

# Oxnard Elementary School District

## *Leadership Profile Report*

March 2 and 3, 2009

### **Introduction**

This report presents the findings of the *Leadership Profile Assessment* conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd. (HYA) for the Board of Education of the Oxnard School District (K-8). After the Board selected HYA to assist in its search for a new superintendent of schools, an assessment instrument was prepared to solicit responses which would be used to help the Board clarify the characteristics it should seek in the new superintendent. The Board distributed the questionnaire to a variety of stakeholders including administrators, faculty, support staff, community, city and county officials. The Board also invited a number of individuals and groups to meet with the consultants on March 2, 2009 to discuss these characteristics in greater depth.

In developing this *Leadership Profile Report*, the consultants sought opinions, recommendations and general comments with respect to preferred candidate traits and qualifications as well as District strengths, challenges and concerns which could bear upon future leadership requirements and influence the selection criteria for the next superintendent of schools. In an effort to ensure that the process was inclusive, the consultants noted that the Board was seeking the views of a broad range of individuals to assist in the search process. It was agreed that the consultants would report the findings to the Board without revealing the identity of any individual contributor, enabling the Board to use the data as it proceeds to define the leadership characteristics and selection criteria to be used in identifying the next superintendent. It also was understood that the Board had the responsibility to define these characteristics and would use its prerogative to do so.

The responses provided with some consistency by the individuals, focus groups and those who completed questionnaires are presented in this report. Groups represented included Board members, administrators, faculty, support staff, county officials and community leaders. It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the District's stakeholders or the respective groups to which they are attributed. Items are included if the consultants believe they warrant the Board's attention.

The consultants wish to thank Sylvia Carabajal for her able assistance in arranging the interviews and keeping us on schedule. We also thank those with whom we met for their cordiality and responsiveness, in addition to all who took the time to respond by written form.

Rudy Castruita, Ed. D.  
Carolyn McKennan, Ed. D.

## Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings of the *Leadership Profile Assessment* conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, Ltd. (HYA) for the Board of Education of Oxnard School District (K-8). The data contained herein were obtained from input received from individuals through completion of *Leadership Profile Assessment* forms, individual interviews, focus groups and/or participation at an open public forum setting on March 2, and 3, 2009. The questionnaire, interviews, forum and focus groups were structured by the Board of Education and consultants to gather data to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics it might seek in its next superintendent of schools. Through this process, the consultants attempted to identify the personal attributes and professional experiences desired in the superintendent, as well as the skill-sets necessary to maintain and deliver what stakeholders value. The process also enabled the consultants and Board to garner input regarding existing and emerging challenges or issues that the District and the new superintendent may be facing.

The consultants commend the efforts of the Board for seeking a clear expression of interest in the District and the superintendent search process as conveyed by all with whom they interacted or who returned completed *Leadership Profile Assessment* forms. Stakeholders demonstrated a commitment to the education and success of all of the District's students as they shared what they perceived to be the strengths of, and challenges/issues facing, the District. Constituent groups also formulated a preferred list of characteristics and experiences that they felt would be desirable for the next superintendent to possess.

Information obtained through interviews and the completed *Leadership Profile Assessment* forms reflected similar views from all groups with respect to strengths of the District. Chief among them are the excellent, dedicated teachers who along with the support staff are committed to the District and supportive of the community. The administrative staff is seen as focused on instructional programs that have resulted in steady academic growth among students. Diversity among staff and the members of the community is seen as a strength and is celebrated. The District enjoys positive relationships with labor groups, the police department and other agencies. The District will be on a single track calendar for the 2009-2010 school year ending the calendar variations currently in place. Fiscal accountability is also seen as a strength.

As with any district, there are a number of challenges to be addressed. One of the most often cited has to do with facilities. There is a need for a Facilities Master Plan which would allow the District to plan for future building needs and identify resources. The District has completed the construction of three new schools one of which is expected to open in the fall. However, many of other buildings in the District are in serious need of modernization. Addressing the changing needs of a diverse student body including immigrant students is seen as a challenge. Encompassed in this challenge is exiting Program Improvement which will be a significant undertaking. Implementation of the English Language Learners Master Plan is also a major undertaking and will also require additional resources including staff. Given the competing interests and uncertain revenues from the State, responding to these challenges will be formidable. There is some suggestion that the Board engages in micro management. Communication, collaboration, support for professional learning communities and the decision making process are mentioned as challenges. A trusting relationship between the Board,

superintendent and other constituent groups should be established so that the District can deal with pressing issues that have a direct impact on student achievement. The new superintendent should hold all members of the district accountable, including her/himself. Outside the District, collaboration and cooperation with other agencies is seen as needed in order to best meet the needs of the students served.

The consultants caution the Board and others not to look upon the delineation of these challenges/ issues as criticism of the Oxnard School District or any component of it. Instead, it is an attempt to catalogue the challenges/issues that appear to exist, and to provide the Board an opportunity to identify those that are of greatest and imminent significance to the District. Once the most pressing issues are identified, the Board then needs to identify an individual who has the skill-sets and experiential base to respond to them over a period of time.

The Oxnard School District is looking for an experienced educational leader who is able to address these challenges in a competent, caring manner. The new superintendent must have the ability and willingness to deal directly and fairly with faculty, staff, students and parents to build strong, positive relationships fostering a team concept. This leader must be a collaborator who communicates with all stakeholders, is open minded and listens to their ideas and concerns. He/she should have the demonstrated ability to work positively with a board of education, being candid and open. Experience as a superintendent or high level cabinet member is preferred. This individual must be accessible to all constituent groups and visible at the sites, community and campuses. It is important that this individual be honest, and possesses integrity. While being bilingual and holding a doctorate degree is preferred, it is not a requirement.

The consultants wish to express their appreciation to the Board of Education of the Oxnard School District for selecting HYA to partner with them in this important process, and for casting an inclusive net that enabled them to hear from a broad base of the constituency. We are exceedingly grateful to the many individuals who rendered time from their schedules to meet with us.

# Oxnard School District Leadership Profile

March 19, 2009

## Consistent For All Groups

### *Strengths*

Cultural diversity is celebrated by administration & staff  
Diversity in staff and community  
English Language Master Plan  
Excellent teaching staff dedicated to the community  
Fiscal accountability  
Good administrative staff who desire to move district forward  
Good relationship with labor groups, police department and other agencies  
Single track district  
Steady academic growth

### *Challenges*

Budget  
Collaboration/cooperation with other agencies  
Curriculum issues, instructional materials, adoptions  
English Language Learners  
Facilities – lack of Facilities Master Plan  
Implementation of ELL Master Plan  
Improving achievement level of students  
Leadership/superintendent/board/cabinet  
Old boy network  
Perception of micro managing  
Personnel policies/practices  
Program Improvement

### *Characteristics*

Ability & willingness to deal directly & fairly with all  
Accessible to all constituent groups  
Accountability – all held accountable  
Bilingual preferred, not necessary  
Communicate with Board/ community and staff  
Doctorate preferred, not necessary  
Experience as superintendent, deputy superintendent or central office preferred  
Experience with facility issues  
Good clear communicator  
Good communication skills  
Good listener  
Honest  
Integrity  
Interest Based Bargaining Skills  
Leader  
Open minded  
Open with Board  
Relationship builder  
Understand & uses data to inform decisions  
Visible at sites, community, campuses