NESDEC
New England School Development Council
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Andover Public Schools
Superintendent Search
Successful Candidate Profile
April 2026

This document provides the *Successful Candidate Profile* to inform the candidate selection process.

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To: Andover School Committee

From: Mary Malone, Ed.D., NESDEC Consultant
New England School Development Council (NESDEC)

Date: April 2026

Andover Public Schools
Superintendent Search

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

During the period of March 31, 2026, through April 16, 2026, the Andover School Committee, with assistance from the New England School Development Council (NESDEC), conducted a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment to support the search for the next Superintendent of Schools and heard from approximately 500 school and community members.

The assessment process included:

- An online community survey
- Four in-person focus groups on April 13 and April 15
- One virtual focus group on April 16
- Two School Committee Informal Forums on April 11 and April 14

Participants were invited to respond to two key questions:

- What are the qualities, characteristics, skills, knowledge and experiences you desire in a new Superintendent of Schools?
- What do you see as the pressing tasks and challenges ahead for him or her in year one?

The Andover School Committee reviewed and analyzed the community's input and then added its own perspective to develop the Andover School District's *Successful Candidate Profile*. The *Successful Candidate Profile* is designed to guide the Superintendent Search interview and selection process.

The Andover School Committee wishes to thank and commend all those who participated in the community needs assessment process.

Respectfully submitted,
Andover School Committee

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The community of the Andover Public Schools expects a high level of competence across all aspects of the position of Superintendent. Stakeholders recognize the strengths of the schools, including dedicated staff, supportive families, and a strong sense of community pride. At the same time, respondents noted challenges related to financial pressures, trust in leadership, and the need for a clear vision for the future.

The community seeks a superintendent who is a trustworthy, student-focused, and collaborative leader capable of guiding the district through current challenges while building a stronger future. The successful candidate will communicate openly, support staff, advance equity, manage resources wisely, and inspire pride and confidence in the public schools.

The successful candidate will be expected to provide stable, effective leadership while fostering collaboration, transparency, and excellence across the district.

To ensure the selected Superintendent is a particular match for our district's needs and goals, *preference will be given to the educational leader who demonstrates a significant depth of skill and knowledge in the following key areas:*

- **Community Engagement and Communication**
- **Strong and Effective Leadership: Guided by Mission, Vision and Strategy**
- **Academic Excellence and Student Success**
- **Financial and Operational Leadership**

Community Engagement and Communication

A leader who:

- Is accessible, visible, responsive, and actively engaged in both school and community life; serves as a collaborative partner to students, families, staff, municipal leaders, and community organizations to support district and student success.
- Commits to engaging in extensive listening to seek input from all stakeholders, including families, staff, and the community at large.
- Communicates openly, honestly, and consistently with families, staff, students, and the community; clearly explains district priorities, goals, expectations, challenges, and decisions.

- Builds confidence and trust through a culture of openness, transparency, respect, and decisive leadership.
- Celebrates student and staff accomplishments while promoting pride and confidence in the Andover Public Schools.

Strong and Effective Leadership: Guided by Mission, Vision, and Strategy

A leader who:

- Makes thoughtful, timely, and informed decisions; solves problems effectively, calmly, and strategically; leads through challenges with integrity, consistency, and resilience; follows through on commitments, and is accountable for results.
- Motivates, leads, guides, and directs staff effectively; cultivates strong relationships with staff by seeking their input; values their expertise, respects their opinions, and uses feedback to inform district practices; encourages a culture of professionalism and continuous learning.
- Fosters an environment that prioritizes both academic and social emotional development and growth of all students, utilizes evidenced-based educational approaches, promotes equitable access to programs and resources, supports culturally responsive practices, and ensures every student and family feels valued.
- Maintains positive and collaborative labor relations, with experience working with unions and the collective bargaining process.
- Demonstrates an understanding of local, state and national trends and the impacts on the district; possesses a strong working knowledge of school law, policy, and governance.

