

*A Proposal Prepared for*

# ***Benicia Unified School District***

***Benicia, California***

*for*

*The Search and Selection of a  
Superintendent of Schools*

*submitted in collaboration with*



*by*

**MCPHERSON *MJ* JACOBSON, LLC**  
EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT & DEVELOPMENT



Phone: 888-375-4814  
Email: [mail@macnjake.com](mailto:mail@macnjake.com)  
Website: [www.macnjake.com](http://www.macnjake.com)





**MCPHERSON & JACOBSON, L.L.C.**  
Executive Recruitment & Development  
*in collaboration with the California School Boards Association*



---

888-375-4814 ♦ Email: [mail@macnjake.com](mailto:mail@macnjake.com) ♦ Website: [www.macnjake.com](http://www.macnjake.com)

February 1, 2022

Board of Trustees  
Benicia Unified School District  
350 East K Street  
Benicia, California 94510

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your RFP. The enclosed proposal describes the professional services the California School Board Association representative, McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will provide Benicia Unified School District in ensuring your superintendent search secures quality leadership for the district.

McPherson & Jacobson will work with the board to design a search that meets the unique needs of your school district. Our firm's five-phase protocol allows the board to concentrate on the most important segments: the interview and selection of the successful candidate. Our team of consultants, working in conjunction with the board and diverse stakeholder groups you identify, will implement a systematic, comprehensive process culminating in the hiring of the most qualified candidate for your district.

At the core of our firm's work is the belief that every student is entitled to high quality education and that this is dependent upon quality leadership. We understand that students have diverse needs, thus, we focus on the intentional recruitment of a diverse candidate pool that includes ethnic and cultural identity as well as experience in culturally proficient practices that have proven successful in addressing educational equity gaps. This unique approach is made possible through the diverse and extensive network of our consultants who have various levels of expertise in the school system from superintendents, to school board members, to educational equity experts. We believe this has contributed to our successful placement of qualified candidates around the state and nation who have met extensive equity focused criteria and continue to make an impact in the districts they serve.

McPherson & Jacobson has been conducting searches for boards of education since 1991. Our California consultants will ensure your search results in quality leadership for your district.

Our contact information:

California School Boards Association  
Attn: Nicole Delos Reyes  
3251 Beacon Blvd.  
West Sacramento, CA 95691  
888-375-4814  
Email: [mail@macnjake.com](mailto:mail@macnjake.com)

We welcome the opportunity to meet with your board to present our proposal and discuss our proven search process.

Sincerely,

McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C.

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<i>About McPherson &amp; Jacobson</i> .....	3
<i>The McPherson &amp; Jacobson Difference</i> .....	3
<i>Qualifications and Background of McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C.</i> .....	3
<i>McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C. Equity Policy</i> .....	4
<i>Applicant Diversity</i> .....	5
<i>Search Process</i> .....	6
<i>Executive Summary</i> .....	6
<i>Five Phases of a Superintendent Search</i> .....	7
<i>Phase I—Initiating the Search Process</i> .....	8
<i>Phase II—Stakeholder Input, Advertising the Position, Recruiting Applicants</i> .....	8
<i>Phase III—Applicant Screening</i> .....	10
<i>Phase IV—Reviewing Candidates with the Board, Interviews</i> .....	11
<i>Phase V—Transition with Success</i> .....	13
<i>Timeline</i> .....	14
<i>Consultants for Search</i> .....	15
<i>Identifying and Recruiting Applicants</i> .....	19
<i>Responsibilities of Benicia Unified School District and</i> <i>McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C.</i> .....	20
<i>Stakeholder Involvement</i> .....	23
<i>Cost Proposal</i> .....	25
<i>Investment</i> .....	25
<i>Additional Information</i> .....	27
<i>California Consultants</i> .....	27
<i>California Searches Conducted by McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C.</i> .....	28
<i>Transparency—The McPherson &amp; Jacobson Difference</i> .....	32
<i>What Board Members Say About the Service of McPherson &amp; Jacobson, L.L.C.</i> .....	34

This proposal is the property of McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C. and has been prepared at the request of the Benicia Unified School District, Benicia, California. The contents of this proposal are not to be reproduced or distributed for any reason other than for use by the Benicia Unified School District, Benicia, California.



## *About McPherson & Jacobson*

### *The McPherson & Jacobson Difference*

#### ***“It’s About the Kids”***

- WE BELIEVE every student is entitled to a high-quality education. We strongly believe quality education is dependent upon quality leadership.
- OUR MISSION is to ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

McPherson & Jacobson has developed a protocol that provides for high involvement of stakeholders, while keeping the board in complete control of the process.

One of the hallmarks of McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. is the belief that the search for a public executive should be conducted with as much transparency as possible. We have designed a process, which keeps the board in complete control of the search, while inviting various stakeholder groups to provide input and become meaningfully involved in the process.

### *Qualifications and Background of McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.*

#### **California School Board Association Search Service**

The **California School Board Association** has selected McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. to represent them in conducting superintendent searches in California. McPherson & Jacobson is a leading national search firm that has California-based consultants. Our California consultants understand California and its unique requirements and laws.

#### **Leading National Search Firm**

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. has been conducting national searches for governing boards since 1991. The firm has placed **over 870 superintendents** and other officials in public and non-profit organizations across the United States. **McPherson & Jacobson is one of the leading national superintendent search firms.**

#### **Nationwide Network of Experienced Consultants**

McPherson & Jacobson has **over 125 consultants** across the nation. Over one-fourth of McPherson & Jacobson consultants are minorities or female. Our diverse group of consultants has extensive backgrounds in education and public service including current and former superintendents, assistant superintendents, university professors,

and school board members. Over fifty percent have a doctorate degree. Their diversity and expertise ensures your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

## **Sustainability in Leadership**

Waters and Marzano review of 3.4 million students' achievement scores found that Superintendents' tenure is positively correlated with student achievement.

Organizations using the McPherson & Jacobson protocol have enjoyed sustainability of leadership. Over the last five years, **almost eighty percent** of administrators are in the position for which they were hired. **Over fifty percent** of administrators are still in the position for which they were hired within the past ten years. **Over forty percent** of the administrators selected by governing boards within the past 15 years continue in the position for which they were hired.

## *McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. Equity Policy*

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. is dedicated to serving school districts through an equity lens that supports all candidates regardless of cultural and ethnic diversity. In order to achieve this, we must embrace a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

As an organization, we are committed to equitable practices that will ensure the equal access for all candidates. This commitment means that success will not be predicted nor predetermined by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, cognitive/physical ability, language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion.

Every decision McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. makes will be committed to the following foundational beliefs:

1. Consultants share the moral imperative and collective ownership to identify and eliminate disparities to ensure all candidates have an equal opportunity regardless of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, cognitive/physical ability, language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion;
2. Eliminate barriers in recruitment, hiring, retention, and internal processes;
3. Utilize culturally relevant practices that do not discriminate based upon language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, cognitive/physical ability, or religion;
4. Promote catalytic leadership for educational and community partners;
5. Support the continuing development of all personnel with a focus on their mindset, beliefs, knowledge, and skills, including an understanding of implicit bias and racial identity;
6. Incorporate the voices, cultures, and perspectives of diverse students, families, and communities into decision making to create a sense of belonging for all;
7. Support and comply with State and District policies on equity.

