

# Finding Leaders is . . .

A national network of experienced educators and human resource, management, and public engagement specialists. *Finding Leaders* is helping with the significant challenges that school districts face when changing leaders.

## Quotes from Clients of **Finding Leaders**:

“*Finding Leaders* asked us the tough questions that others don’t usually ask. As a result, we were able to work through some historical issues and concerns in our school district and clear the air for our new educational leader.

“Our work with *Finding Leaders* has driven home the point that a successful search requires more than just finding the right person. If we don’t put that person into the right situation, we’ll soon be looking for someone else to lead our district.

“For us, the greatest value of *Finding Leaders* was the help we received in developing a transition management plan. This plan kept us focused through the search process and is responsible in large part for continuing acceptance and success of our new superintendent.

“*Finding Leaders* is meticulous and comprehensive. Utilizing state-of-the-art interviewing strategies and feedback techniques, *Finding Leaders* helped us create a clear picture of who we needed and then provided us with candidates who fit that profile.

Among the staff of *Finding Leaders* are authors who have written a number of books about public engagement and leadership. Published by The MASTER Teacher®, these books include:

- *When the Choir Began to Sing: A Story About Awakening the Leader Within Each of Us*
- *The Power of Public Engagement: A Beacon of Hope for America’s Schools*
- *Putting the Power of Public Engagement to Work for Your Schools and Community*

For more information about **Finding Leaders**, contact:



Finding Leaders  
8471 Waterside Dr.  
Sagamore Hills, OH 44067

[www.findingleaders.com](http://www.findingleaders.com)

Paul Pendleton  
Phone: 216-225-2787  
Fax: 216-524-3683  
[pendlent@aol.com](mailto:pendlent@aol.com)

Dave Laurenzi  
Phone: 216-701-0065  
[djlaurenzi@gmail.com](mailto:djlaurenzi@gmail.com)



# FINDING LEADERS

SEARCHING FOR EDUCATION’S BEST LEADERS



A successful executive search requires **more** than just finding the right person. It requires putting that person into the **right** situation to be successful . . .

**Finding Leaders** can help you do both.

# The Challenge

# Finding Leaders *will ...*

Our public schools have a serious challenge. In a nutshell, the challenge is this: without strong support from the biggest advocates of the school district, newly hired superintendents tend to have a brief honeymoon period. Within a year or so of being hired, they begin to become a lightning rod for negative-thinking people, eventually lose favor with the public, and ultimately get replaced by new superintendents, starting the cycle over again.

This turnover carries a hefty price tag, both financially and educationally:

- Changing superintendents cost the taxpayers money.
- Turnover in superintendents makes it difficult to sustain and scale up educational programs that are working.
- Lack of continuity in educational programs and initiatives creates a morale problem for school employees who condition themselves to the fact that whatever they are doing educationally will probably not last long.
- Finally, some of our most promising educational leaders are deciding not to seek administrative positions because of the lack of personal support they feel they will experience if they become superintendents.

## What Causes Leadership Transitions to Fail

Often there are things done during a typical search process that actually compromise the success the district is seeking. There are also beliefs that are held and perpetuated by board members and other stakeholders that result in a less-than-desirable outcome after a superintendent is hired. Among these actions and beliefs are:

- Waiting until the last minute to begin the search.
- Not involving school employees in the search process.
- Discounting qualified internal candidates.
- Ignoring school district issues and concerns that are likely to limit the honeymoon period for the new school executive.
- Creating a blue-ribbon committee to represent the community in the search process and calling this action “public engagement.”
- Finding someone you can control.
- Finding someone you want to change.
- Hiring a change agent.
- Throwing out what is working along with what is not working.
- Hiring whoever interviews well.
- Believing your job is done after you hire the new person.
- Failing to create a transition plan.
- Relying upon existing job pool.
- Making saving money your top priority.

## Help You with Planning and Preparation

The period of time (which can be up to a year) preceding a change in district leadership serves as a window of opportunity for the board of education to examine school district strengths, barriers to educational improvement, leadership styles, and other critical issues such as board elections and financial issues. *Finding Leaders* uses this time of planning and preparation to help the board create a leadership transition plan that preserves the best of the past and secures the promise of the future.

## Do the Search

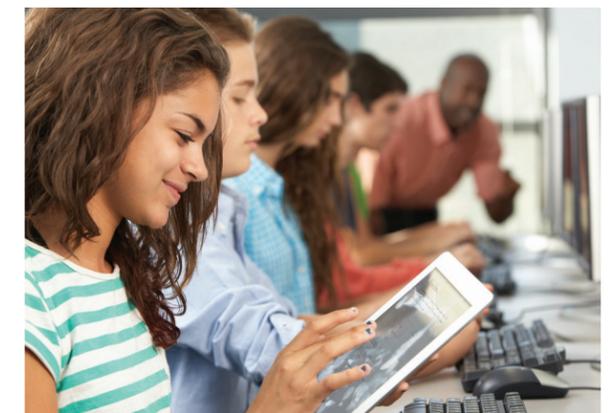
To avoid the “potholes” of the leadership transition and search process, *Finding Leaders* works closely with the school board to:

- Help determine the desired qualities and characteristics of the new leader.
- Advertise the job opening to a broad pool of potential candidates.
- Identify and recruit known highly qualified candidates.
- Screen and interview all candidates
- Recommend finalists.
- Assist the board throughout the interview process.

## Give the Support Throughout the Transition Year

During the year following the change in leadership, *Finding Leaders* helps the board and new leader implement the final phase of the transition plan. This phase of the plan includes board-superintendent retreats, personality profiling, planned feedback processes, administrative team leadership development, public engagement techniques, and other leadership support strategies. In this day and age, having a transition plan is not a luxury. It is a necessity.

1. Help you develop a preliminary profile of your new school leader.
2. Provide statewide and nationwide exposure of your vacancy.
3. Aggressively recruit candidates who match your profile.
4. Utilize reliable research and effective interviewing procedures.
5. Prepare the board for the interviewing process.
6. Ensure that legal and ethical procedures are followed.
7. Help you develop a leadership transition plan.
8. Conduct a performance audit.
9. Develop a staff and community support strategy for your new educational leader.



“The bottom line is that we must provide good people with a support system if we expect them to succeed on our behalf.”