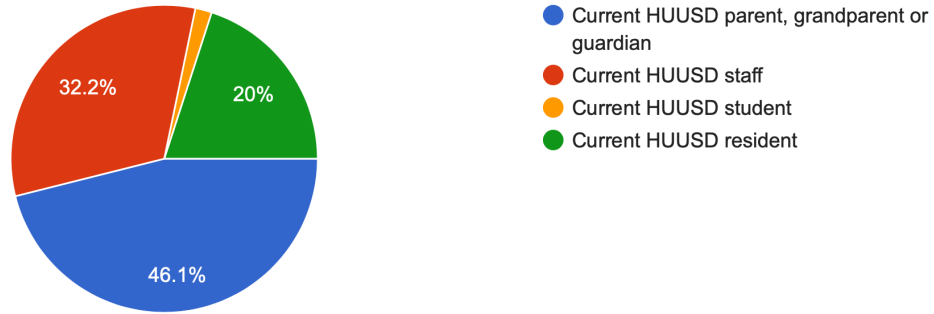


Leichliter Feedback Summary – Community
2/3/22

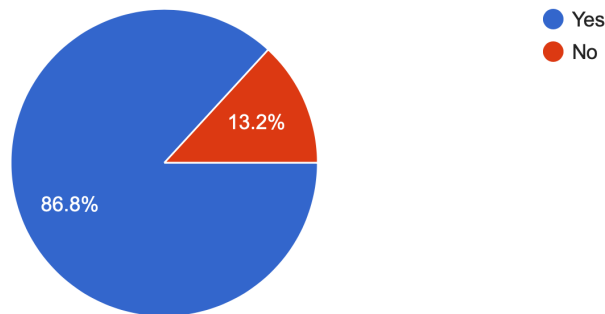
Please identify your role in the HUUSD community that is primarily informing your response today:

115 responses



Do you believe this candidate could be a good choice as superintendent for our district?

114 responses



Comments

- Wow! Dr. Leichliter came across as articulate, curious, flexible and interested in HUUSD and ways to build community. We need that voice here. He has a solid skill set that could be a valuable addition to HUUSD. He has led by example. I was really impressed and would love to welcome him to our community. P.S. During his school visit, he made connections with kids!
- Clear answers to questions. At ease with responses. Did not use a lot of jargon. Sense of humor when bell/buzzer interrupted. Experience bringing groups together.
- His response to the question on how to help 2 sides that disagree on an issue to come to an agreement or an understanding was excellent. I appreciate that he took the time to see the 2 PE teachers' viewpoint.

- I have now watched all three interviews and find something strong in each candidate. Mike has experience that seems to demonstrate good leadership skills. I am concerned that he has never lived in Vermont and "retired" at the end of the school year and is only seeking employment in our district. That has pluses and minuses for me, but is not a deal breaker. He answered the questions clearly and easily. That is a plus.
- I think the candidate presented as well spoken and ready to take on the responsibilities of our district however I worry about the hire from out of state as the track record is not great (Burlington and CVSD). Has the board conducted interviews with current admin and staff he works with-is he really what he sounds like or just a "polished" interviewer?
- He was extremely articulate, understanding of the human condition, has done his homework thoroughly about the district; understands the complexities of change, race conversations, and how to help community heal and come together over tough situations. Seems incredibly open to learning, yet also taking a stance for what he believes is right for students. Has fabulous experience as educator and leader..bring people together to be heard and to find consensus. I would love to see him offered the position of HUUSD's next superintendent.
- Although not an educator or professional within the field, but as a parent with kids who directly impact from this decision; I believe this candidate to be the best fit for our community and student needs.
- Good experience. He seems clear and gave direct hands on answers. I worry this is a retirement job and he may not be innovative enough for our community and needs. On the other hand, he seems sincere, invested in people (students and adults) and a believer in community, which are all pluses.
- Mike is my top candidate out of the three finalists because he demonstrated great leadership qualities, while also demonstrating humility and working well with teams. He gave really concrete examples in his experiences that are applicable to HUUSD like school renovations and validating teachers' frustrations and exhaustion.
- I thought Mike's answers were incredibly generic. I believe we need someone with specifics to help lead us forward.
- He has already experienced and triumphed at everything our distrust doing and about to go through
- Lack of experience
- Construction Project experience, multi level educator and admin, colaborative but willing to make the decision if situation calls are all positives. I liked he mentioned the use of agriculture as education. Does seem he does want to be here. Negatives-I worry he can find housing if offered position.