## *Applicant Diversity*

While McPherson & Jacobson does not represent candidates, we keep a data bank of quality candidates. Once a board identifies the characteristics it desires in its new superintendent, the consultants from McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will identify and aggressively recruit, on a national level, candidates who match the board's identified criteria.

McPherson & Jacobson has **over 125 consultants** across the nation. Our diverse group of consultants has extensive backgrounds in education and public service including current and former superintendents, assistant superintendents, university professors, and school board members. Over fifty percent have a doctorate degree. Their diversity and expertise ensures your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

We use our consultant network to track the careers of successful administrators. We also work closely with universities, colleges, and professional organizations that represent and promote minority and female applicants.

For the past five years, approximately **one-third** of our applicants have been female and almost **one-fourth** of our applicants have been ethnically diverse.

In the past ten years, **one-third** of the boards we have represented have placed women or ethnically diverse candidates.

## *Search Process*

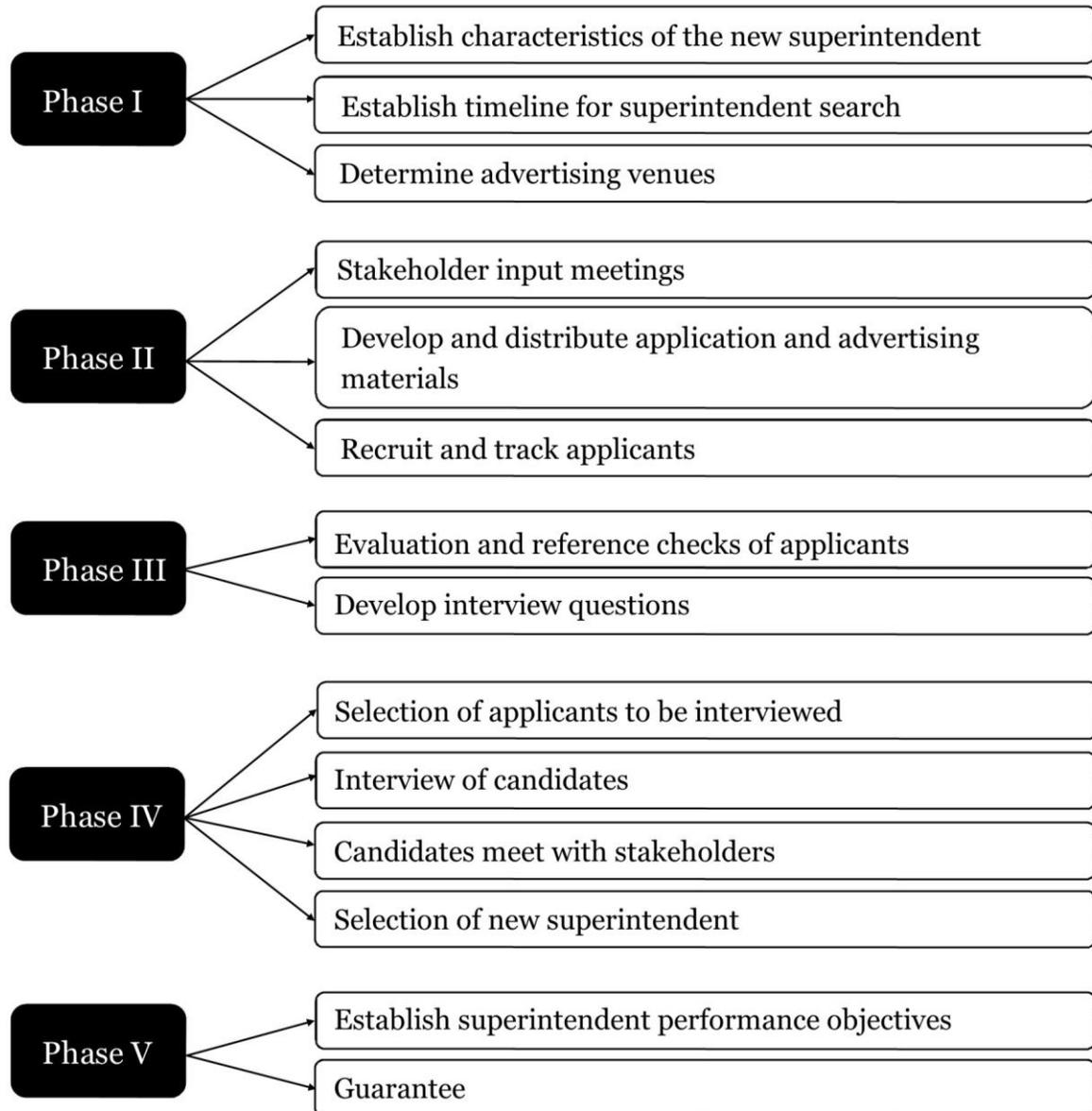
### *Executive Summary*

McPherson & Jacobson L.L.C. provides a comprehensive search process. Below are some of the highlights of our process:

- Our process is comprehensive and provides critical support for the most time-consuming aspects of recruiting and screening the candidates, so the board can focus on interviewing and selection.
- Transparency is a hallmark of our protocol. Stakeholder participation emphasizes the transparency of our process.
- We take the entire board through a consensus decision-making process to identify the top criteria for the selection of the new superintendent.
- We meet with groups to ensure broad-based stakeholder input in the selection process. In addition, we provide an online survey to reach out to anyone who could not attend a stakeholder meeting. The consultants will present a comprehensive written report to the board, which includes all of the comments recorded during the input sessions.
- McPherson & Jacobson's consultants actively recruit candidates that meet the selection criteria. If desired, we will recruit non-traditional candidates.
- Applicant confidentiality is important to attract top candidates. Names remain confidential until the board selects their finalists.
- We continue to work with your school district until a superintendent is hired and in place.
- Phase V provides a continued commitment to work with your board and new superintendent for one year. We help you collaboratively establish annual performance objectives for the new superintendent's first year. Evidence from previous searches shows this phase to be very positive as it fosters a good transition.
- We are so confident of our ability to identify the district's criteria, recruit and screen applicants against those criteria, and assist during the transition period, that we guarantee our service. If your superintendent leaves for whatever reason during the guarantee period, we will repeat the process for no charge except for actual expenses.

***Our mission is to ensure your search results in quality  
leadership for education excellence.***

## *Five Phases of a Superintendent Search*



### *Phase I—Initiating the Search Process*

- ✓ **Using a group process with the board, identify the most important characteristics of the future superintendent.**

The consultants will assist the board in identifying the most important characteristics the board would like the new superintendent to possess. These characteristics will be used as a template for recruiting and selecting candidates.

- ✓ **Establish appropriate timelines and target dates for the selection process.**

The consultants will prepare a proposed calendar for the search process. Dates for advertising the announcement of vacancy, closing date, dates for interviewing, a target date for selecting the new superintendent, and a date for the new superintendent to begin will be determined.

- ✓ **Determine, with the board, appropriate advertising venues.**

The consultants will assist the board in determining the scope of the search. Appropriate media venues (professional journals, trade papers, newspapers, and websites) and associated costs will be presented for consideration.

- ✓ **Identify appropriate stakeholder groups.**

The board will identify the various stakeholder groups that they want McPherson & Jacobson's consultants to meet with to solicit input into the process.