Commitment to Academic Excellence

A leader who:

- Provides a clear and compelling vision for the future of the district.
- Demonstrates an unwavering commitment to academic excellence grounded in high expectations and strong instructional practices, while strategically addressing achievement gaps through targeted supports and data-informed decision making.
- Exhibits a deep understanding of and a strong commitment to appropriate programming for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and historically marginalized groups.

- Ensures a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment; supports student mental health and social-emotional well-being with an evidenced-based social emotional (SEL) curriculum.
- Creates a continuum of services, alignment of resources, and implements effective interventions to support all students and families.

Financial and Operational Leadership

A leader who:

- Possesses expertise in school finance, including budget development, management, and capital planning; communicates budget priorities clearly and effectively to the School Committee, staff, community, and municipal officials.
- Ensures that the management of schools complies with laws, regulations, and School Committee policies.
- Conducts a comprehensive assessment of the district operations such as staffing, finances, and instructional supports to ensure resources are aligned with student needs and district priorities and are implemented and distributed equitably and efficiently.
- Understands federal, state, and local funding structures; explores alternative funding sources (such as grants) and creates partnerships to support district programs and extracurricular activities.
- Demonstrates expertise in facilities management, long-range maintenance planning, and building/renovation projects.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO SUPPORT THE CANDIDATE PROFILE

Community Engagement and Communication

A leader who:

- Commits to engaging in an extensive listening and entry process to seek input from all stakeholders, including the community at large.
- Will consider the input from families and the community at large in developing and implementing goals.
- Is accessible, visible, responsive, and actively engaged in both school and community life.
- Is highly visible within the school community and takes time to learn about the students, staff, and families.
- Maintains a strong community presence and serves as a collaborative partner to families, municipal leaders, and community organizations.
- Encourages meaningful family engagement and develops strong community partnerships to support student success.
- Will consider the input from families and the community at large in developing and implementing goals.
- Will build authentic relationships with students, staff, families, municipal leaders, and the School Committee.
- Stays aware of issues, events, and activities throughout the district and views school and community relationships as collaborative partnerships.
- Effectively communicates with all stakeholders. Needs to excel in communication connecting with staff, students, parents, and community.
- Possesses clear communication skills in written and oral format. Communication is clear and concise and fosters transparency. Clearly explains district priorities, goals, expectations, challenges, and decisions.
- Communicates openly, honestly, and consistently with families, staff, students, and the community.
- Builds confidence through transparent, thoughtful, and decisive leadership.
- Rebuilds trust and fosters a culture of openness, transparency, and mutual respect.
- Celebrates student and staff accomplishments while promoting pride and confidence in the Andover Public Schools.

Strong and Effective Leadership: Guided by Mission, Vision, and Strategy

A leader who:

- Unifies the district and moves it forward with a shared sense of purpose aligned with the district's mission and vision.
- Provides both stability and forward-thinking leadership during times of opportunities and challenges.
- Possesses a broad portfolio of experiences in public education.
- Demonstrates a sincere commitment to becoming an engaged member of the community and making a long-term commitment to the district.
- Makes thoughtful, timely and informed decisions; solves problems effectively, calmly, and strategically; leads through challenges with integrity, consistency, and resilience; follows through on commitments, and is accountable for results
- Frames issues clearly for decision-making and discussion and reaches timely decisions. Manages change effectively.
- Recruits, develops, and retains a diverse, high-quality workforce of administrators, teachers, and staff.
- Fosters a culture where staff feel respected, valued, and supported.
- Builds a culture of unity, professionalism, and coherence by restoring relationships and creating positive working conditions,
- Motivates, leads, guides and directs staff effectively; will cultivate strong relationships with staff by seeking their input; values their expertise, respects their opinions, and uses feedback to inform district practices.
- Values staff development and creates opportunities for systemwide professional growth and high-quality professional learning.
- Supports meaningful high-quality professional development for staff.
- Demonstrates a commitment to supervising and evaluating programs to ensure effectiveness, accountability, and continuous improvement.
- Designs and implements evaluation processes with clear performance standards and follows through on addressing performance issues. Addresses performance concerns directly and constructively, ensuring a culture of professionalism and continuous learning.
- Understands the importance of accountability for staff and self.