- How would he evaluate the financial, structural and educational needs of the district and work to build the communities trust.
- Very polished; seemed authentically interested in being part of the HU community - only job he's applied to! I liked that he addressed Arianna when he was answering her question. I trust an administrator who talks to the student in the room.
- Hire this man!! I'm hopeful after watching this interview!
- Probably would be my pick of the 3. I appreciated his demeanor and experience. He also impressed with his desire to be a part of the community.
- While Mr, Leichliter has administrative experience, I do not feel he is the right fit for this position. There needs to be a deeper connection to small town VT and the history.
- Educated, polite, respectful, and caring. The candidate has good leadership skills and a passion for education and students. He also did his homework and is interested in the Harwood District and Community. Fit for the job.
- Seems like the best fit for our schools and our community. It feels as if he has thoroughly researched our district and our communities and he believes it would be a good place for him and I believe in our unique area, this is important. He seems smart and has some really great experience. His answers are well thought out and he seems to value things that our communities value.
- I thought his answers were canned and vague. Sounded fine but had no substance.
- Seemed impersonal and too laid back to enter into a school district currently in disarray and lacking trust in the administration and the board. He was too similar to the types of students our schools are currently producing - weak, fragile, and unable to handle adversity.
- Strong commitment to student voice, true appreciation for community and teacher involvement, many years of experience. I appreciate his first hand work in dealing with racially charged situations.
- He seemed knowledgeable, transparent, and open minded.
- Loved his feeling of connection with our district. And this is his only application. And his CRT experience and passion. He's my favorite so far.
- Very relatable, knowledgeable
- Has strong experience and sometimes and outside perspective is helpful. Concrete actions taken around anti-racism. I do think that Zach McLaughlin would be the better choice, but Mike is a close second in my opinion.
- I feel that Mike is the strongest candidate. I was impressed with his experience and testimonials on the PASA (PA Association of School Administrators) website. I believe he is someone who would work well with and be highly respected in our district community. I think the other candidates, well known in VT, especially Zach, are good finalists, however many

community members have already judged them on here-say and not facts. This leaves me fearing that hiring one of the other two candidates could potentially lead to an immediate lack of faith in the administration, keeping the district from looking and moving forward. The community needs an experienced administrator with fresh eyes and ears to lead. Aside from Mike's extensive experience, he interviewed very well and showed himself to be very sincere and compassionate about wanting the best for our students and the community. Thanks to all the board members for your time and dedication. I hope members that are leaving in March will continue to be active in our school district as community members. You are leaving with a wealth of experience and knowledge on how to make and keep our schools great!

- Mike seems to be a well seasoned candidate that "gets it." He brings a teacher perspective, admin perspective and talks with history about collaborative leadership. He gets my vote. He was the only candidate that engaged me in a discussion on the visits to each school, and I saw all three, but he was the only one that took time to chat, introduce himself and see what was going on. He mentions he led this current district in a major renovation, this also may be helpful to have on board in our future.
- This candidate came prepared and had really in depth answers with supporting scenarios. He has the experience to come in and won't require a lot of on the job training. He was well spoken and engaged with the interviewers
- His answers were solid and he gave clear examples; would have liked more specificity around his guiding values/principles (his answer to Mr. Neville's question was 'avg') - he didn't give examples of HOW he's removed barriers for teachers, how he's coached them, etc. Also would have liked more evidence of values around communication, transparency, team/culture as I believe these are some of the current strengths that I wouldn't want us to compensate on. Seems solid based on this short window-in, but would probe or get good references on the following before final decision: - what do former teachers in his district say (would want few references from various levels, genders, years experience) - what do former Board members think about his leadership style and results? - what do former HS students say about their school culture and their perception of district decision making? to probe: 1. what is his philosophy on the purpose of education? 2. what are 2-3 examples of HOW he has removed barriers for teachers and the stress they endure? 3. what is his coaching style? 4. what additional values/principles does he bring to the community? (listening for something around communication, transparency, voice, equity, safety, etc.) 5. how does he think about his ideal time allocation as a superintendent?
- Mike has some excellent experiences both as a teacher and Superintendent. I have mixed feeling about whether or not he would be a good march for our district at this time.

