COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FOR NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FEBRUARY 2015

INTRODUCTION

In support of a national search for the new Superintendent to serve the Norwalk Public Schools, PROACT Search hosted a series of large forum community meetings to provide input and feedback on the conditions and challenges that impact the desired qualities and characteristics for viable candidates to satisfy this critical leadership position.

In close consultation with the Norwalk Public Schools Board of Education, PROACT Search provided opportunities for written and verbal input and feedback by both community and employee stakeholders. The initial level of engagement involved individual interviews with each of the elected members of the Norwalk Public Schools Board of Education. Each board member provided an insightful perspective regarding the critical issues facing the district and the Superintendent to be selected in 2015.

Input and feedback to generate data for the search was in the form of Community Engagement meetings held at two schools and one church in different areas of the district. These meetings were open to the public and typically resulted in participation by staff, parents and other interested community members. Finally, an online survey administered by PROACT Search was made available through the district and PROACT websites. As of February 10th, the online survey yielded 405 responses with the three largest numbers of participants identifying themselves as Parents/Guardians, Teachers, and Community Members.

The following summary feedback represents engagement by the groups identified above. The results were compiled according to responses from four component parts of the feedback discussion:

1. What are the strengths of Norwalk Public Schools?
2. What are the challenges for Norwalk Public School District, both now and moving forward?
3. What are the most important characteristics you would like to see in the new Superintendent of Schools?
4. Additional comments.

An important note is that this report contains data reflective of the perspective of participants and therefore should not be construed as a scientific sampling nor a majority opinion of the stakeholder groups. Data incorporated in the report is deemed worthy of the attention of the Norwalk Public Schools Board of Education, in the judgment of the consultants supporting the stakeholder engagement process.

In addition, following the summary feedback from the Community engagement sessions and survey responses received throughout January and February of 2015, PROACT has included the community engagement report compiled in February of 2013 for reference.

FEEDBACK PART 1: NPS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Three community engagement sessions were scheduled and publicized as open to the public. These sessions were for the purpose of soliciting input and feedback from parents, community members, staff members and all other interested constituents of Norwalk Public Schools. The community engagement sessions are listed below:

1)	Brien McMahon High School	January 28, 2015	7 Participants
2)	Calvary Baptist Church	February 10, 2015	14 Participants
3)	Norwalk High School	February 11, 2015	13 Participants

From these sessions listed above, a total of 34 participants shared their perspective in an open, public forum as they responded to the same four components listed above.

The summary of responses below is intended to represent the emerging themes from representative stakeholder comments for each of the community meetings. Comments representing the most emphasized themes are shown in bold text:

COMMUNITY SESSION 1, BRIEN MCMAHON HS

Location: Brien McMahon HS	Date: 1/28/2015	Time: 7:00 pm

PROACT Facilitators:	Y. Hernandez	**Participants:**	7
Board Members Present:	2	**Written Input Forms Submitted:**	0

DESCRIPTION OF MEETING: Meeting convened promptly at 7:10 pm. *Yasmin Hernández* welcomed the participants. Board member Mike Barbis spoke briefly at the beginning of the meeting and periodically throughout the meeting in response to participant concerns. The meeting was also attended by Heidi Keyes, Board member. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT RECEIVED (bolded text for comments with greatest emphasis)

School District Strengths	School District Challenges	Superintendent Characteristics

• Diversity • **Teachers** • **Elementary Magnet Schs.** • CCSS Math performance • Dual Language Programs • **HS Ctr. For Global Studies** • **Norwalk HS Early College** • Technology PETL/Innovation • IB for Brien McMahon HS • Music Program • Collaborations 21st Century • **Students low bullying** • Parent involvement in school site activities • Norwalk ACTS (strategic plan)	• **CCSS Testing** • Urban District testing-additional challenges • **Dysfunctional BOE (US vs WE)** • **Low Teacher Morale** • Keeping current w/Ed. • Not putting children first • **Budget-Lack of Resources** • Norwalk funds education w/city taxes only • **PD provided not effective** • **PD lack of utilizing expertise of current teaching staff** • **PD lacks collaboration for teachers and para-professionals** • CCSS/District Testing/New Report Cards/Lesson Planning • **Validating all stakeholders** • **Technology too many programs can't keep up** • **Need to Focus on all levels (PK-12)** • **Bridging the gaps** • **IT website needs to be updated** • Parental Involvement community meetings • **Lack of Collaboration between school leaders & teachers** • PD discrepancy between teachers and para-professionals • **ELL population being underserviced** • **Poor relationship with ELL** • **ELL population growing** • **Resources for ELL lacking for low level HS students** • Equity of budget across district • Lack of resources with specialist • **Teacher expectations to accomplish too much** • **Communication and transparency with parents** • Community is stuck in 20 yrs ago • Smoother transitions from school to school (elem., middle & HS) • Cultivate relationships w/outside funding & CBO	• **Strong leader** • Respected in the field • **Knowledgeable** • **Humble** • **Courageous** • **Validates & understands people** • **Innovative** • Bridge gaps between parents, tax payers & unions • Politically savvy • **Collaborative to move district forward** • **Budget savvy (optimize/streamline)** • **Visionary** • Charming not belligerent • Approachable • Visible (validates teachers) • Collegial w/contract negotiations • **Works well with people** • **Belief in children w/disadvantaged back grounds** • Dialogue w/elem. & middle sch. • **Create alternative pathways for children who will not go to college/career ready** • **Maintain successful programs** • Cultivate relationships w/outside funding & CBO-continue & bring in new • **Ability to make tough personnel changes needed**

