



LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

Voorhees Township
Public Schools
October 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) in May, September & October 2026 for the successor superintendent of the Voorhees Township Public Schools. The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders. The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally, the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years.

The findings reflect input from participating stakeholders through interviews, focus groups, and an online survey. Participation was voluntary, and the results should be understood as stakeholder perspectives rather than a statistically representative assessment of the District.

Both the interviews/focus groups and survey findings reflect a community deeply invested in academic excellence, safe schools, quality teaching, and meeting the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse student population. Stakeholders also identified challenges related to enrollment growth, increasing special education needs, staffing, facilities, and fiscal constraints.

The survey reflects generally positive perceptions of the district, with 78% of respondents rating the overall quality of education favorably, 88% agreeing that schools are safe, and 78% recognizing the effectiveness of teachers, administrators, and support staff. The highest-ranked leadership priorities were fostering a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect (54%), recruiting and retaining effective personnel (43%), establishing high expectations (38%), and maintaining visibility and engagement throughout the district and community (38%).

Respondent groups placed different relative emphasis on leadership priorities. Certificated staff most frequently selected a professional climate of trust and respect, while parents most frequently selected high expectations for students and personnel. These priorities are complementary: the next superintendent should build a supportive, collaborative professional culture while maintaining clear expectations and accountability for student success.

Focus group participants also raised concerns about equitable resources, growing enrollment, special education services, staffing structures, and facilities capacity. Although some stakeholders expressed interest in innovation and the thoughtful use of artificial intelligence, others emphasized the importance of balancing technology with developmentally appropriate instruction and limiting excessive screen time. Survey findings reinforce the need for greater clarity around technology.

Taken together, the findings point to the need for a visible, collaborative, and forward-thinking superintendent who can build trust, support and retain effective staff, communicate transparently, address operational and resource challenges, and maintain a strong focus on student learning and well-being.

PARTICIPATION

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below: *Not all focus groups were a group that was disaggregated for the on-line survey.*

Group	Personal interviews or focus groups	Online Survey
Board	9	
Building level administrators	10	7
Central office administrators	4	
Faculty/Staff (includes nurses, CST, IA, & Tech)	10	78
Community	16	6
Support Staff	0	21
Parents	7	139
Students	10	
Total	66	251

The community survey report and a draft of the desired characteristics are provided under separate cover and are meant to be stand-alone complementary pieces to the Leadership Profile Report.

Participants identified the following perceived strengths and areas requiring attention. Experiences and perspectives varied across stakeholder groups.

STRENGTHS OF THE DISTRICT

- **Academic Excellence and Strong Curriculum:** High student performance, strong test scores, and comprehensive reading, math, science, and enrichment programs (e.g., WIN program, Sparks).
- **Dedicated and Talented Staff:** Highly skilled, caring, and passionate teachers, principals, and support staff who go above and beyond for students.
- **Diverse and Inclusive Community:** A rich cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic demographic that provides valuable opportunities for global learning and belonging.
- **Strong Parental and Community Engagement:** Active, invested parents, strong PTAs/PFAs, and supportive community members dedicated to school success.
- **Special Education and Inclusive Services:** Comprehensive IEP, special education, and early intervention programs that foster a sense of belonging for students of all abilities.
- **Robust Extracurricular and Arts Programs:** Outstanding opportunities in music, theater, arts, athletics, and after-school STEM/clubs.
- **Strong Fiscal Discipline and Management:** Sound financial planning, responsible budgeting, and successful utilization of capital reserves and grants (e.g., pre-K center addition).
- **Well-Maintained Facilities and Safety:** Clean, modern, safe, and well-kept school buildings, supported by strong local police and security partnerships.
- **Accessible and Transparent Leadership:** High visibility, open communication, and active involvement from administrative and building-level leaders.
- **Early Childhood Opportunities:** High-quality preschool facility and programming that establishes a strong foundational entry point for students.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES FACING THE DISTRICT

- **Population Growth and Housing Expansion:** Managing increased student enrollment driven by local affordable housing developments and balancing class sizes, facilities, and redistricting.
- **Changing Student Demographics and Needs:** Meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student population, including rising numbers of English Language Learners (ESL/ELL), economically disadvantaged students, and special education support.
- **Budgetary Constraints and Healthcare Costs:** Navigating rising healthcare costs, state aid fluctuations, and maintaining high-quality programs without increasing the tax burden.
- **Staffing, Support, and Hiring Needs:** Addressing staff turnover (primarily non-instructional staff), competitive compensation, morale/burnout, and specific missing roles (such as dedicated HR personnel and content curriculum supervisors).
- **Relationship with Local Township:** Overcoming communication gaps, delays in municipal approvals, shared facility resources, and joint infrastructure/traffic concerns.
- **Technology and AI Integration:** Finding the right balance between technology usage (e.g., iPad reliance, screen time) and traditional hands-on learning, alongside navigating the educational impacts of AI.
- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Bullying:** Addressing student mental health, chronic absenteeism, school climate, and continuous efforts to combat bullying.
- **Equity Across Neighborhoods and Schools:** Ensuring equal access to resources, high-level expectations, and consistent curriculum implementation across all individual elementary and middle schools.
- **Equity and Representation for Students of Color:** Addressing underlying cultural differences, equity concerns, and ensuring staff diversity reflects the changing student body.
- **Managing High Community Expectations:** Balancing a "high-touch," vocal parent community with clear boundaries, and maintaining collaborative board-staff relations during leadership transitions.

HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the district. The search team will seek a successor superintendent who can work with the Board, staff, parents and community to provide the leadership needed to



continue to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of each of its students, schools and communities.

The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey and the VTPS staff members who assisted with our meetings, particularly Michelle Santore, Tricia Malady and Dr. Neely Hackett who organized the search team's time with district stakeholders.