- ✓ **Assist the board in determining compensation parameters.**

In order to recruit and select top candidates, compensation packages need to be competitive. Our consultants will present data indicating what districts in the same geographic region and similar size are paying superintendents. Whenever possible, they will also present compensation information for districts that recently hired a superintendent. This information is provided for the board's consideration of compensation parameters.

Final compensation decisions will be determined by the board and the selected candidate.

- ✓ **Identify the point of contact for the district**

The board will identify an appropriate staff person to work with the consultants to coordinate the logistics of the search. This includes tasks such as assisting with information for the promotional brochure and coordinating details for stakeholder input and other meetings within the district.

### *Phase II—Stakeholder Input, Advertising the Position, Recruiting Applicants*

- ✓ **Work with the district to schedule the stakeholder input meetings.**

The consultants will work with the district's point of contact to determine the stakeholder input schedule and coordinate notifying the stakeholders about the meetings.

✓ **Meet with groups identified by the board to provide stakeholder input into the selection process.**

The consultants will meet with the stakeholder groups identified by the board and solicit their input into the selection process. Each group is asked to identify the strengths of the school district and community, the issues facing the new superintendent, and the characteristics they would like to see the new superintendent possess.

The board chooses which groups it would like the consultants to meet with, but the most common groups include central office administrators, building administrators, teachers, classified staff, students, and community and business groups. The consultants will assist the board in choosing which groups it wishes to include.

For any unable to attend a stakeholder meeting, we provide an online version of the questions we ask the groups. At the request of the district, the survey can be available in multiple languages.

The results of the stakeholder meetings and online stakeholder input are summarized by the consultants and presented to the board.

✓ **Develop promotional literature and brochures announcing the vacancy.**

In order to attract quality applicants, it is important to promote your school system and community. With on-site assistance from the district, the consultants will assist in preparing an announcement of vacancy that highlights the strengths of your school system and community. Our graphic artist will prepare a professional color brochure that highlights the school district and community, including the board's selection criteria, the board members, and the application procedures and timelines.

✓ **Prepare and place announcement of vacancy.**

McPherson & Jacobson's staff will prepare and place the announcement of vacancy. It will be sent to the state school board and administrator associations, as well as media venues selected by the board. Additionally, McPherson & Jacobson maintains an interactive website ([www.macnjake.com](http://www.macnjake.com)) that allows applicants to access all the application materials and apply online. The website averages over 225,000 hits per month.

✓ **Develop an application unique to your vacancy that reflects the selection criteria determined by the board.**

McPherson & Jacobson's staff will create an application form requiring applicants to describe their strengths and experiences relating to each criterion identified by the board. This will be one of the preliminary screening devices used by the consultants when assessing potential candidates.

✓ **Post application information and notify interested applicants.**

McPherson & Jacobson's staff contacts potential applicants and manages all the application materials using our online application software. Our office staff handles this task without assistance from your district.

✓ **Actively recruit applicants who meet the district’s needs.**

While McPherson & Jacobson does not represent candidates, we actively maintain a data bank of quality candidates. Once the board has chosen its selection criteria, we will send the information to all of our consultants across the United States, asking them to nominate candidates who would be a good match. We will encourage those candidates to apply. Some of the best candidates may not be actively seeking another position and will need to be recruited.

McPherson & Jacobson stays current with trends in educational leadership by being an active participant and presenter at national and state education conferences. We participate in Job Central at the American Association of School Administrators conference, the National School Boards Association annual conference, and others such as the AASA Women’s Leadership Conference.

✓ **Confidentiality of Applicants**

McPherson & Jacobson proposes an open process for the search. We believe the public business should be done in public with transparency. We also understand the need for applicants’ confidentiality. Our process keeps the names of all applicants confidential until they are named a finalist for the position, at which time the names of the finalists are made public.

If the board believes that the names of the finalists should be kept confidential until they make their selection, we can do that. This is your search and we will adapt our process to fit your unique needs.

✓ **Keep all applicants informed of their status in the selection process.**

During the application process, McPherson & Jacobson’s staff monitors applicants and notifies them of what is still needed to complete the process.

✓ **Communicate with all Board Members in a timely manner**

The consultants will communicate with all board members keeping them informed of the status of the search throughout the process.

*Phase III—Applicant Screening*

✓ **Evaluate each applicant against the selection criteria.**

The consultants will read and evaluate all of the completed files submitted by applicants. They will read the application form and all of the additional material in each file and begin reviewing against the selection criteria.

✓ **Conduct reference checks.**

We understand that applicants do not submit references who will not speak highly of them. We begin with the references given and ask them a list of questions relevant to the selection criteria. After asking those questions, we ask each reference to give us the names of other people who can speak of the applicant’s qualifications. We then call those individuals and ask them the same set of questions, including asking them to give us the names of other people who can speak of the applicant’s qualifications. We go a minimum

of three people removed from the primary references. What we are looking for is consistency of answers that will verify the applicant's strengths and weaknesses.

In addition to contacting references, the consultants conduct an extensive Internet search of the applicants.

✓ **Pre-Interview and Video of Shortlist Applicants.**

The consultants will pre-interview applicants to be submitted on the shortlist. We will have these applicants submit a video which the consultants can share with the board.

✓ **Assist the board in developing a set of interview questions that reflect the identified selection criteria and characteristics.**

The consultants will present an extensive list of potential interview questions that reflect the selection criteria and characteristics desired by the board. The board members choose interview questions that reflect their criteria and priorities.

If the board chooses to conduct two rounds of interviews, the consultants will assist in developing interview questions for both rounds of interviews.

*Phase IV—Reviewing Candidates with the Board, Interviews*

✓ **Review candidates with the board and assist board members in determining which candidates they will interview.**

The consultants will present a complete list of applicants, who completed the application process, to the board for its review. We do not eliminate any applicants; however, a short list will be submitted of those applicants who we found most closely met the district's criteria. The consultants will present a reference profile demonstrating the consistent feedback for each short list applicant.

Upon reviewing the recommendations, the consultants will assist the board members in identifying which applicants they wish to consider as candidates for interviews.

✓ **Assist the board in determining interview procedures.**

After the board selects their final candidates to interview, the names of these candidates will be made public upon confirming the interviews (if the board chooses to release the names). During the interview process, the stakeholder groups will have an opportunity to meet the individual candidates.

If the board chooses to conduct semi-finalist interviews, the candidates will only meet with the board. The names of the semi-finalist candidates will remain confidential (in states where an executive session is allowed), and stakeholders will not meet the semi-finalists. The finalist interviews will be conducted as described in the paragraph above.

✓ **Coordinate interview and visitation procedures.**

If the board chooses, McPherson & Jacobson will schedule semi-finalist interviews. Semi-finalist interviews are typically conducted with the board only. After the semi-finalist interviews, the board will select their finalists.

If the board chooses to involve stakeholder groups in the interview process, the consultants will assist in establishing the finalist interview schedule that includes district

staff, students, and community groups. A typical interview day will include a tour of the district and community, meeting with stakeholder groups, and a formal interview with the board.