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COMMUNITY SESSION 2, CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

Location: Calvary Baptist Church	Date: 2/10/2015	Time: 7:00 pm

PROACT Facilitators:	Y. Hernandez	Participants:	14
Board Members Present:	4	Written Input Forms Submitted:	0

DESCRIPTION OF MEETING: Meeting convened promptly at 7:00 pm. *Yasmin Hernández* welcomed the participants. Board member Rosa M. Murray spoke briefly at the beginning of the meeting and periodically throughout the meeting in response to participant concerns. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 pm.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT RECEIVED (bolded text for comments with greatest emphasis)

School District Strengths	School District Challenges	Superintendent Characteristics
• **Diversity among students** • **Passionate staff & parents** • **Professionalism of teachers** • ELA Curriculum • **Improved Technology** • Online Testing • Direction of CCSS initiative • **Parents support teachers**	• **Lack of professionalism on the board** • **Overcrowded schools** • **Lack of communication to all stakeholders** • **Racial divide among African Americans & other races** • **Lack of parental involvement** • **Issued are not addressed by the BOE when brought forth/not heard** • **Educating the parents to acquire 21st Century Skills-adult education** • Lack of consistency across all schools implementing best practices • **Increase in ELL population** • **Insufficient TESOL certified teachers** • **Decrease in African American population schools discriminate against these students** • Lack of School funding (taxes increased & property values decreased) • **District is fractured-not working as a team** • **Students bused to schools instead of attending neighborhood schools** • **Lack of focus on ALL student populations (Sped.Ed/ELL/minorities)** • **Over classifying of African American**	• **Innovative** • **Visible in schools & the community** • **Strong leader** • **Integrity** • **Available to meet with ALL staff & community members** • **Visionary** • **Humble** • **Courageous** • **Validates & understands ALL people** • Politically savvy • **Collaborative to move district forward** • **Budget savvy (optimize/streamline)** • **Make decisions for the betterment of ALL** • **Belief in children w/disadvantaged backgrounds** • Expand school day and calendar to 12 months • **Ability to make tough personnel changes** • **Conduct open forums with community**

	students into special education • **High student suspensions not justified** • **Lack of cultural sensitivity** • **Bullying of minority students** • **Lack of extended day programs** • **Communication and transparency with parents** • Lack of acknowledgement of employees	• **Embrace all 9 BOE members** • **Ability to lead and respect teachers & administrators** • Independent & interdependent thinker • Engage community leadership to black boys who have high suspensions-bring solutions • **Will have a long term commitment to NPS** • **Puts children first** • **Brings solutions to problems presented instead of ignoring or not addressing at all** • **Specific focus on Special Programs (Sped.Ed/ELL)** • **Look at the district as a whole**

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COMMUNITY SESSION 3, NORWALK HS LIBRARY

Location: Norwalk HS Library	Date: 2/11/2015	Time: 7:00 pm

PROACT Facilitators:	Y. Hernandez	**Participants:**	13
Board Members Present:	2	**Written Input Forms Submitted:**	9

DESCRIPTION OF MEETING: Meeting convened promptly at 7:00 pm. *Yasmin Hernández* welcomed the participants. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT RECEIVED (bolded text for comments with greatest emphasis)

School District Strengths	School District Challenges	Superintendent Characteristics
• **Diverse community** • **Arts-Musical & Visual** • **Good teachers** • **Caring parents** • District size • Good foundation set for new superintendent • High School electives • Global studies (McMahon) • **Rolling out of CCSS Consistent** • **CCSS Institute** • Non-profit organization funded middle school after school program • Grant opportunities & new programs • **Staff** • NYC influence • Parent involvement • **Parents support teachers** • **Communication between schools and parents/community** • Updating buildings for 21st Century • **Raising the bar for all students** • More conformity between schools • Competition with our districts, towns, cities that surround Norwalk • **Diversity growing ELL population** • Adjusting to rigorous CCSS	• **Lack of accountability for teachers in elementary schools** • Some students get lost in the mix • Parent/teacher maintain some of overall district goals to raise standards • District conformity district wide • Lack of a focus vision of goals & continuity • **Teacher morale** • **Technology-old system in schools** • **Outdated books for curriculum implementation** • **Special Education** • **Teacher's Union & Union Head** • **Lack of consistent curriculum-lack research based** • **Implementing curriculum & updating it** • Lack of money for PD for teachers to implement curriculum correctly • **BOE – difficulty reaching consensus-polarization** • **Increase in ELL population** • Increasing diversity among teaching staff • **Updating school buildings (1950"s)**	• **Decision maker who follows through** • **Previous experience working in a divisive community** • **Visionary** • **Intellectual/knowledgeable** • Data driven • Patient • **Aware of Norwalk's growth in student population & concerns of parents** • Conflict resolution skills • Good Listener • **Conduct regular meetings with parents in schools** • **Sense of urgency** • **Politically savvyAbility to make tough personnel changes** • Supports PK programs • **Communicates with all stakeholders** • **Continues work in strategic plan to implement it and adjust as needed** • **Knowledgeable about Norwalk's situation and politics** • Focuses on the arts

• Changes • Difficult/challenging population • **Overcrowded schools** • Ed. Cost Sharing very low per pupil given • Veteran staff who need to retire	• **Lack of consistency across district** • **School schedules not consistent across the district** • Transportation (no late buses) • After school care (not consistent w/service during & after school) • Lack of after school programs & clubs • Middle schools lack of consistency w/each • Energetic • **Interpersonal communicator** • **Work well with BOE** • People skills • **Proven leadership** • **Desire to be vested in Norwalk for many years** • **Resilient & strong** • **Puts children first**	

FEEDBACK PART 2: PRESENTATION OF ONLINE SURVEY DATA FOR THE NPS SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

The following pages provide a data report of the online survey results in support of the NPS search for a new Superintendent. This online survey was made available to the public through the NPS and PROACT websites beginning January 23, 2015. The survey results shown below represent the aggregate report compiled on February 12th, 2015, following the closing of the on-line survey.