- He seemed very nice and full of good intentions, but quite stiff and formal. I felt that he gave very "safe" and edu-speak, jargon-y answers to the questions that were all the "right" answers, but not answers that distinguish him. I did not get a sense that he would be able to clearly communicate his decision making process to the community. I also worry that coming from a larger district outside of New England, that he would not understand the tradition of local controls and small schools in Vermont.
- After reviewing Zach's interview, Mike is not as strong. By comparison, his answers are more vague, his examples more general than those of Zach's which were very concrete.
- I appreciate his calm demeanor. His ability to say, a leader needs to understand when to build consensus and when to be decisive. I also appreciated his approach to asking for feedback from principals and students about what they need to best support them. This can create a sense of community. I think he would be an incredible asset to our community. He is articulate, human focused, passionate about education and kind. He seems passionate about our district and truly wants to be here. I was very impressed with him and think he would make a great leader for the HUUSD.
- I appreciate that he is so willing to engage w/ educators and students. We've been missing that so much in our district.
- The experience he has in a major HS renovations is a big plus. It seems like he will be able to think through, and act upon, the inevitable fact that we will need consolidation within our seven campuses. The current seven campus model is unsustainable given the shrinking student population. This candidate seems like he will recognize this pretty quickly, and can hopefully suggest a path forward for merging a few of our campuses.
- Mike is my first choice. I think he will bring the experience, perspective, and new energy our district needs. I appreciate his middle and high school focus, his leadership through a major school renovation, and his clear/calm response to the interview committee. I am curious why he is leaving Penn Manor district a year before his contract is up.
- Pros: Lots of talk about student voice, listening to students, assessing needs first before action Direct experience with DEI Has recent experience with building renovations Cons: Mainstream lived experience Not sure about his ability to build consensus in the community (only example he gave was within a school) How long would he be here before he is ready to retire?
- I liked that Mike talked about both stem and agricultural programs. And his approach to solving problems with communication. He was confident, likeable, professional and seasoned. I think our district needs a strong leader with experience at this time. After reading about test scores I am also convinced that he will support staff to support all students- those that need supports and those that need more of a challenge to succeed.

- It would be refreshing to have a non Vermonter in charge. He seems like a great guy with a big heart and a big brain. He has had LOTS of experience in education, playing many roles. He seems humble yet very capable. I really liked his answer to the anti-racism question. And how he answered the question about bringing people together to make hard choices. He is a respectful listener.
- I really liked Mike and the sincerity to his answers. His experience and value to community are apparent. I noticed that he turned to address each person asking the question which is important, he made it clear he listens and tries to help problem solve and values the teachers and staff.
- Mike appeared to be a good listener, and responded thoughtfully to the questions posed during his interview.
- He is good communicator and clear thinker. Very well organized and seems to be a systems thinker. I think he might be personable but after watching Megan Roy's interview, felt he lacks the collaborative skills that she values so much. He seems well qualified and made it very clear that he is committed to this community.
- I liked this candidate overall. Reasons: 1) He will have an outside perspective. While it will be helpful to understand VT politics, it will be good to have leadership that is not bogged down with it. 2) He is a very good communicator and well spoken. 3) He was involved in a \$100M school renovation project, which our high school desperately needs. He may be able to help navigate this in the future. 4) Liked his comments about having respect for student voices and empathy for staff. I don't think this community listens to its students enough, especially when it comes to consolidating the middle school. One concern was that he mentioned "retiring" from his last school. Was that because he wanted to move or because he wants to actually retire? I would like to see our next superintendent stay for many years, if they are the right fit.
- He presents himself as an empathetic leader. He listens to staff, he thinks about student needs and he has proven himself at his current position as a strong leader. We need someone who is ready to be a compassionate leader. Our district needs to work together to move forward. He seems ready to bring a variety of parties together.
- I like that Mr. Leichliter started his career as a middle school teacher and seems to use his experience to inform his leadership. His work with Samaritan Center in PA and implementation of the Teen Hope program gives us a glimpse of his willingness to help students find success no matter what- even if they are living on the street. I like that he described his guiding principle as "to support teachers" and then he drills down a bit to add that he wants to remove barriers so that teachers can create supportive classroom