✓ **Assist the groups identified by the board in planning for meeting each candidate and providing feedback to the board.**

If the board chooses to involve stakeholder groups in the interview process, representatives will be selected from the stakeholder groups identified by the board. The purpose of these groups is two-fold: 1) to promote the school district and community to the candidate; and 2) to form an impression of each candidate, which they will share with the board. The board will identify chairpersons for each stakeholder group. The consultants will meet with the chairpersons to discuss their roles and responsibilities. The consultants will also provide the chairpersons with a form to record the group's consensus impressions of each candidate's strengths and any concerns or questions the group may have. Each form will be sealed in an envelope and turned in to the district contact person.

✓ **Coordinate visitation procedures for the candidate's spouse/significant other.**

We encourage boards to invite spouse/significant others to attend the interview day. The consultants will coordinate, with the point of contact, a portion of the interview day for the spouse/significant other to have an expanded visitation of the community. Tours typically include available housing, medical facilities, churches, recreational opportunities, and areas of interest unique to your community.

✓ **Assist the board in making final arrangements for each candidate's visit.**

It is common practice for the district to pay interview expenses for the candidates and their spouse/significant others. To ensure that expenses stay within established guidelines, the consultants will assist the point of contact in making lodging and travel arrangements for each candidate.

✓ **Contact all finalists and schedule their interview dates.**

The consultants will contact the final candidates, notifying them they are finalists for the position and scheduling their interview dates. The consultants will be the contact for answering any questions and coordinating the candidates' visits to the district.

✓ **Notify all applicants not selected for an interview.**

Once the board has selected its final candidates, all other applicants will receive, on behalf of the board, a personalized notification thanking them for taking the time to complete the application materials and notifying them that they are not a finalist.

✓ **Personally contact each finalist who was not offered the position.**

Once a contract has been offered by the board and accepted, the consultants will call each of the other final candidates and thank them on behalf of the board for interviewing for the position. *These candidates are not notified until an offer has been accepted.* If by chance you lose your top candidate, we want to keep viable candidates available.

✓ **Conduct background checks.**

Included in the fee is a criminal/financial/credential verification background check for the selected candidate. For an additional fee, the board can choose background checks for all of the finalists.

*Phase V—Transition with Success*

✓ **Establish performance objectives for new superintendent.**

Working with the board and new superintendent, the consultant will assist in establishing two or three performance objectives the board wants the superintendent to focus on during the first year. These objectives are beyond the day-to-day school district operations.

Once the performance objectives have been identified, board members will be asked what they will accept as evidence of progress towards the accomplishment of the identified objectives.

The superintendent will take the information generated from this session and develop an action plan for achieving the performance objectives.

✓ **Provide a guarantee.**

If the board chooses to use our complete service, we will guarantee our process for **two (2) years**. If the person selected leaves the position, ***FOR WHATEVER REASON***, within the guarantee period, we will repeat the process at no charge except actual expenses.

We are convinced that our process of identifying your most important selection criteria, meaningfully involving stakeholders, screening candidates against the criteria, and working with you during the critical first year, will ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

## *Timeline*

The timeline for the search process is established when we meet with the board, so we can address the unique needs of the district. However, the time from our first meeting with the board until the finalist is selected is typically a minimum of two to three months.

Search sequence:

- At the beginning of the search
  - The qualities for the new superintendent are identified
  - A formal timeline is established
  - Advertising decisions are made
  - Application information is posted
  - A brochure is created to advertise the district and the vacancy
  
- At the time designated by the board
  - Stakeholder group meetings are held
  - A summary of stakeholder input is presented to the board
  
- As applications arrive in our office
  - Applications are monitored and applicants are notified of the deadlines to submit their materials
  
- After the closing date
  - All the completed applicant files are forwarded to the consultants
  - The consultants begin the review and pre-interview process
  
- Approximately two to four weeks after the closing date
  - Consultants provide information to the board on all applicants who completed the process
  - Consultants present summary profiles and video interviews of qualified candidates to the board
  - The board selects the candidates it wants to interview
  - McPherson & Jacobson notifies each applicant not selected for an interview
  
- Soon after the board selects their candidates
  - Semi-finalist interviews are conducted (if chosen by the board)
  - The board interviews its final candidates
  - The board selects their new superintendent
  - A criminal/financial/credential verification background check is conducted on the selected candidate
  - McPherson & Jacobson's consultants contact each candidate who was interviewed to notify them of their status

## *Consultants for Search*

**Robert G. Ferguson**  
**2973 Brookwood Drive**  
**Napa, CA 94558**  
**Email: r\_ferguson@macnjake.com**  
**Phone: 707-815-1414 – Cell**

### **Educational Background**

Additional Class Work	USIU and UCLA	Ed. Admin.
M.A.	California State University at Long Beach	Ed. Admin.
B.A.	University of California, Los Angeles	History, Psychology

### **Professional Experience**

<b>Dates</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
2013	to Present	Consultant	McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.	Omaha, NE	
2017		Interim Superintendent	Sausalito/Marin City School District	Sausalito, CA	
2017		Interim Superintendent	Howell Mountain School District	Angwin, CA	
2014		Interim Superintendent	St. Helena Unified School District	St. Helena, CA	
2008	to Present	Consultant	ENGIE Services		
2008	to Present	Consultant	WLC Architects		
2004	to 2008	Superintendent	Tamalpais Union High School District	Marin County, CA	4,000
1998	to 2004	Superintendent	El Dorado Union High School District	El Dorado County, CA	8,000
1996	to 1998	Assist. Superintendent, Secondary Education	Santa Barbara School District	Santa Barbara, CA	14,000
1985	to 1996	High School Principal	Santa Barbara School District	Santa Barbara, CA	2,200
1982	to 1985	Junior High School Principal	Fallbrook Elementary District	San Diego County, CA	1,600

1971	to	1973	Teacher/Coach	Singapore American School and Republic of Singapore	
1969	to	1982	Asst. Principal/ Activities Director/ Dean of Students/ Coach/Teacher	Huntington Beach Union High School District	Orange County, California

**Professional Organizations**

City Superintendents and Northern/Southern Superintendents  
 ACSA Superintendents Academy and New Superintendents

**Nicole M. Anderson**  
**P.O. Box 5475**  
**Vallejo, CA 94591**  
**Email: n\_anderson@macnjake.com**  
**Phone: 916-539-7161**

**Educational Background**

B.A.	Oregon State University	Business Administration
M.A.	Sonoma State University (in progress)	Educational Leadership
Credential	National University	Single Subject Teaching
Credential	Sonoma State University	Administrative Services

**Professional Experience**

<b>Dates</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>District/Organization</b>	<b>Location</b>
2020	to Present	Consultant/Partner	Ed Connective	Virginia
2018	to Present	Consultant	McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.	Omaha, NE
2018	to Present	Consultant	California School Boards Association	West Sacramento, CA
2018	to Present	Consultant	Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)	Sacramento, CA
2018	to Present	Consultant	Epoch Education	Sonoma, CA
2018	to Present	Substitute Administrator	Vallejo City Unified School District	Vallejo, CA
2018	to Present	Consultant	Multiple K-12 and college educational agencies, non-profits, school boards, police departments, etc.	California
2018	to 2020	Consultant	Generation Ready	New York, NY
2016	to Present	Founder, CEO	Nicole Anderson and Associates Consulting, LLC	Vallejo, CA
2014	to 2017	Diversity & Equal Access Executive	Association of California School Administrators	Sacramento, CA
2011	to 2014	Principal	Highland Elementary School	Vallejo, CA
2009	to 2011	Vice Principal	Vallejo High School	Vallejo, CA
2009	to 2018	Adjunct Professor	Touro University	Vallejo, CA