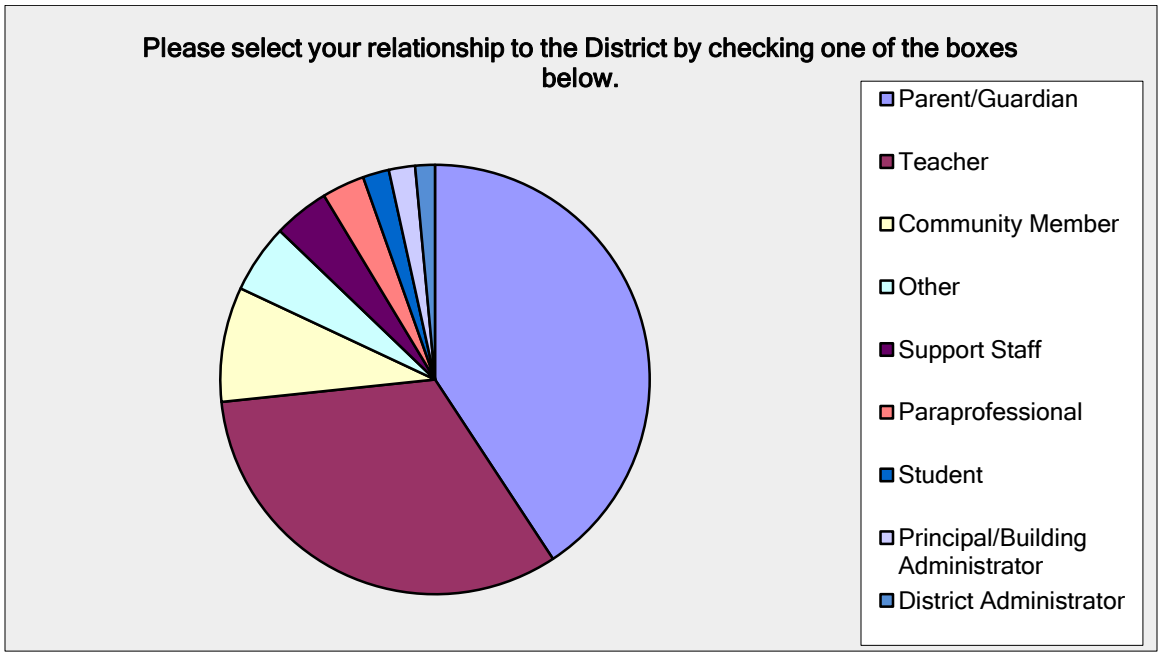
The online survey contained 3 items for participant response and was made available in both English and Spanish:

1. What is your relationship with the Norwalk Public Schools?
2. Select up to 10 characteristics you believe the next Superintendent for Norwalk Public Schools should possess.
3. Please write any additional comments, suggestions, and input.

Questions 1 and 2 generated 405 (402 English, 3 Spanish) participant responses. The open-ended question received a total of 144 Responses (143 English, 1 Spanish) responses. Please see the summary of data on the following pages.

Question 1: Please select your relationship to the District by checking one of the boxes below.

