REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH CONSULTANT SERVICES

Grand Forks Public School District No. 1

2400 47th Avenue South

Grand Forks ND 58206-6000

The Grand Forks Public Schools School Board seeks the services of a consultant to conduct a full and comprehensive search for a new Superintendent of Schools. The Grand Forks Public Schools District serves a population of approximately 7,714 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. It employs a staff of approximately 1,733 full- and part-time people. The impending superintendent vacancy is due to the current superintendent submitting a retirement resignation effective June 30, 2027. The School Board's goal is to appoint a new superintendent to assume the role as of July 1, 2027. Additional information about the District is available online at www.gfschools.org.

I. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT/DEADLINE

Proposals, along with 10 copies, shall be addressed to and received at the following:

Ryan Gatzke, Interim Business Manager

Grand Forks Public Schools

P.O. Box 6000

Grand Forks Public Schools, ND 58206-6000

Email: rgatzke310@mygfschools.org

Phone: 701-746-2205 x7123

Deadline for receipt of proposal is 3:00 PM, Tuesday, November 10, 2026

II. INTRODUCTION

Grand Forks Public Schools (GFPS) is beginning its search for a highly-qualified candidate for Superintendent of the Schools to start work on July 1, 2027. To help in the search for the most qualified candidate, the school district is seeking to retain the services of a search firm with experience in the recruitment of superintendents for school districts similar in size and demographics to GFPS.

Grand Forks Public Schools is comprised of students from Grand Forks Public School District No. 1 and Grand Forks Air Force Base Public School District No. 140. The two districts work together in a unique arrangement to serve the approximately 7,714 students who attend schools in the two communities. Approximately 6 percent of students are Asian; 62 percent Caucasian; 12 percent African American, 12 percent Hispanic, and 8 percent Native American. Approximately 37% of students qualify for free and reduced-price lunch.

The schools of the two districts expect and receive strong performance from the students. This is possible because of a rich curriculum design led by highly-qualified teachers, 51.76% of them have Master degrees and beyond. The districts' composite ACT score in 2023-2024 was 20.3, exceeding the North Dakota average of 19.82. Approximately 315 students are enrolled in dual credit courses and 19% of high school students are enrolled in advanced placement courses.

The district employs approximately 1,733 full- and part-time people, including 832 teachers and 901 support and administrative staff. People like working here and many of them spend their entire careers at Grand Forks Public Schools.

School facilities consist of 18 schools in the district (including elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, alternative learning programs, and Head Start). Parent and community support is strong and very instrumental in the success of the schools. Emphasis is given to class size, curriculum, staff qualifications, and student achievement. The result is high average daily attendance, well-behaved students, safe comfortable schools, and academic results that exceed those of the state and nation.

The Grand Forks School District is governed by a nine-member School Board that develops policies for the operation of the school system. School Board members, representing a cross-section of the community, are elected for four-year terms. Elections occur every two years with four members being elected during one two-year cycle and five in the next two-year cycle. The Grand Forks Air Force Base School District has a separate five-member board that contracts with the local school district for educational services. School Board member selection occurs annually as per North Dakota state law.

School District funding is from three sources - local, state, and federal - with a general fund budget totaling approximately $135 million annually.

The School Board uses a modified policy governance approach as its method of governing the school district. The Superintendent is the School Board's primary employee, and it is the Superintendent's role to evaluate and monitor all District employees. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible to the School Board for carrying out District policy, administering the operation of the Districts' schools, supervising all District personnel, and advising the School Board on all educational matters for the welfare and interests of the students.

III. PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

This Request for Proposal ("RFP") seeks replies from experienced and qualified search firms or consultants specializing in assisting with employment searches for school district

superintendents. The School Board will work with the selected firm to develop a Superintendent search process and a timeline for the search activities. Duties and activities will include the creation of a position description and qualifications, advisory services to the School Board, identification and assessment of candidates, assistance with logistics for finalist interviews, and securing a satisfactory conclusion to the search.

Understanding that discretion is of utmost importance to our district, as well as to many candidates, the search firm must maintain the confidentiality of all information collected as appropriate.