2004	to	2009	Dean/Assistant Principal	Vallejo High School	Vallejo, CA
2004	to	2006	Summer High School Principal	Jesse M. Bethel High School	Vallejo, CA
1998	to	2004	Spanish, Leadership Teacher	Jesse M. Bethel High School (Grandfather's namesake)	Vallejo, CA
1993	to	1998	Scholarship Basketball Player	Oregon State University	Corvallis, OR

### Community/Service/Fraternal Organizations

Name of Organization	Offices/Positions Held
Ralph "Tony" Gross 4 Vallejo School Board	Campaign Manager
Benicia African American Moms	Coordinator
Benicia Education Foundation	Secretary
Solano County Equity Collaborative	Member
Benicia Middle School Site Council	Member
Benicia Unified Facilities Planning Team	Member
Benicia Middle School PBIS Team	Member
Benicia Middle/Mathew Turner Elementary PTA	Member
ACSA Equity Committee	Chair
ACSA Ed Cal Newsletter and Leadership Magazine	Featured author
ACSA Federal Legislative Advocacy Team	CA State Leader Representative
California Equity Leadership Alliance	Coordinator
Humboldt County Office of Education	Featured Speaker/Keynote
California Association for Bilingual Education	Featured Speaker
Jesse M. Bethel High School	Head Varsity Girls Basketball Coach
California School Boards Association	Featured Author/Keynote/Equity Network Facilitator/Business Affiliate
Chevron	Featured Speaker/Keynote
Center for Leadership, Equity, and Research (CLEAR)	Mentor
ACSA Mentoring Program	Mentor
San Mateo County School Boards Association	Facilitator
Northern California Safe & Healthy Conference	Featured Speaker
Sunnyvale, Newark, and ICEF School Districts	Keynote/Featured Speaker

## *Identifying and Recruiting Applicants*

While McPherson & Jacobson does not represent candidates, we keep a data base of quality candidates. Once a board identifies the characteristics it desires in its new superintendent, the consultants from McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will identify and aggressively recruit, on a national level, candidates who match the board's identified criteria.

Over one-fourth of McPherson & Jacobson consultants are minorities or female. We use our consultant network to track the careers of successful administrators. We also work closely with universities, colleges, and professional organizations that represent and promote minority and female applicants.

McPherson & Jacobson stays current with trends in educational leadership by being an active participant and presenter at many national and state education conferences. We participate in Job Central at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Conference, the National School Boards Association annual conference, and others such as the AASA Women's & Minority Leadership Conference. In addition, McPherson & Jacobson consultants are members of the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NASBE), and the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS).

Once the board has identified its selection criteria, the consultants of McPherson & Jacobson will immediately begin to identify potential applicants both locally and nationally. McPherson & Jacobson has over 100 consultants across the United States; we will send the information to all of our consultants across the United States, asking them to nominate candidates who would be a good match. Those candidates will be invited to apply. Some of our best candidates may not be actively seeking another position and will need to be recruited.

We do not maintain a stable of candidates, but we do follow the careers of successful administrators. Individuals who are currently looking to take a new position are encouraged to register with us so they can receive notification of the vacancies we are representing. We have over 900 potential applicants currently registered with McPherson & Jacobson who will receive notification of the superintendent opening. Additionally, we will vigorously pursue current or emerging leaders through personal contact.

We have maintained an ongoing presence at the American Association of School Administrators' Job Central at their annual conference where we have an opportunity to meet and interact with potential applicants. We maintain an ongoing presence at the National Association of School Boards' annual conference. We represent one state school board association as their superintendent search process; therefore, we are the only private firm allowed to participate in their Job Central.

Our searches draw applicants from across the United States. Most searches have applicants from 10 to up to 25 states apply. Some of our searches also have applicants from outside the United States.

*Responsibilities of Benicia Unified School District and  
McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.*

<b>Event</b>	<b>McPherson &amp; Jacobson's Tasks</b>	<b>School District's Tasks</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The consultant guides the board in determining the following items               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Characteristics for the new superintendent</li> <li>○ The search calendar</li> <li>○ Compensation parameters</li> <li>○ Identify the appropriate constituent groups for stakeholder input</li> <li>○ Advertising venues</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The consultant works with the Point of Contact to compile:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Information to create the brochure announcing the vacancy</li> <li>○ The list of names to be invited to the community input meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provides consultant with the necessary information to create the brochure; the name of the Point of Contact; and the Board Contact List</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reviews and approves the brochure</li> </ul>
After 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Application link is posted online</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Brochure announcing the vacancy is created</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advertising is started</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vacancy announcements are sent out</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> E-mails are sent to applicants registered with McPherson &amp; Jacobson notifying them about the opening</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> E-mails are sent to consultants regarding the opening, requesting they invite candidates to apply for the position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Opening is posted on social media and additional venues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Edit the brochure</li> </ul>
During application period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consultants recruit candidates that fit the position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monitors applicants and where they are in the application process</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Notifies applicants of the closing date for submitting their materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Lead consultant keeps the board up to date on the search</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Posts a link to the McPherson &amp; Jacobson website</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Posts the brochure (announcement of vacancy) on their website</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Advertises the opening on the district's social media platforms</li> </ul>

Event	McPherson & Jacobson's Tasks	School District's Tasks
Stakeholder meetings are scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Home Office sends out invitations to the community stakeholder meeting(s) after receiving the information from the consultant and the district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assists in organizing stakeholder focus groups and meeting schedule</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Names and addresses are sent to Home Office for community meeting invitations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Posts meeting dates, times, and locations as open public forum</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assists in translating stakeholder input survey into the additional language(s) requested by the school district</li> </ul>
Stakeholder meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consultants facilitate the stakeholder meetings, recording the input</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> An online stakeholder input survey is created, the link is posted on the McPherson &amp; Jacobson website and also provided to the district to post</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Link to online stakeholder input form(s) is (are) posted on the school district website</li> </ul>
Stakeholder meetings completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consultant summarizes key themes and gives the results to the district</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of summary is sent to Home Office</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The stakeholder input summary report is created</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "Stakeholder Input Report" is posted on the school district website</li> </ul>
2 <sup>nd</sup> board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review stakeholder input summary report and provide copies to the district</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The consultant guides the board in determining the following items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Interview questions</li> <li>o Length of contract, moving and interview expenses</li> <li>o Spouse/significant other's involvement in interview process</li> <li>o District Interview Schedule</li> <li>o Candidate Daily Interview Schedule</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interview questions are sent to Home Office to be formatted</li> </ul>	
Prior to 3 <sup>rd</sup> board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applicant packets are reviewed by the consultants and reference checks are performed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contact candidates on short list and verify their interest in the position</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with stakeholder group chairs to review schedule, procedures, and screen questions</li> </ul>	