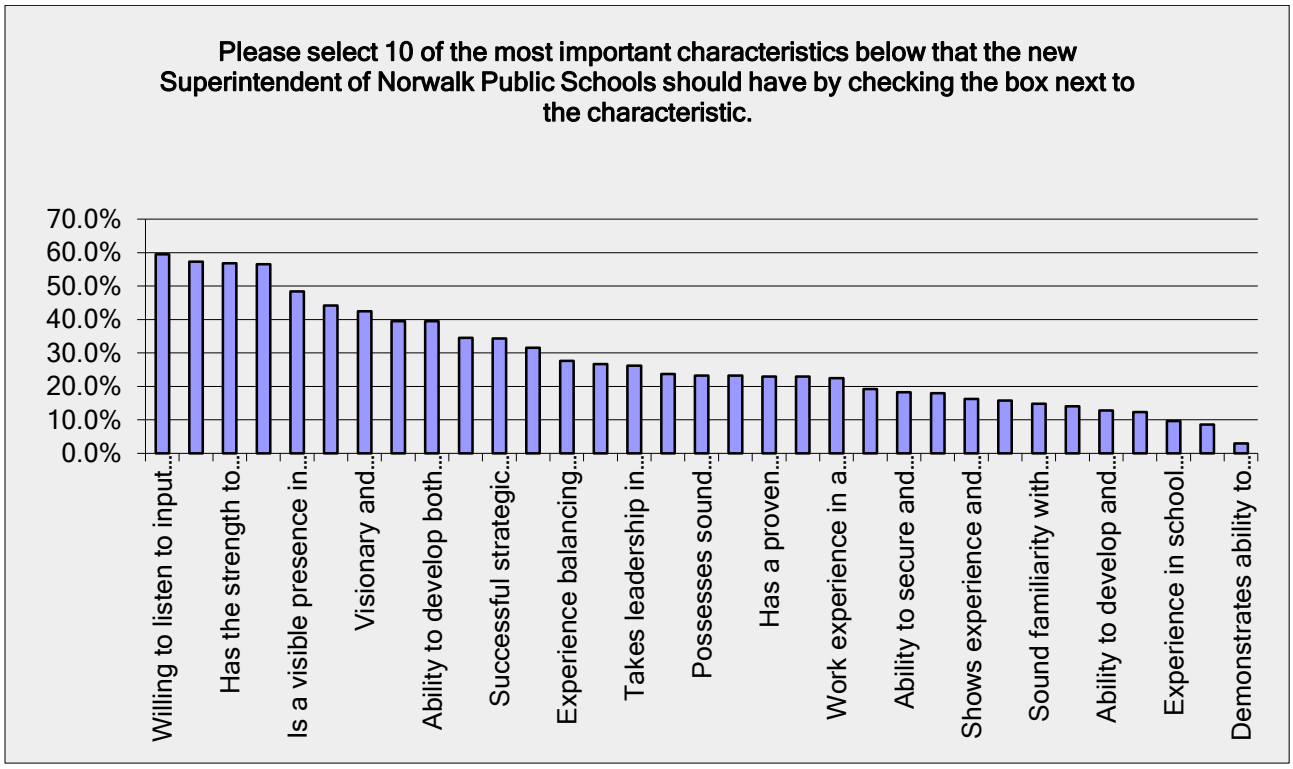
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Parent/Guardian	40.7%	165
Teacher	32.6%	132
Community Member	8.6%	35
Other	5.2%	21
Support Staff	4.2%	17
Paraprofessional	3.2%	13
Student	2.0%	8
Principal/Building Administrator	2.0%	8
District Administrator	1.5%	6
	TOTAL	405



Question 2. Please select 10 of the most important characteristics below that the new Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools should have, by checking the box next to the characteristic.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	59.5%	241
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, School Board, Administrators, and Staff	57.3%	232
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	56.8%	230
Puts students first	56.5%	229
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	48.4%	196
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	44.2%	179
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	42.5%	172
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	39.5%	160
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	39.5%	160
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	34.6%	140
Successful strategic planning experience	34.3%	139
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	31.6%	128
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	27.7%	112
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	26.7%	108
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	26.2%	106
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	23.7%	96

Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	23.2%	94
Strong instructional leadership skills	23.2%	94
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	23.0%	93
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	23.0%	93
Work experience in a similar district	22.5%	91
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	19.3%	78
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	18.3%	74
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	18.0%	73
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	16.3%	66
Able to work with federal and state legislators	15.8%	64
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	14.8%	60
Uses data to make decisions	14.1%	57
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	12.8%	52
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	12.3%	50
Experience in school district capital projects	9.6%	39
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	8.6%	35
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	3.0%	12
	TOTAL	**405**



Question 3. Please write any additional comments, suggestions, and input.

**Comments have not been changed or edited from original entries in the survey.

- The "old Norwalk" has got to go....
- To be aware of what is going on in the schools -- poor management in particular and school climate
- We need a visionary. We need a Mini -me of Dr. Rivera! We need a Superintendent that can blow our district out of the water and effectively use our strenghts to make NPS a strong and successfull school district. We need a Superintendent that has the courage and tenacity to put unrully and ignorant BOED members in their place and not let it get to them. We need a Superintendent that will move mountains to get funding for our NPS from all state and federal levels possible. We need a real person that cares about students and teaches too!
- Should have several years experience as a superintendent; For question 2, 10 traits are not enough.
- Strong leaderships skills are most important. Consider how Norwalk is perceived and build on our town's strengths as a diverse place. Make the Norwalk school system a place people want to be a part of and more into. Very happy to see the Great Schools rating of "8" for the Cranbury Elementary. Go Norwalk.
- Better have a strong leadership skills and backbone to rise above petty politics and stay the course.
- Hopefully the next superintendant will be committed to a long term committment to the district. We need some stability and continuity and less frequent turnovers of administrations