environments for their students. Mr. Leichliter seems to put teachers and students at the center of his practice, and promotes their successes to the broader community.

- I really liked Mr. Leichliter. He presented professionally and was a good mix of passion for education and ability to manage a complex organization. I liked that he talked about academics and I felt he was the only one who really addressed that. I also like that he has experience with high school students - I feel our high school is in most dire need of support and direction: bathrooms are closed because kids are doing drugs or pulling sinks off the walls - and just this week a kid was beaten up in the bathroom. Academics is not in the back seat... it doesn't feel like it's even in the car. Although there may be some challenges around coming from out of state, I think he would have resources in regional superintendent meetings and seems capable of figuring Vermont-specific stuff out - plus I think the external perspective could be really helpful. At the same time it doesn't seem too much of a foreign perspective - he talked about agriculture and alternative career options being important where he is now, too. I liked that he talked about addressing racism head-on and that he comes from a district with 30% people of color. He probably understands a lot more than most of us.
- But - I wonder about his commitment to Vermont and his understanding of how things work in a small rural state.
- Not a solid yes. Seemed a steady personality and professional. Building renovation experience a plus. Doesn't come off as dynamic and can he be strong enough to work through issues with the HUUSD board.
- Dr. Leichliter was a successful superintendent of a school district with many similarities to HUUSD. His former district had multiple elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school. That district is comprised of multiple towns but located in an agrarian area. Additionally, the district's high school provided different educational paths for its students--college prep, tech ed, etc. He supervised the renovation of the district high school and the improvement in the academic ranking of that high school. He also oversaw the transformation of the middle school schedules in order for them to offer equal opportunities to students in both schools. These are experiences that will serve him well in our district. Dr. Leichliter mentioned many times that he is always asking what someone (i.e. students, staff, administrators) needs. A good leader is always listening to the needs of his teams and working hard to meet those needs. One cannot lead without listening. Finally, I was most impressed by Dr. Leichliter's statement that he has looked at Superintendent jobs from California to Maine but, after researching the HUUSD district, this is the only job for which he is applying!! He has the relevant experiences and skill sets that HUUSD needs. Hire him!!!

- I found Mike Lechlitter to be informed, confident, and thoughtful in his responses to the questions. I got the sense that he understands what some of the pressing needs are for the next stage of our HUUSD community, not the least of which include staff wellness and a need to get back to the conversation of revitalizing the high school. One thing in particular that resonated with me was his notion that having perspectives from another place is a strength that he can bring to the table. I agree. As a Vermonter, I think we insulate ourselves as being the wise old elders, and too often it results in a status quo. The front porch wisdom of "don't fix it if it ain't broken" or "ya can't get there from here" is hindering our need for progress and improvement. We are a bit broken and a little lost. I think we need experience, new ideas, balance and kind confidence as we enter this shift in leadership.
- I don't feel that he answered the questions. He talked around the questions. I do not think that he gave a good answer to the question about equity and race. This is a critical issue in our schools right now, and action will need to be taken. I don't think he would take action.
- I thought this candidate spoke very well and seemed genuine. A variety of experiences in education and gave explicit examples to questions.
- All the red flags - examples from 20 years ago, researched the whole country but only applied here, decided to leave last post without a job. That aside, he really had nothing to say. Helping teachers deal with the ongoing stress we've had for the last years: bagels. Hard pass.
- I don't think Mike answered the questions well. I didn't like his example of bringing two groups of people together. His example only represented a school, not an entire district, and in fact there wasn't a real resolution. I also didn't get a good vibe that he will lead us well in our anti-racism work and SEL work recovering from the pandemic. Please note that I am also a parent/tax payer.
- But I think there is a much better candidate.
- He has a lot of experience. He seems personable. He mentioned a strong belief in supporting teachers. He seems like he could mediate groups that may not agree with each other. He really wants to be here.
- Concerned that he has no VT experience in VT other than a daughter in college at UVM. Some VT districts have a history of bringing leaders from other states that don't share the same values of VT Vermont and they often don't last. He was very articulate but something didn't feel genuine. A 30 minute public interview and no time to meet & greet the candidates in a formal way prior to the interview was disappointing.
- I really appreciate the thoughtful answers, the experience of navigating challenges that seem similar in nature to our district. The experience of being in multiple roles in schools will help provide lots of perspective.