Event	McPherson & Jacobson's Tasks	School District's Tasks
3 <sup>rd</sup> board meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The consultant facilitates the board's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review of the list of all applicants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overview of candidates on short list</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Selection of finalists</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finalizing of interview dates &amp; schedule</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review of interview questions &amp; procedures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finalizing candidate &amp; spouse/significant other arrangements</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contact finalists and schedule interview dates, review schedule, discuss compensation and contractual issues</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Work with Point of Contact to coordinate interviews (transportation, lodging, interview locations, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Send Candidate Daily Interview Schedule to each finalist</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Notify the applicants who were not selected to be interviewed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assist with lodging arrangements and welcome gifts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange for spouse/significant other tour</li> </ul>
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call Point of Contact after 1<sup>st</sup> interview to learn how it went</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call 1<sup>st</sup> candidate to learn their perspective and how the interview went</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Suggest any possible improvements</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be available for questions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be present at interviews if request is made by school district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One candidate per day</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Board member greets each candidate upon arrival to district</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Informal interview-social setting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Formal interview</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/significant other's visitation is coordinated</li> </ul>
Finalist selected and accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call and make offer to candidate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Verify acceptance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conduct criminal/financial/credential verification check on selected candidate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call other finalists</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sends out letter of congratulations to candidate who was chosen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Board meets and discusses each candidate individually</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Read input forms submitted by stakeholder input groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have each board member rank order candidates</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Select minimum of #1 and #2 candidate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call and make offer to candidate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Send interview forms and files to the Home Office</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Board evaluates our services</li> </ul>
Phase V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate board and superintendent's identification of 2-3 performance objectives and evidence of progress the board will accept</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consultant reviews superintendent's plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Superintendent creates plan with target objectives and timelines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan is sent to consultant to be reviewed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Board adopts plan</li> </ul>

## *Stakeholder Involvement*

Obtaining stakeholder input is an integral part of McPherson & Jacobson's search process. Since 1991, McPherson & Jacobson has conducted over 870 superintendent searches for school districts ranging from 10 to over 300,000 students. For each search, we have coordinated stakeholder input sessions. Besides meeting with stakeholder groups designated by the board, an online input survey is also available for those who cannot attend the meetings. After the meetings have been completed, the board will receive a written report with the findings of the meetings and online input.

### **Initial stakeholder input sessions**

The consultants will meet with groups identified by the board to solicit their input into the selection process. Each group is asked to identify the strengths of the school district and community, the characteristics they would like to see the new superintendent possess, and the issues facing the new superintendent. The results of these meetings are summarized by the consultants and presented to the board. The board chooses which groups it would like the consultants to meet with, but the most common groups include central office administrators, building administrators, teachers, classified staff, students, and community and business groups. The consultants will assist the board in choosing which groups it wishes to include. An online survey option will be provided to stakeholders who are unable to attend the scheduled meetings.

### **Meeting the candidates**

A representative group of eight to twelve people will be selected to represent each of the groups identified by the board. The consultants will meet with a chairperson for each group to discuss their roles and responsibilities. The purposes of these groups are two-fold: one, to promote the school district and community to the candidate; and two, to form an impression of each candidate, which they will share with the board. The consultants will coach each group on how to conduct the meeting with each candidate and what questions they can or cannot ask. The consultants will also provide the chairpersons with a form in which, using group consensus, they will record their impressions of each candidate. The forms will be sealed in an envelope after meeting with each candidate and turned in to the district contact person. Upon completing the interview process with all candidates, the board will receive and open the forms from each group.

### **Process for Obtaining Staff Input**

The consultants will meet with central office administrators, building administrators, teachers, classified staff, and students, to solicit their input into the selection process. Each group is asked to identify the strengths of the school district and community, the characteristics they would like to see the new superintendent possess, and the issues facing the new superintendent. The results of these meetings are summarized by the consultants and presented to the board.

Our normal protocol is to host meetings for the teachers and classified staff in the afternoon, right after school dismissal to give the maximum opportunity for the staff to participate. Central office and building administrator meetings are scheduled at multiple locations to maximize the opportunities for their input. Student input sessions are not scheduled during class time, they are normally held during lunch breaks.

### **Process for Obtaining Parent and Community Input**

The consultants will meet with parents and community stakeholders, to solicit their input into the selection process. Each group is asked to identify the strengths of the school district and community, the characteristics they would like to see the new superintendent possess, and the issues facing the new superintendent. The results of these meetings are summarized by the consultants and presented to the board.

Our normal protocol is to host meetings for the parents and community stakeholders in the evenings at multiple locations to allow as many stakeholders as possible to give their input.

McPherson & Jacobson will also allow stakeholders to submit their input online.

### **Process for Including Ethnically Diverse Communities**

McPherson & Jacobson will work with the district to determine the best practices to obtain input from ethnically diverse communities in the district. If in-person meetings are required, McPherson & Jacobson will work with the district to obtain the necessary translators.

### **Process for Obtaining Online Stakeholder Input**

McPherson & Jacobson will create an online input survey to allow stakeholders to submit their input. At the request of the district, surveys for multiple languages can be developed and posted.

## Cost Proposal

### *Investment*

**The fee for conducting the superintendent search is \$13,900 for Phases I-V.**

*McPherson & Jacobson has the tools to conduct all or some components of the search process electronically. We can work with the board to determine the best practices as the search progresses to determine if in-person or online meetings will best meet the needs of the district.*

**The total not to exceed amount including expenses is \$17,675.\***

Included in the expenses is

- Four (4) weeks of print advertising in EdCal (40-word ad)
- Sixty (60) days of advertising on EdJoin
- One (1) day of in-person stakeholder meetings
- Online stakeholder input surveys
- Video interviews of candidates
- Criminal/financial/credential verification background check for the final candidate
- Travel expenses for consultants to travel to the district for the scheduled meetings
- Office expenses

*\*\*If the district chooses to do parts of the search using online meetings, the expenses may decrease.*

#### **NOTE:**

- Expenses may increase if the district chooses additional media advertising.
- Fees and expenses will increase if the district requests additional stakeholder input days.
- Interview expenses for the candidates are not included in the expenses listed.

McPherson & Jacobson is committed to working with the school district until a superintendent is identified and hired. If a second round of candidate selection is necessary, the only cost to the district would be the additional expenses, there is not an additional fee.

#### **Guarantee:**

If the board chooses to use our complete service, we will guarantee our process for **two (2) years**. If the person selected leaves the position, for whatever reason, within the guarantee period, we will repeat the process at no charge except actual expenses.

We are convinced that our process of identifying your most important selection criteria, meaningfully involving stakeholders, screening candidates against the criteria, and working with you during the critical first year, will ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.

**Price Match:**

McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. will match the search fee for comparable services.

**Additional Services:**

In addition to the basic services provided, McPherson & Jacobson can provide at no additional charge the following services:

- Assist the board in revising and updating the superintendent's job description.
- Assist the board in developing an effective contract.
- Provide assistance in negotiating the contract with the finalist.
- Schedule an on-site visitation to the finalist's home district.

