

## EDUCATION/LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- What is your experience with managing a Special Education program?

In all of my school administrative experience, I have strived to ensure that my schools have offered and provided Special Education services that are in full compliance with state and federal IDEA laws.

When I was with Bureau of Indian Education, my schools were audited every school year for Special Education compliance. My schools have been rated as "Level 1," meeting all Special Education requirements. This is a reflection of the work that is being done with my administration, Special Education department, teachers, related service providers, and my parents in implementing student Individualized Education Plans.

- In your bios you stated that you want to put emphasis on reforming schools. Can you give examples of the reforms you've helped other schools with?
- Did your school meet and/or exceed standardized test proficiency?
- Has your school made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)? Please explain.

Yes, my previous schools have met and exceeded standardized test proficiency. My schools all have had 95+% Native American student population. As a candidate, I have an experienced background in establishing school improvement efforts and improving Indian education.

I have inherited some schools that were in significant need of reform. I have successfully transformed a BIE elementary school from Federal NCLB School Improvement Year 2 status to Making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). I have Made AYP for 12 consecutive school years (2003-2014) in a public high school and Bureau of Indian Education elementary school.

In working towards significant school improvement, there are several benchmarks in improvement that come into play. These include: attendance rate, % of student proficiency per grade level, % of students tested. I have worked with intensive data analysis, used "data teams process" to set up SMART goals, planned for professional development, established interventions programs, and collaborated with parents in implementing a home literacy and math program to support the school's efforts to improve.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

- What can you tell me about Head Start, its framework, and what it's designed to do for children and families?
- What is the difference between a public preschool and Head Start?

There are some key differences between a public pre-school and Head Start. A pre-school is operated by public and private entities. The pre-school provides foundational skills and developmental education. These entities may accept families with no limitations on household income.

Head Start is a Federal program that promotes the school readiness of children from birth to age five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development. Head Start programs provide a learning environment that supports children's growth in many areas such as language, literacy, and social and emotional development. Head Start emphasizes the role of parents as their child's first and most important teacher. These programs help build relationships with families that support family well-being and many other important areas.

While both a public pre-school and a Head Start programs provide early childhood development, there are some constraints. A public pre-school may accept more students and may offer individualized academic support. A Head Start program has limits on who is eligible to participate, and their program is pre-established and a center must be in alignment and compliance with those federal program goals.

## STUDENTS & FAMILIES

- What is your experience with families in poverty? Families experiencing trauma? How does that experience effect your professional work?
- How have you improved parent involvement?

The topic of parent involvement and community engagement are important in gaining a support system for schools.

I have used Dr. Epstein's Framework for Parent involvement in my work with parents, families, and communities. The Framework is comprised of 6 components:

1. **Parenting:** Type 1 involvement occurs when family practices and home environments support "children as students" and when schools understand their children's families.
2. **Communicating:** Type 2 involvement occurs when educators, students, and families "design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications."
3. **Volunteering:** Type 3 involvement occurs when educators, students, and families "recruit and organize parent help and support" and count parents as an audience for student activities.
4. **Learning at Home:** Type 4 involvement occurs when information, ideas, or training are provided to educate families about how they can "help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning."
5. **Decision Making:** Type 5 involvement occurs when schools "include parents in school decisions" and "develop parent leaders and representatives."
6. **Collaborating with the Community:** Type 6 involvement occurs when community services, resources, and partners are integrated into the educational process to "strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development."

My experience with parent involvement has been great. SRS needs to continue to engage and involve parents in their child's education. In my experience, the best strategy is for the school organization is to provide continuous opportunities for parents to become involved.

I intend to make myself available to parents and community by hosting a monthly "Coffee with the Superintendent" session. In my previous school positions, parents have appreciated this opportunity to get together for school updates, participate in trainings, provide parent input and feedback, and be involved in the education process.

## STAFF

- How will you hold principals, leaders, and staff accountable to student achievement?

Each school and program/department will be asked to provide an action plan to increase achievement, align program/department goals, and provide capacity building opportunities for all staff. The SRS district as a whole will align services to support the goal of teaching and learning. In this process, there will be accountability in establishing and working towards meeting these goals.

- How do you encourage 300+ staff and let them know you see them?
- How you will communicate with all staff?

I will encourage staff by offering opportunities for feedback and input. I will inform that staff that they are valued and appreciated for the work that they do to provide educational services to SRS and our students, parents, and community. I have experience in using a schedule in which I make visits to each school site and programs/departments for regular walk-throughs and scheduled meetings and observations. It is important to inspect the implementation of school improvement initiatives at these site levels. I have supported professional development and team building activities in be inclusive of all categories of workers.

In my administrative experience, I have used a variety of methods for communication within the organization such as memos in staff mailroom inboxes to electronic methods (OneCallNow) that sends text messages and emails to staff. I intend to use a variety of communication to inform, update, and collaborate with staff at all levels.

## **CULTURE & LANGUAGE**

- What is your knowledge of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community as it relates to education and our commitment to community and culture?
- What is your experiencing incorporating Native American language and culture into curriculum and student activities?

There is a rich cultural history in the Salt River community area with the Akimel O'odham and Piiipaash. The SRPMIC has always been committed to education and the instruction of language, culture, and community history. When I was at Desert Eagle Secondary School, we were encouraged to integrate language and Native American culture into the school's social studies curriculum. This process made for an integrated study of the traditional social studies coursework with a Native American perspective.

I have continued this approach to incorporating Native American culture into the school's program. At HPLS, the school had a bicultural component in integrating Tohono O'odham and Pascua Yaqui language and cultures into the school's curriculum, foreign language requirement, and into the daily operations of the school. The school had: language class, traditional arts/crafts, school garden, nutrition education, and support for after school activities.

At SRRS, I continued this approach to providing daily instruction and correlations of Tohono O'odham language and cultural components into the schools operations. We coordinated with IHS to provide Diabetes prevention education, Healthy O'odham Promotion to provide nutritional education, implemented a Wellness Walking Program, collaborated with numerous Tohono O'odham Nation programs to support school traditional 2 day camping activities, school garden, storytelling, singing/dancing, and providing students with historical significant learning opportunities.

In my schools in Dulce and Navajo Nation, we implemented language and cultural components into the schools as well. The following are additional activities that were conducted: pageants, pow wows, royalty program, school ambassador program, daily Pledge of Allegiance on intercom, student cultural performances.

SRS has several components in its school organization. These include ECEC, SR Elementary, ALA, Higher Education, and Administration. I would value the opportunity to work on implementing a strong language and cultural component in the organization to support students, parents, and community.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Name three books that have influenced you the most?  
The following books have influenced me:
  1. The First Days of School, Harry Wong
  2. Data Teams, Douglas Reeves
  3. Learning By Doing, Professional Learning Communities, Richard DuFour
  
- What question do you wish we had asked you?  
How would a coworker describe you?  
Dedicated, committed, self-motivated, reliable, ethical, student-centered