- If there had been a maybe choice I would have clicked it. I liked what he had to say about working cooperatively with different school communities but I didn't hear anything about working with the community outside of school. On the other hand he communicated well and I liked that he had really looked into our district and seemed committed to a Vermont move although I'm not sure his experience in Pennsylvania has a lot of relevance to northern New England.
- I like that he has experience as a teacher, assistant principal, principal and superintendent, that he knows what it's like at all levels with their own struggles. I appreciate his focus not only on student well being but also teachers. I like that he has experience navigating tensions around anti-racism and equity.
- Extremely well-spoken and engaging. Professional. Brings a wealth of experience.
- I appreciate his level of experience, respect for students, and statements about equity.
- Based on what I have seen and read about the candidates, I feel Mike would best serve our district. He shows strong results from his experience at Penn Manor as well as shows an understanding of leadership and community. I also like the general sense of openness and welcoming. I feel this is a good time to bring someone from the outside to share and guide our district with a fresh set of eyes.
- I really liked his connection to his community. He seems like he cares deeply about the well-being of students, staff and community members. He also has experience with a big renovation and dealing w scheduling issues. Both of these things need to be addressed at the high school.
- I am a senior at Harwood Union High School and I had the awesome opportunity to be one of the students who gave Mike a tour around the school. Through talking with him and watching him interact with both students and teachers, I could tell that he is a very personable, genuine person, who engages with everyone he meets. I think Mike would be a great leader for our district, and I think it's awesome that he is so enthusiastic about the possibility of being part of our district too. I sincerely hope he is chosen as our next superintendent candidate.
- He is my second choice. I liked how he talked about listening and that he liked the Harkness program. but does he really understand Vermont?
- We need someone with experience
- Former teacher, experience in construction and high school revamp, strong in social justice
- I like that he has a vision and examples from previous work that show he is capable of achieving his vision. I like how he knows why Harwood is the best fit for him and that is evident in his actions and answers to the questions.

- I have now watched all three interviews and my order of preference is: 1) Megan Roy; 2) Zach McLaughlin; 3) Mike Leichter. I appreciated Mike's answers to the equity and "Why Harwood?" questions. However, I don't think he has as strong of a foundation or understanding of some of the challenges our district faces with consolidation and trust. I think he would be OK but he didn't excite me as much as the other two.
- I think he is a strong candidate, and I like his stated reason for applying: he likes Vermont, its people and traditions. That's important given that he would be moving here from a position that very likely has a much higher pay scale, and from the region where he grew up and has lived most of his life. I worry that this may be his "pre-retirement." Over all, I would rate him as second of the three, my preference going to Ms. Roy.
- Having watched the interviews, I was most impressed with Mike's ease of answering questions in a comfortable, down-to-earth way while also citing his experience. I appreciated how he stressed how he'd support teachers and his eagerness to be part of the community.
- #1 of 3 candidates
- #1 of 3 candidates. It is critical for the next superintendent of the district to come to the position with experience as a superintendent.
- I appreciated his viewpoint of supporting teachers, which seemed to come from his experience as a teacher. I also value that he's been through a large renovation withing a district he's worked in which could inform and assist us with the bond and work that needs to be done to renovate Harwood HS.
- Well rounded experience, genuine, wants to be here and to join our district. Proven leader.
- Respectful of the people who do the work, and the students. No evident ego or control issues. Open to learning and listening. Doesn't come across as superior but seems like a team player. How refreshing !
- Mr. Lichliter IS THE ONE. He is a great match for our district/communities. He's a strong communicator, he is smart, intelligent and clearly is a strong listener. He is someone who has experience and has a lot to offer our schools and our community. He will make a great addition to our school community.
- Experience - as a teacher, administrator, and superintendent. Connected - he seems incredibly comfortable connecting with students, families, administrators, and teachers - these connections seem to guide his decision making - from what he said, it appears he highly values these connections and conversations - he appears to listen and let such conversations guide in the decision making. He speaks of the importance of being open and having conversations and also includes ACTION steps. He wants to be part of our community - he has spent time getting to know our district and wants to be somewhere that