- Also the ability to fire those who are not doing the job correctly or ethically. To be able to survive 'the Norwalk Way' and be a positive agent of change.
- Is committed to improving elementary success and getting rid of social promotion so that have a better chance of success at the secondary level
- Experience/Leadership in an Ethnically diverse Public School System
- Someone who understands Special Education
- The new superintendent should be required to sign a two-year minimumm committment to the school system or be fined. We have too many short termers collecting a very good salary that are not committed to the system. Would like to see someone who has the guts to fire/demote non-performing teachers, administrators, and staff. We have a lot of them. Would like to see a study done to see how many high school graduates that actually a bachelor's degree after four years of college.
- Strong enough to deal with our very difficult board of education members
- Looking for someone who is committed to staying at NPS for many years. Possible 5 year contract??
- Help maintain or improve existing working programs, even if this is limited to some students
- Understands the "issues" that exist in Norwalk and won't need to be fired or resign in under two years.
- Someone like Ralph Sloan - who stayed and understood the needs of NPS.
- Superintendent must be committed to the education of our youngest children and strive for universal preschool for at least our four year olds. We will never close the gap without early intervention.
- An individual who operates in the real world as is willing to challenge and question policies forced upon us by legislative arm twisting which are politically motivated.
- Someone willing to make changes set goals and deliver them no be stuff in the "old Norwalk way"
- It is integral that the candidate have a proven track record of district commitment, and not a year here and a year there. Norwalk needs a constant, dynamic, visionary leader.
- Can see the value of arts, electives, and other non core areas
- committed to the job, implementing lasting change, and won't leave after 2 years
- Must sign a multi-yr with negotiated bonuses paid after 3 years
- Someone that is willing to commit to the job for an extended periods of time (more than 2 years) and who can improve the current standings of the whole system -- including academic performance and a more functional board of ed/district affiliates.
- We need someone who has a strong commitment to gifted education and an understanding that an education that providing each child FAPE includes ABOVE grade level as well as below.
- Someone who is committed and not just another empty suit
- 10 characteristic choices were not enough on above item!
- We have had too many superintendents over time. We need one who will stay and commit to a minimum of 5 years at least. I would like to see the compensation structure include a "kicker." If he or she leaves within 5 years, then they forfeit some of their compensation. We must stop the turnover and one way to do that is through the comp plan. Norwalk pays enough and deserves this loyalty.
- Needs to be humane and have a heart, common sense and to trust in his staff
- Puts students well being first

- Looking for candidate with long term commitment . Hire someone who is younger and willing to work hard to prove him/ her self
- It is very important to have a well thought out plan before implementing any new practices
- The board must require a specific time frame for commitment to norwalk and if it is not met they must reimburse board for all recruitment costs
- personality and eager to get into the schools to see the big picture
- The new Superintendent needs to recognize the challenges within the Special Ed Department and give the department more input in decision making.
- Fund more money for programs and world language departments
- We need a full-time Superintendant of Schools, and one not afraid to stand up to the special interest groups.
- High ethical standards!!!!!
- strong leadership & solid experience is needed to "weather the current storm" of petty conflicts and get down to business.
- Let this person do the job that they are hired to do!
- The superintendent should be visible and comfortable with meeting parents. The superintendent should also establish a strong policy to maintain good leadership at the school level buildings. There is no accountablility for the principals. Principal performance should not just be based on just the performance of the teachers. When there is a specific problem at a school and both the parents and faculty have made a strong case then the superintendent needs to take action.
- BENEFIT STUDENT NEEDS!!!
- The individual should be open to working with all elected officials and community members even if their opinions differ from his/her own.
- do not hire anyone over the age of 50. We are now in the 21st century and baby boomer leaders are out of touch.
- The biggest changes required are to force change within our school board so this individual will stay and be successful.
- We need a strong leader that will continue to lead Norwalk in the right direction. Personally, I think it is important for our leader to look for teacher input in making decisions that directly effects them.
- I believe it's time we start looking within the BOE and community . We spend all this money moving these people here they can't handle a year. A waste of money & time. So why don't we choose from people who are currently commited and love our school district. I know of at least 2 Principals in Norwalk that would be great candidates. Joe Vellucci would be a grate
- Able to hold there own with unions
- lives in town with childern who go to school in norwalk
- Committed to Norwalk and to staying here long enough to bring goals to fruition.
- hire from outside - NOT within.
- the interim superintendent norwalk his hired is rediculous. Spending that money and him actually agreeing to the amount is absurd! Who's bright idea was that to pay his nightly stay, gas and high salary?? Norwalk deserve a great superindendent nor greedy
- I think the new superintendent should have had successful experience working in the kind of school system that we want to become.

- Break up the existing school board. From what I understand the existing board made it difficult for the last superintendent to get the job done. Time to clean house and put Norwalk on top, great communities start with great schools.
- Would like someone who understands the importance of the Arts in a student's life experience.
- preschool and elementary should have focus and more funding
- Willing to fire administrators that do not put the students first. To not be intimidated by people and policies in place.
- Ability to deal with ineffective and poorly educated BOE members
- would be helpful if the new superintendent also has some idea of reality for working parents.
- Someone who will put forth an initiative to improve the Middle & High Schools. Currently the teachers there only seem to care about a paycheck and not the individual learning needs of the students. Bullying is a major problem and gangs & drugs. There needs to be a leader not afraid to "clean house"where it's needed. Thank you.
- How about a permanent leader who actually cares about Norwalk? Enough of the ones tidying up a nice pension.
- How about a permanent leader who actually cares about Norwalk? Enough of the ones tidying up a nice pension.
- Actually almost all Of the above
- HIRE FROM WITHIN. STOP LOOKING OUTSIDE OF NORWALK
- Will stay in district for at least 5 years
- Please allow this person to fill central office. Minimize the effects of Tony & Bruce by allowing this person to fill central office with people with a similar vision for Norwalk, not a fragmented one.
- this should be someone who can deal with our town well. someone who.is not scared to go to the schools and see what is really going on and can take a look at each principle and make sure they are doing their job correct. make sur every teacher is able to handle what is delt to them and families and children are being respected at their school. a lot of things have been over looked and I think it needs to be looked at all over again.
- I would like the BOE to hire a Superintendent with the same skills and background as Dr. Rivera. He was perfect for the Norwalk Public School District.
- Understands what they are getting into and willing to accept the challenge of working with Norwalk stakeholders.
- We need a Super who won't cave to the Teachers Union, or the Common Core Federalists, or the Big Government Progressive-Socialists, shall I go on? While the Students are the reason we have a School District, that doesn't mes the School District should run rough-shod over the *TAXPAYERS* of the City!!! The School System has *FAILED* to create a 'First Class' (or was it 'High Performing') school district. So we need to stop pretending that throwing money at the problems will fix them. I have publicly called for the resignation of the members of the Board of Education for repeated failures in hiring. I repeat that call here. Step down and let a new BoE do the heavy lifting.
- Should be an individual that spends more time in the classrooms than in the office, can see "The Big Picture" and will tap into the knowledge/expertise of NPS faculty and staff for PD before hiring outside "experts"
- Cultural competence, preferably Spanish speaking
- I will have a daughter in kindergarten next year and I am really hoping that Norwalk can find a superintendent who is committed to the district for an extended period of time. I am also concerned about the lack of play and outdoor education in the elementary years. Someone with a Bank Street background would be ideal.
- would also like someone who is visible in the schools, puts students first and develops relationships with the community
- Why do we continue to look outside of Norwalk for Superintendents, when past practice tells us they will not stay? This is usually after they spend a year getting to know the district. There is so much talent here in the district--people

