Jenkins

senemanich@ktjlaw.com

815-347-7851

2. Mr. Troy Meier - Central CUSD #4 Board President

tmeier@cusd4.org

815-383-0607

3. Mr. Kurt Korte, Lemont High School Board President

kkorte@lhs210.net

(630)709-5407

4. Mr. John Burke, Manhattan SD 114 School Board President

burkej@manhattan114.org

815-603-2323

Proposed Search Plan

Phase A: Opening the Search (July 2025 - August 2025)

- The Superintendent search process begins with the Board of Education approving the consultant/firm to facilitate the search with them.
- An initial planning meeting will be held with the Board of Education to establish a timeline and scope of services.

Phase B: Creating the New Superintendent Profile (August - September 2025)

- Board members are interviewed to understand the qualities, skills, and experiences they seek in their new superintendent.
- Focus Groups are held with selected groups approved by the Board
- A District-wide On-line Survey that is tailored for your District is designed to allow staff and community members to give input to the search process.
- A New Superintendent Profile is developed using the information gained from Board interviews, focus groups, individual interviews, and written feedback. The Board approves the New Superintendent Profile.
- Position is posted on the IASA Job Bank, District website and any other posting locations the Board requests.

- The search process and calendar of events are posted on the District website.

Phase C: Developing the Candidate Pool (September - October 2025)

- The Consultant accepts applications and recruits candidates who match the District's New Superintendent Profile.
- The Consultant conducts face-to-face screener interviews using the New Superintendent Profile.
- Internal candidates will follow the same process as external candidates.
- Consultant conducts references and internet checks on potential candidates.
- Consultant presents highly qualified candidates (5 to 7) to the Board and the Board decides which recommended candidates to interview.

Phase D: Selecting the Candidates (October - November 2025)

- Consultant holds a Board interviewing workshop prior to the interviews. (This workshop can be the same meeting when the Consultant makes the recommendation of the 5 to 7 candidates the Board may interview.)
- The Consultant facilitates the Board interviews for the first-round slate of candidates.
- The Board narrows the field to two to three semi-finalists.
- An Interview Committee(s) of staff, parents, and community members interview the semi-finalists in a structured process and members give feedback to the Board.
- The Board will have the semi-finalist candidates give a short Formal Presentation to observe the candidates' presentation skills.
- The Board conducts a second set of interviews using feedback from the Interview Committees.
- The Board conducts reference calls.

- The Board may choose to conduct a site visit for the final candidate's home district.

Phase E: Contract Negotiations and Official Hire (December 2025)

- The Board negotiates and takes action on the new superintendent's contract.

Consultant Recommendations and Communications

- Consultant communicates through a Board Liaison and District Staff Liaison (usually district/superintendent administrative assistant).
- Recommendation is for the Consultant to work with the District Communication Director to create New Superintendent Search information on the district website such as the Search Process, Search Timeline, and New Superintendent Profile.
- Consultant provides detailed written interview guidelines, including questions for the candidates.
- Consultant will provide written materials for the Interview Committees and may facilitate the interviews.
- A designated staff member will work with the Consultant on the posting of the position on the district website and the district's regular posting platform.
- District staff will be responsible for the copying of materials for the various aspects of the search process.
- The Consultant will assist in making dinner arrangements for the Board and the finalist. (Optional)

Consulting Fee

Basic Consulting Fee for Supt. Search - \$12,000

- Consultant facilitates a true confidential search with no interview committees in the final stage of the search process
- Consultant conducts all aspects of the search process with the Board of Education. Consultant will create survey and district will post it on the district website for feedback on the New Superintendent Profile
- Consultant conducts a salary study with local districts the Board wishes to use for comparisons for data for the Board to consider when they finalize the new superintendent contract

Additional Services with Additional Costs

- Consultant interviews various stakeholder groups (per Board of Education request) at the beginning of the search process to help create the New Superintendent Profile - Cost \$1500
- Consultant facilitates interview committees with the two to three semi-finalists. Consultant summarizes this feedback from the interviews and shares it with the Board of Education - Cost \$1500

District Expenses

- Copying of materials
- Cost to post position on a national level or specific state level
- Any meal or food costs for Board members during evening meetings
- Travel cost reimbursement to just include gas and mileage for consultant(s).

Any additional procedures not described in this proposal the Board wishes to initiate in this search will be open for discussion of costs between the Board of Education and the Pezanoski Education Consulting owner.