builds community - we are an amazing community and we deserve someone who TRULY wants to be here.

- Brings practical, relevant experience as an educator and admin. Experience connects to current dilemmas our district needs to solve. First choice out of the 3 candidates. Well rounded experience. Our district could benefit greatly from hiring an “outside” candidate. Someone who has experience with systems and procedures in another district and state. A fresh perspective and new lens on Vermont systems and procedures.
- Mike seems to have just the sort of experience we need in Huusd, particularly his emphasis on connecting students to their learning goals by way of empowering their teachers and enabling community connections/experiences. I appreciate that he would bring a fresh perspective in the sense that he is not already in the “VT superintendent club”.
- Mike understands communication and appreciation is the pillar to success, working together is also key! Mike would be an asset to Harwood
- I watched all three interviews and feel like Mike is the best candidate for our district. He is experienced and seems willing and eager to do the hard work needed in our district to heal and move forward as a community. I appreciate that he found us and is only applying here. He wants to be a part of HUUSD which is so exciting for us!
- He appears to be the best of the three by far.
- This candidate's experience is critical and highly important. Based on his view around listening/collaboration/connecting it seems he can seamlessly become part of our community and we will not have to waste precious time supporting someone on how to take on the responsibilities of superintendency. We need someone to step in that has a full understanding of how to balance all of the responsibilities of a superintendent - has experience doing this job and doing it well - it seems Mike could do this.
- Very impressed by Mike Leichliter. I think he would be an excellent choice!
- I greatly appreciate the time and energy Dr. Mike has put into understanding Harwood. He appreciates who we are and wants to be part of our team. I believe he will work to accentuate our positive attributes and can lead us through to brighter days
- I believe his previous years of experience as a direct instruction educator, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent for 13 years is beneficial. I believe he has a clear understanding of the various tasks surrounding being a superintendent in Central Vermont supporting 6 towns. He is an advocate of STEM and technical schools which I feel is very necessary and currently lacking in our district. I believe his transparency is welcoming and his thoughts surrounding equity and racial concerns is a fair approach to hopefully assist our district to address these issues. His empathy and concern for the mental and physical health of our staff and students is extremely important and his willingness to visit

schools to 'check in' to see how staff and students are doing. I did not hear of his history regarding budgets, staff retention or community feedback which would have been nice. He did briefly mention a \$100 million bond for upgrades to a school in PA which given the current climate in our communities is a concern but he did speak of being a problem solver and that is important.

- Talks a lot but I didn't hear substance that makes me believe he's a strong leader.
- Mike is the most seasoned administrator of the three and best prepared to lead our district. Though I didn't think his interview was perfect, he demonstrated some moments of vulnerability that will be an important facet of leading us through the healing we need to do as a district.
- I did not think his answer about dealing with conflict was strong. Our community has divisive issues that are on a much higher level than scheduling. We need a leader to help us move forward with school configuration, repairs that need to be done to our high school. He is a strong educator and his background would serve our community well with perspectives and values about leadership
- He might be a good fit. I particularly liked his answer about why he would be a good fit for Harwood but think some of his other answers were not specific enough to give me a clear answer to whether he would be a good choice as Sept.
- Excellent candidate. He's my top choice of the three interviewed.