who already know the district and who are a loyal part of the community. My suggestion is that we promote from WITHIN, and also that we start to groom and train Norwalk teachers/administrators whom we believe have the potential to be an outstanding superintendent in the future.

- I believe that the only way forward for the City of Norwalk is to embrace a collaborative approach to problem solving and improving the city/school system. I also believe there must be accountability for the building leaders/administrators in order for our schools to improve. A good strong leader with a collaborative spirit is the way forward.
- Special Education continues to be an area where this district has made limited progress. It is critically important that new superintendent be up to date with all the issues and include the Director of Special Education in his or hers cabinet meeting so as to ensure that the issues are being address and that the Director of Sped recieve the support needed to affect change in this district. There continues to be a disconnect and bldg administrators continue to circumvent the direction of sped department and proceed as they will. New sueperintendent must understand and enccourage the assistant superintendant to surpport the sped ed director, so as to provide consistancy thru out the district.
- I have been a Norwalk School parent for 19 years. In my opinion, our ideal superintendent is a fearless ex-military general who has successful experience managing insubordinates and working with toxic, micromanaging board of education members. We need someone who can't be bullied and has no fear.
- abilty to set and enforce standards , expecations and the ladder of referral with ALL stakeholders including the Unions
- someone who wants to transform Norwalk from fair to good to great.
- It would be great to have a leader whom has the student's best interest in mind. This district is need of someone whom will stick around, fight for our kids and help provide cutting edge instruction to our teachers (which will in turn be provided to our students). Our kids need someone who will NOT give up on them as well as stick around for the long run.
- Someone who will stick around for the long term if qualified and is a true leader.
- The new Superintendent needs to get into the schools and list to teachers on the front line.This person needs to be unafraid to make enemies. Change inNorwalk causes enemies.
- Someone who is truly committed to staying here for 5 to 7 years
- Please realize that in order to address the issues of Norwalk Public schools changes that go far beyond who is the Superintendent are needed. Even finding the "right" person for the job won't matter is other major issues are not addressed. But in terms of this- I would say hire someone who is honest. That would be a simple way to improve things.
- This person should be here to secure the best education for children not to manage adults who can't behave. That you have to ask questions about a contentious environment is absurd and sad for children.
- I feel that it is of the utmost importance to put the children first. I feel this person should be familiar with the teaching process and how it effects each child. This person should be able to help teachers reach each individual child in the teaching process and be able to let teachers do what they do best----TEACH! This person should be respected by the teachers as one who is willing to listen and move forward with a plan to help all children learn at their own pace and shine.
- Listening to the community/teachers and working with the unions are useless. They aren't qualified and they are all about themselves, respectively.
- It would be perfect to hire a LOCAL who actually has an investment in the city. Someone whose tax dollars contribute to their high salary would definitely be interested in making sure that tax dollars are not wasted on unnecessary spending.
- They should value music education and support the arts!

- Someone who understands the importance of others, including parents, students and employees, and whose behaviors reflect this understanding
- Someone who can work with a board of education that doesn't alway agree.
- Commitment to literacy
- *Internal auditing -- finances, procedures, policies *availability to staff for private meetings *Utilization of Paraprofessionals to serve on policy committees
- Please be sure that this superintendent candidate views this as a permanent position, not a temporary job or stepping stone to something 'bigger or better'. In addition, the superintendent should be able to take input from all sides and levels, but actually be able to make a decision. We need someone who is strong and won't cave in to one group or another's demands or interests. I am a product of Norwalk Public Schools, as are my children. I received an excellent education, but over the years our academics have been increasingly watered down by constant test prep. In addition, instructional time is not treated as the precious commodity it is. We have an extremely short school day compared to other districts in CT, and when one factors in art, gym, music, ESL, bilingual, strings, nutrition, science lab and field experiences, then reading, writing, and math fall by the wayside. Please find someone who is committed to this district and will remain a presence. We don't want more temporary (whether admitted or not) superintendents or people who will stay five years for a CT administration pension.
- we need someone with a strong committment. and who can work with our difficult board to guide them to make good educational decisions not politcal party decisions
- Stop hiring people from their previous districts that were either let go or have no knowledge of the school environment
- Should NOT have retired from many positions in the past. Traveling from district collecting pensions.
- The next superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools I hope is like the last. However, s/he needs to be strong enough to work with building level supervisors (principals and assistant principals) in a much stronger capacity, if they won't fall in line, then they need to be replaced. In addition to that s/he needs to be able to navigate the politics of the NPS board of education and not be bullied by them. Norwalk is a great district with even greater potential, it's time to stop letting a few bad apples spoil it for the rest of us and our students.
- The Superint. must hold bad principals, vice principals, and housemasters accountable. This has not been the case since 1996.
- No wimps, please
- Cultural knowledge of the Hispanic community and its needs . Willing to make an honest effort to make Science and foreign languages at the Elementary level. It's willing to take on the re-districting.
- Ability to hire the right people to get the job done= most important
- Committment for a long enough term to get someone accomphished
- Please have someone who is here to stay for the long-run!
- not a job jumper
- Strong advocate for the importance of arts education as a central part of the curriculum at all levels
- Will not be swayed by NPS historical politics.
- In the job offer lettter something needs to be added that they can't leave the position till 5 years. I have been living in this town for 13 years and am truly disgusted now ithe the NPS District. Mr. Rivera was making huge changes here and I was very happy with the work he was doing and had accomplished during his short tenure. Human Resouces needs to be improved. There is a lack of communication with the jobs being offered and how the HR office gets the paperwork done and or communicates with future applicants. Also, the hiring is not done equally, principals put in a