## *Additional Information*

### *California Consultants*

**Mrs. Janice Adams**, Retired Superintendent, Benicia  
**Mrs. Nicole Anderson**, Educational Consultant, Vallejo  
**Mr. James Bates**, Retired Superintendent, Bakersfield  
**Ms. Aida Buelna**, Retired Superintendent, Woodland  
**Mr. Robert Ferguson**, Retired Superintendent, Napa  
**Dr. Reyes Gauna**, Superintendent, Byron Union School District  
**Dr. Michele Huntoon**, Superintendent, Aromas-San Juan School District  
**Mr. William Huyett**, Retired Superintendent, Lodi  
**Mr. Benjamin “Ben” Johnson II**, Former Board Member, Riverside  
**Dr. Barry Kayrell**, Retired Superintendent, Murrieta  
**Dr. Steven Lowder**, Retired Superintendent, Stockton  
**Dr. Michael McCoy**, Retired Superintendent, Bakersfield  
**Mr. Jesse Modesto**, Retired Administrator, Woodland  
**Dr. Daniel Moirao**, Retired Superintendent, Danville  
**Dr. Stanley Munro**, Administrator, Fresno USD, Clovis  
**Mr. Dennis Murray**, Retired Superintendent, Murrieta  
**Dr. Marilyn Shepherd**, Retired Superintendent, Friant  
**Mr. Edward Velasquez**, Retired Superintendent, Chino  
**Mr. Daniel Zeisler**, Retired Superintendent, Chicago Park ESD, Grass Valley

*California Searches Conducted by  
McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.*

**Albany Unified School District, Berkeley**  
Search Year: 2018/19, Enrollment: 3,714

**Alisal Union School District, Salinas**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 9,000

**Alpine Union School District, Alpine**  
Search Year: 2015/16, Enrollment: 1,700

**Anderson Union High School District, Anderson**  
Search Year: 2018/19, Enrollment: 1,800

**Benicia Unified School District, Benicia**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 5,000

**Calexico Unified School District, Calexico**  
Search Year: 2017/18, Enrollment: 8,966

**Central Unified School District, Fresno**  
Search Year: 2021/22, Enrollment: 15,000

**Cold Spring School District, Santa Barbara**  
Search Year: 2016/17, Enrollment: 175

**Conejo Valley Unified School District, Thousand Oaks**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 19,500

**Davis Joint Unified School District, Davis**  
Search Year: 2021/22, Enrollment: 8,300

**Denair Unified School District, Denair**  
Search Year: 2017/18, Enrollment: 1,500

**El Monte Union High School District, El Monte**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 9,500

**Elk Grove Unified School District, Elk Grove**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 62,000

**Fallbrook Union High School District, Fallbrook**  
Search Year: 2018/19, Enrollment: 2,200

**Fort Sage Unified School District, Herlong**  
Search Year: 2016/17, Enrollment: 180

**Glendale Unified School District, Glendale**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 26,200

**Golden Valley Unified School District, Madera**  
Search Year: 2017/18, Enrollment: 1,950

**Grass Valley School District, Grass Valley**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 1,500

**Gustine Unified School District, Gustine**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 1,830

**Hacienda La Puente Unified School District, City of Industry**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 22,000

**Hemet Unified School District, Hemet,**  
Search Year: 2015/16, Enrollment: 21,000

**Johnstonville Elementary School District, Susanville**  
Search Year: 2015/16, Enrollment: 205

**Lakeside Union School District, Bakersfield**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 1,310

**Linden Unified School District, Linden**  
Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 2,300

**Nevada Joint Union High School District, Grass Valley**  
Search Year: 2017/18, Enrollment: 2,600

**New Haven Unified School District, Union City**  
Search Year: 2018/19, Enrollment: 12,148

**Newark Unified School District, Newark**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 5,700

**Newcastle Elementary School District, Newcastle**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 796

**Old Adobe Union School District, Petaluma**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 2,097

**Oakley Union Elementary School District, Oakely**  
Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 4,900

**Oxnard Union High School District, Oxnard**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 16,800

**Parlier Unified School District, Parlier**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 3,500

**Paso Robles Joint Unified School District, Paso Robles**  
Search Year: 2013/14, Enrollment: 6,500

**Penn Valley Union Elementary School District, Penn Valley**  
Search Year: 2014/15, Enrollment: 700

**Piner-Olivet Union School District, Santa Rosa**  
Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 1,300

**Pollock Pines Elementary School District, Pollock Pines**  
Search Year: 2015/16, Enrollment: 800

**Red Bluff Joint Union High School District, Red Bluff**

Search Year: 2013/14, Enrollment: 1,622

**Richland School District, Shafter**

Search Year: 2015/16, Enrollment: 3,504

**Roseville Joint Union High School District, Roseville**

Search Year: 2017/18, Enrollment: 10,300

**San Carlos School District, San Carlos**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 2,900

**San Mateo-Foster City School District, Foster City**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 11,000

**Santa Barbara Unified School District, Santa Barbara**

Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 15,000

**Santa Paula Unified School District, Santa Paula**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 5,200

**Santa Ynez Valley Union High School District, Santa Ynez**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 850

**Saugus Union School District, Santa Clarita**

Search Year: 2017/18, Enrollment: 10,000

**Sausalito Marin City School District, Marin City**

Search Year: 2015/16, Enrollment: 524

**Sierra-Plumas Unified School District/Sierra County Office of Education, Loyalton**

Search Year: 2018/19, Enrollment: 386

**Soledad Unified School District, Soledad**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 5,000

**Soledad Unified School District, Soledad**

Search Year: 2016/17, Enrollment: 4,800

**Sonoma Valley Unified School District, Sonoma**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 3,730

**Sonora Union High School District, Sonora**

Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 1,000

**Strathmore Union Elementary School District, Strathmore**

Search Year: 2019/20, Enrollment: 773

**Vallecito Union School District, Avery**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 600

**Vallejo City Unified School District, Vallejo**

Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 11,500

**Ventura Unified School District, Ventura**  
Search Year: 2016/17, Enrollment: 17,000

**Washington Unified School District, West Sacramento**  
Search Year: 2020/21, Enrollment: 7,460

**Whittier City School District, Whittier**  
Search Year: 2021/22, Enrollment: 6,300

**Winship-Robbins Elementary School District, Meridian**  
Search Year: 2013/14, Enrollment: 200

## *Transparency—The McPherson & Jacobson Difference*

One of the hallmarks of McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C. is the belief that the search for a public executive should be conducted with as much transparency as possible. We have designed a process, which keeps the board in complete control of the search, while inviting various stakeholder groups to provide input and become meaningfully involved in the process. The openness of the process has not gone unnoticed. The following article discusses McPherson & Jacobson’s stakeholder involvement.

### **Report details what community members want in new Elk Grove district superintendent**

Residents, teachers and students in the Elk Grove Unified School District are all looking for the same characteristics in a new superintendent, according to report from McPherson & Jacobson LLC, an executive search firm hired by the district.

They want someone who is collaborative, culturally competent, approachable, has integrity and strong communication skills and is visible at schools. They also want someone who can lobby for legislation, policy and resources at the state and federal level, according to the report.

...

The report, compiled from more than 20 meetings with community members and stakeholders, was distributed to board members and others at a school board workshop Wednesday afternoon.

“It’s a good process – to get a feel for the community, employees and students,” said board President Priscilla Cox.

The report also says that stakeholders are in sync about issues at the district that they would like a new superintendent to know about. They list the achievement gap at the top of their list of concerns, as well as institutional racism and equity in the distribution of resources between schools.

They want the new superintendent to know that there is a split on the school board that makes it difficult for staff to work with trustees and that there is a need to re-establish trust between the administration and staff, according to the report.

