

SUPERINTENDENT STORY SCRIPT

1. On January 23 Eagle County Schools announced Dr. Carlos Ramirez, our superintendent since July had stepped down. According to the district, this decision was mutually agreed upon.
2. One of the concerns that led to this decision was Dr. Ramirez's compatibility with the district vision .
 - Quote from Felicia Battle, school board member: "When you see that they're not matching up, when you see that it's not a good fit, it's disappointing, it's very saddening. But unfortunately, our role as a board was to evaluate that situation and determine what was best, again, for our students, and what was best overall for the district, and we felt his approach was not the best fit for Eagle County."
3. The school district is paying Dr. Ramirez \$198,000 to buy him out of his contract. The school board believes this spending is a better choice than having Ramirez complete his contract.
 - Quote from Felicia Battle, school board member: "We made the decision that we did because we felt like the long term impact was not what we wanted, so we needed to make a decision, and we needed to do it in a timely way that would have the least amount of impact, that would allow us the opportunity to correct, to write the course, and to find a leader that is a better fit and able to move us down and take our vision into the future."
4. The district says that this spending is not negatively impacting the district's budget.
 - Quote from Philip Qualman, former Assistant Superintendent, current Interim Superintendent: "The school district has an overall budget of about 150 million dollars. And we have reserves in excess of 10 million dollars, and a general fund dollars of around 60 million. So, when you start talking about numbers of that size, the severance package that Dr. Ramirez received becomes manageable."
5. But the community has different perspectives on this spending decision.

In a letter to the Vail Daily, Gypsum resident Ed Spivak wrote, "I guess the severance package for Ramirez (\$195,000 plus six months of health insurance) is no big deal to school board members. Those funds could have been better used to improve student outcome."

The Vail Daily published an editorial stating their opinion that, "It's hard to see Ramirez's departure as anything but a failure on the part of the school board. Either the right questions weren't asked, or someone in the hiring process didn't listen well enough to the applicants."

6. Now, the school board is tasked with finding a new superintendent.
7. The district is to use HYA to find a new superintendent. This is the same company they used to find Dr. Ramirez
 - Quote from Philip Qualman, former Assistant Superintendent, current Interim Superintendent: "When hiring Dr. Ramirez it was if that person that they hired from that process was not a good fit or was not successful, then they could run the process again at no cost. So, it's kind of a money back guarantee on the search. So, that's the plan. And they certainly are mindful of missteps in that last process. They definitely are going to do more exhaustive background research, they'll be checking references probably more thoroughly than they did previously, so there were lessons learned on their part."
8. The school board has hosted many community panel discussions to include the community as they move forward in the hiring process. This has been Bernie McManus.