job offer and it's typed up, many of us apply and have the work expeirence but they pick and choose who they want without interviewing all candidates. This is not an equal opportunity for all.

- I think it is important for us to find a superintendent that is not only worried about lower performing students but also high performers. All we heard from Dr. Rivera was about closing the gap and programs for less fortunate or underperforming students. We need a superintendent who also encourages programs for high performing students.
- Must have knowledge of the diverse student body in Norwalk, Connecticut.
- Someone who can withstand the ugly environment that is the board of ed.
- Must be visible in all schools and making our leadership accountable for their daily work and observational duties. Look closely at why so many of our students end up in costly out of district programs, speak with parents that have children in these programs so that we can begin developing these programs within our own district. Parents need to be seen as an asset not a combative group looking for something their child does not deserve. I have personally dealt with this kind of behavior for the last 11 years. We need to discuss what is working in the Special Education Department and what needs to be changed. Teachers have been our background in this District with all the many changes with Superintendents and other Leadership positions. It is time to focus on what we can do for our District and not be put down. The public needs to know the great education we provide for our city's children.
- willing to champion differentiation for gifted students, streamlining the process for special education, science and social studies.
- Clone Dr. Rivera!
- Someone who listens to the parents and is willing and able to make changes in the district.
- The candidate should also demonstrate a commitment to supporting and increasing diversity. In addition, the candidate should demonstrate strong leadership ability. He or she should be willing to live in the community.
- Someone willing to stay more than a year and not afraid to clean house. Need someone willing to redistrict where necessary!
- Important to be able to secure grants to improve the school system
- Ability to evaluate and if necessary move out ineffective principals.
- The Superintendant should be able to work with professionals to implement strategies that support the school district without inteference of the board (who are not educators). It might be helpful for the superintendant to speak with families who have fled the school system to find out the reasons for leaving.
- Can actually stay in district for more than a couple of years
- Please, let's find someone who will support the visions we began implementing under Dr. Rivera-- PTech and IB and others! Let's not lose sight of them and let's continue to build towards excellence as a district!
- Someone that is very similar to Dr. Rivera.
- making better decisions about snow days and delays and being aware of how many students drive themselves. icy roads are a large threat to young drivers
- We need someone who is familiar with the diversity of Norwalk , educated, strong willing to make a change p, stand up to the BOE, communicate with parents and staff basically we need manny !!
- Norwalk needs a leader who is personable, fair, but has the ability to stand up to those in the district who are not doing their job
- This candidate needs to be within the Norwalk District
- Make cuts where it makes sense.
- N/a

- This position also needs a person whom believes that once a system is in place that it works by implementing procedural rules.
- .....
- Strong institutional and community leadership ability is essential It is critical that we hire someone who is neither cowed by the Unions nor beaten down by some of the more questionable Board of Ed members. He/She will need to build support among these constituencies, and to do so, will have to inspire them to accept changes, Some harsh/hurtful structural changes are also essential and grasping the nettle will be all-important.
- Has the ability to clean house. Get rid of principals not doing a good job and bring in new, fresh, experienced administrators.
- Ability to "clean house" if needed; someone at a point in their career where they are looking to make a name for themselves (not have already made a name for themselves) and see Norwalk as a place to acheive that; Not so successful that they are going to be recruited away from us in less than 2 years. Someone who shows promise, needs a superintendent job in a place like Norwalk, someone who believes in themself and in Norwalk; NOT anyone currently working for our district; NOT Tony Dadonna
- Supports and champions non-traditional schools and programs such as Columbus Magnet, Jefferson Magnet, Brien McMahon Global Studies and can implement new strategies and educational programs throughout the district - specifically, in middle schools.
- committed for the long term- remain with Norwalk District
- School quality affects home values. The School Board cannot screw this up again. They must help whoever is hired to be successful.
- We need someone who can put Norwalk Schools ahead of politics and create school system which will make difference in Kids life as well as uplift the depleted house prices.
- Strongly suggest employment contract making resigning before end of term highly undesirable
- Please hire someone who really cares about Norwalk and can honestly make a difference and stay here for at least five years
- Commitment to implement an International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Non-partisan. Dynamic personality.
- This person should have the ability to communicate with parents and take action if there are problems and concerns in individual schools
- pienso que es importante que el nuevo superintendente proponga el uso del uniforme en todas las escuelas. Muchas veces se ve a los estudiantes vestidos innapropiadamente y mas preocupados por la moda y por como se ven que en poner atencion y dedicacion a lo que estan estudiando. Creo que el implantar el uso de los uniformes en las escuelas les ayudaria a ser mas disciplinados, responsables, a verse mejor y a enforcarsre en lo que necesitan aprender. Seria de mucha ayuda mirar a los modelos de muchas otras escuelas dentro del pais e inclusive en el extranjero. Muchas veces me he preguntado si este cambio no se ha dado porque las escuelas tienen que ser parte de la politica y ayudar a la economia del pais comprando ropas de diferentes modelos y colores y marcas en las diferentes tiendas que cada ciudad tiene poniendo de lado y la educacion sin siquiera analizar que el aspecto de cada uno dice mucho de uno, y aunque estas cosas tambien se ensenan en la casa es importante que la ensenanza continue en la escuela haciendo de nuestros hijos una mejor sociedad.