The items below represent those activities where the School Board expects assistance/input from the selected consulting firm.

A. Scope of the Work

- Work with District's School Board, Superintendent Search Committee, and designated staff and others as directed by the School Board.
- Meet with School Board to clarify and determine views regarding desirable education, training, experience, and personal characteristics of candidates.
- Identify qualified candidates.
- Conduct aspects of recruitment process as directed by the School Board.
- Work with designated staff and others as directed by the School Board to recommend finalists.

B. Specific Activities

1. Meet with designated stakeholders as directed by the School Board to develop a profile of the new superintendent.
2. Work with staff and the School Board to develop a plan and timeline for recruitment, selection, and communications.
3. Identify potential qualified candidates, discuss with those candidates the district's characteristics and the School Board's leadership profile, criteria for the new superintendent, and encourage qualified internal and external candidates to apply.
4. Obtain all relevant background information on potential candidates.
5. Screen applicants, using the approved School Board criteria.
6. Conduct a thorough validation of each semi-finalist's qualifications and background including information that might harm GFPS and the candidate's professional reputation.
7. Maintain confidentiality of all information procured or maintained by the consultant in compliance with North Dakota Century Code requirements.
8. Collaborate with school district staff to prepare and distribute physical and online written materials necessary to advertise vacancy.
9. Advertise broadly in North Dakota, regionally, and nationally through a variety of means.
10. Arrange for School Board representatives visits to finalists' home districts as deemed necessary and appropriate by the School Board.

Proposed timeline is to have a signed contract with the new Superintendent by the end of April 2027 with a start date of July 1, 2027.

IV. EVALUATION

A. The School Board for Grand Forks Public Schools would like responses for each point below, in the order listed:

1. A letter of interest including company history.
2. Response to the stated scope of work including how consultant will carry out the general and specific activities.
3. Approach: How the consultant will approach this work to meet Grand Forks Public Schools' unique needs.
4. Schedule: Timeline of search (with readiness to incorporate the District's timeline).
5. Fees: Consultant's fees including an analysis of itemized options.
6. Staff: Key personnel to be assigned to this search, including resumes.
7. Qualifications and experience relevant to this scope of work:
    - Experience placing superintendents in similar school districts.
    - Track record of searching for public school superintendents.
    - Flexibility to adjust superintendent search following community and stakeholder feedback and school board directives.
8. References: List of references, plus at least three recent letters of reference from clients comparable to Grand Forks Public Schools.
9. Optional: Other information related to consultant's expertise and performance.

B. A proposed search plan.

Indicate the methodology you employ to initiate and carry out a search. Your narrative should address the search activities, including:

1. How you propose to communicate and work with two school boards and the Superintendent Search Committee.
2. How you will identify prospective candidates and promote their interest to apply.
3. Your experience in effective community engagement both in terms of collecting information from the public to develop the initial position qualifications and evaluation criteria and in providing a meaningful way to generate and receive public input in the evaluation of final candidates.
4. How you will collect information from stakeholders to develop the initial position qualification and evaluation criteria.
5. What you see as the major challenges to a successful superintendent search and how you would address them.
6. What information, services and assistance you will require from the School Board and district staff to enable you to conduct the search.

V. SELECTION/INTERVIEW PROCESS

The School Board will review all proposals and may invite selected respondents to participate in an interview process. Participants will present and discuss their proposal, and respond to questions. The primary contact listed in the RFP response will be contacted in regard to the status of their proposal, including any interview.

The School Board will select the proposal that it deems will best serve the interest of the Grand Forks Public Schools, taking into account a range of technical, managerial and cost-related criteria, including the scope, clarity, relevance and feasibility of each respondent's proposal; the qualifications of the individuals who will work on the project; the demonstrated ability of the respondent to perform the services set forth in the proposal; and the relative cost of the proposals. Price being but one factor that will be considered. The School Board reserves the right to reject any and all submitted proposals.

The consultant's contract agreement will be subject to final approval from the District's legal counsel and by majority vote of the School Board.