- Promotes collaboration with school leaders by valuing their expertise, seeking their input, and engaging them in decisions that directly affect school operations.
- Builds and leads an effective administrative leadership team while holding self and administrators accountable for meeting expectations and achieving results.
- Build strong relationships with the District Leadership Team and school level administrators. Relationship building and developing trust are important factors to advancing the district's goals and ensuring all students' needs are met.
- Foster collaboration and partnerships with the school level administration team; value them for the dedicated and passionate leaders they are. Tap into their expertise and experience and provide them a platform to have input into the decision-making process, particularly those systems, structures, and changes that will directly impact the operation of their buildings.
- Understands evidenced-based educational practices and uses data to inform decision making.
- Leads effectively with students and families at the center of all decision-making.
- Prioritizes both academic and social emotional development and growth of all students.
- Fosters an inclusive environment that promotes equitable access to programs and resources, supports culturally responsive practices, and ensures every student and family feels valued.
- Demonstrates an understanding of local, state and national trends and the impact on the Andover Public School District; Possesses a strong working knowledge of school law, policy, and governance.
- Ensures safe, supportive schools free from bullying and harassment.
- Leverages technology to enhance learning through thoughtful implementation of evidenced-based instructional tools and practices.
- Maintains positive and collaborative labor relations, with experience working with unions and the collective bargaining process.

Commitment to Academic Excellence

A leader who:

- Provides a clear and compelling vision for the future of the schools.
- Establishes high expectations and measurable goals for continuous improvement.
- Understands the current educational landscape and will be a strong and effective champion to foster and maintain a student-centered district.

- Demonstrates an unwavering commitment to academic excellence grounded in high expectations and strong instructional practices while strategically addressing achievement gaps through targeted supports and data-informed decision making.
- Prioritizes academic growth and achievement for all students. Will ensure equitable access to opportunities and resources.
- Makes decisions based on what is best for students and understands the varied needs of learners across grade levels.
- Leads with a clear commitment to fairness, inclusion, belonging, and respect for every student and family.
- Supports culturally responsive and inclusive practices. Understands the diverse academic and social emotional needs of all students.
- Demonstrates a strong commitment in appropriate programming for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and historically marginalized groups.
- Brings strong expertise in special education and a deep understanding of the complex needs of students with disabilities.
- Ensures a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment. Supports student mental health and social-emotional well-being with an evidenced based social emotional (SEL) curriculum.
- Creates a continuum of services, alignment of resources, and implements effective interventions to support all students and families.

Financial and Operational Leadership

A leader who:

- Possesses expertise in school finance, including budget development, management and capital planning.
- Demonstrates strong financial stewardship and identifies efficiencies. Develops responsible, transparent budgets.
- Communicates budget priorities clearly and effectively to the School Committee, staff, community, and municipal officials.
- Effectively communicates budget priorities to the School Committee, staff, community, and municipal officials.
- Aligns resources with student needs and district priorities. Protects valuable student programming whenever possible.

- Prioritizes hiring and retaining student-facing positions over administrative expansion.
- Is skilled at working with the budget and can evaluate the school budget to find cost saving measures that will not affect student achievement.
- Conducts a comprehensive review of district operations including staffing, finances and support services to ensure equitable and efficient use of resources.
- Will conduct short and long-range planning in the areas of facilities and other departments of the district with a creative and innovative lens to create efficiency and excellence.
- Conducts a thorough assessment of the district operations such as staffing, finances and instructional support to ensure resources are implemented and distributed equitably and efficiently.
- Makes bold strategic decisions to reimagine and deploy district resources for the sustainability of the Andover Public School District.
- Demonstrates strong organizational skills and has a deep understanding of school law; ensure that the management of schools complies with laws, regulations, and School Committee policies.
- Maintains strong working knowledge of school finance, including budget development and management. Understands federal, state, and local funding structures.
- Understands federal, state, and local funding structures; explores alternative funding sources (such as grants), and creates partnerships to support district programs and extracurricular activities.
- Demonstrates expertise in facilities management, long-range maintenance planning and future building or renovation of and including Andover High School.