The report will be used to help select a superintendent and will be distributed to the candidates so they can understand the community’s needs, said Bob Ferguson, a consultant for McPherson and Jacobson LLC. The new superintendent also will receive a copy as a guide to taking the helm of the district.

The process is very effective, said William Huyett, a consultant for McPherson and Jacobson. By the third or fourth meeting, common themes began to emerge.

“It’s a healthy thing to talk to your stakeholders and to find out what the issues are,” Huyett said.

The school board adjourned to a closed session with the expectation that it would identify finalists for interviews that will begin Friday.

...

The entire board will conduct formal interviews of candidates in closed sessions. Interviews could continue Monday if the board selects more than four finalists. Representatives of employee, district and community organizations have also been selected to participate in the interviews.

**Taken in part from Lambert, Diana, *Sacramento Bee*,  
Wednesday, Sep. 3, 2014 - 9:30 pm**

# What Board Members Say About the Service of McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C.



**Christi Barrett, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent

**Darrin Watters**  
Deputy Superintendent  
**Tracy Chambers**  
Assistant Superintendent  
**Derek Jindra, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Superintendent  
**Jennifer Martin, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Superintendent

**Professional Development  
Service Center**  
1791 W. Acacia Avenue  
Hemet, CA 92545  
(951) 765-5100  
Fax: (951) 765-5115

**Professional Development  
Academy**  
2085 W. Acacia Avenue  
Hemet, CA 92545  
(951) 765-5100  
Fax: (951) 765-6421

**Governing Board**  
Stacey Bailey  
Rob Davis  
Megan Haley  
Gene Hikel  
Vic Scavarda  
Patrick Searl  
Ross Valenzuela

[www.hemetusd.org](http://www.hemetusd.org)



[www.facebook.com/hemetunified](https://www.facebook.com/hemetunified)



[twitter.com/HemetUnified](https://twitter.com/HemetUnified)

August 13, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for Mr. Ben Johnson. I had the opportunity to work with Mr. Johnson and McPherson and Associates as a candidate for the Superintendent of Hemet Unified School District.

Mr. Johnson provided guidance throughout the application process while working with the District to ensure that the District and I were a good fit. He continued to stay in touch throughout my first year as Superintendent to ensure I had the support needed in my new position.

Mr. Johnson has a kind and caring manner. He is committed to pairing potential candidates with Districts that will grow their skills and expertise as the Superintendent and move the District in a forward direction.

Sincerely,

Christi Barrett, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Betsy Connolly, D.V.M., President  
Pat Phelps, Vice President  
Mike Dunn, Clerk  
Peggy Buckles, Member  
John Andersen, Member

**SUPERINTENDENT**

Jeffrey L. Baarstad, Ph.D.



June 3, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

We have just completed a successful search for our new superintendent with the able assistance of Anita Johnson and Ed Velasquez, our consultants from the search firm McPherson & Jacobson, LLC.

The entire process was handled in a highly professional manner. Every question was answered, every concern addressed. Rather than following a scripted process, the board remained in control of the style and substance of the search but without the burden of its execution. As board president, I worked closely with our consultants and came to depend on them for insight and advice. Their experience, with the search process and with the issues faced by education agencies was invaluable.

We were on a tight timeline and, like many board members, I have a demanding schedule outside of my school board responsibilities. Anita and Ed were available to me in the evening and on weekends when questions and conflicts arose. They did the detail work and planning so that we didn't have to. The level of support and encouragement provided was extraordinary. I cannot imagine doing a search without them.

The number and quality of the applicants was reassuring to the board and spoke to the success of the initial planning process and the skillful execution of our plan. I believe that our consultants represented us enthusiastically to potential candidates, thus helping to develop a high quality candidate pool. Our board constructed a rigorous candidate assessment that no doubt placed additional burdens on our consultants. They didn't waiver or complain. During our post interview discussion of the applicants, our consultants provided insight and guidance without attempting to influence the final outcome. Honestly, with such a difficult and important decision, it was critical to have their advice and support.

That support didn't stop with the selection of a finalist. Anita kept in touch with me, and with our selected candidate, as we worked through the contract development and public announcement process. It is for these reasons, and many more, that I give our consultants and their firm, my enthusiastic endorsement.

Betsy Connolly DVM

## Comments from Santa Barbara Unified School District

From: **Laura Capps** <[lcapps@sbunified.org](mailto:lcapps@sbunified.org)>  
Date: Wed, Aug 12, 2020 at 1:24 PM  
Subject: Re: Follow-up  
To: Ben Johnson <[benjohnson2nd@gmail.com](mailto:benjohnson2nd@gmail.com)>

**We are thrilled with the new Superintendent that MacPherson & Jacobson found for us. I thoroughly enjoyed working closely with Ben Johnson. He is especially skilled at helping school boards work together and effectively find consensus -- and that is so important in the final weeks of a high stakes search. I am grateful for their partnership.**

---

**From:** Wendy Sims-Moten <[wsimsmoten@sbunified.org](mailto:wsimsmoten@sbunified.org)>  
**Date:** August 13, 2020 at 12:41:34 PM PDT  
**To:** Ben Johnson <[benjohnson2nd@gmail.com](mailto:benjohnson2nd@gmail.com)>  
**Subject: Re: Request**

From the very beginning of the search firm selection process I appreciated Ben for really laying a foundation that the Board makes the decision. This was very evident throughout the entire process. Whenever we got stuck or were hesitate [sic] to speak candidly he reminded us the Board makes the decisions. The helped us to trust and own our decision making process. Thank you Ben and company.

---

Dr. Jacqueline Reid, Santa Barbara Unified School District, CA  
*"I highly recommend Ben Johnson II and Dr. Daryl Adams of McPherson and Jacobson to any district doing a superintendent search. Throughout the process, Mr. Johnson and Dr. Adams offered us advice that helped us to make better decisions. Overall the service was excellent."*

July 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Teri Vigil, consultant for McPherson & Jacobson, L.L.C., led our school district in the search for a new district superintendent/principal. It was my pleasure to serve as the point of contact for this endeavor.

I found Teri to be accessible, knowledgeable and professional. But, most of all, I appreciated her sincere caring for our district. Serving, as she does, on the school board of a small, rural district, Teri knows the needs and issues affecting rural districts. She truly understands the need for a special individual to lead such a district.

McPherson and Jacobson enabled our search to cover the United States.

Teri flew the position via McPherson and Jacobson, completed the paper screening of applicants, carried out the reference checks and then presented the school board with a list of possible candidates to be interviewed. Our small, rural district was presented with first-class candidates from which to choose.

Teri also contacted candidates to be interviewed, set up the interviews, provided the list of interview questions to be used and served as the facilitator of the interviews. The list of interview questions used were based on the earlier work completed with stake- holders. These questions were focused on the specific needs and concerns of those stakeholders.

The result of the work done on behalf of our district by McPherson and Jacobson, L.L.C., and most especially by Teri Vigil, has enabled us to put into place a dynamic, accomplished Superintendent/Principal.

It was a pleasure to work with Teri. Her work on behalf of our district gave me peace of mind; I did not have to worry about the quality, or thoroughness, of the superintendent/principal search. Teri always kept the children in the district as the primary focus of this search; she worked to find a candidate who would strive to do the best for the students of Fort Sage Unified School District.

Claire Schumacher

Vice President

Fort Sage Unified School District Board of Trustees