2013

NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS - STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

PROACT Search reached out to the District and to the larger community through an aggressive engagement program. With the help of the Board and district staff, sixteen meetings were scheduled to gain input from a wide cross section of the Norwalk Public Schools community. Individual conversations were also held with individual board members and selected community leaders. Also, an electronic survey was completed to gain additional valuable data.

Below is a summary of the stakeholder groups.

GROUP	DATE	ATTENDANCE
Teachers Focus Group	February 12	8
Community Input Session – Carver Community Center	February 12	8
Parent/Community Input Session – Brien McMahon High School	February 12	12
Administrators Focus Group	February 13	0
Community Input Session – Stepping Stones	February 13	6
Norwalk Federation of Teachers Focus Group	February 19	36
Support Personnel Focus Group	February 19	5
Community Input Session – South Norwalk Community Center	February 19	12
Parent/Community Input Session – Norwalk High School	February 19	38
Student Focus Group – Norwalk High School	February 20	25
Student Focus Group – Brien McMahon High School	February 20	22
Community Input Session – Norwalk City Hall	February 20	16
District Administration Focus Group	February 21	13
District Community Partners Focus Group	February 21	17
IMF Focus Group	February 21	15
NAACP/Community Input Session	February 21	40
Online Survey Responses (English)		313
Online Survey Responses (Spanish)		3
TOTAL		

In all cases the discussions were rich and full. Many opinions were voiced. To date, over 273 persons have been involved in this collaborative process. The results were compiled based on three discussion questions:

1. What are the strengths of the Norwalk Public Schools?
2. What are the challenges facing the Norwalk Public Schools system in the next three to five years?
3. What are the most important characteristics you would like to see in the next superintendent?

Following are the results of these community and focus group meetings. The comments most frequently mentioned are highlighted in **bold** font.

In all, sixteen stakeholder input sessions were held.

Teachers Focus Group – February 12, 2013

Attendance - 8

STRENGTHS

- This is a diverse community with great kids
- Every school has its own sense of community
- Folks work hard to come together to work towards getting additional funding
- Folks used to leave the community in droves, but now they are staying and committing themselves to the community and the District
- Kids are challenged and there is rigor in the instruction
- There exists a strong sense of community throughout the District
- Strong supplemental programs for mentally gifted and mentally challenged
- Strong outreach programs from the extended school community and community partners
- There is strong teacher engagement in many areas of the District

CHALLENGES

- Need to find additional funding streams via grant-writing
- There is a lack of sufficient staffing as a result of budget cuts
- Closing of the achievement gap, especially for student sub-groups
- There exists a need for more diversity in the teaching staff to reflect the diverse student population

QUALITIES

- A person with a clear vision, who stands by that vision in spite of adversity
- A superintendent who is visible
- One who is accountable for their actions
- Candidate must be thick-skinned and resilient
- Candidate must have a sense of humor

- One who understands the politics of the community and can navigate their way through it
- A true leader who earns the respect of the District and the surrounding community
- A candidate who holds people accountable/firm but fair
- An authentic change agent with a proven track record
- Has to know the contracts and have the ability to work with the unions
- Must possess a multicultural understanding of the district and community
- Candidate must have the best interest of students in mind
- A good business sense. One who understands systems and how things should work

Community Input Session – Carver Community Center - February 12, 2013

Attendance - 8

STRENGTHS

- There are children of promise that attend Norwalk's Public Schools-they only need a quality education for the best hope in life
- Children in the Norwalk community are sensitive the exceptional needs of different children
- ESL students get extra help to support their learning
- There are teachers who truly care about children
- There is an intentional focus on the use of technology with teachers and students
- There is personalized learning for students to engage in learning beyond the walls of the schools
- The community has many caring parents, regardless of their poverty, wealth, race, etc.
- There are many students who are educated in the district and go on to some of the best universities in the country(it was noted that more students should be attending these universities)
- The PTOs will do whatever it takes to support the schools

CHALLENGES

- Awaken parents to the power they have as parents in the education of their parents. Parents leave to much of decision-making to educators, especially parents who do not understand the operation of a school district
- Face the new reality of educating all children at high levels
- Helping parents understand what a 21 century student should know and be able to do
- Curriculum should be more challenging
- Budget---budgets are overly time consuming and divide the community through debates—it seems like as soon as one ugly budget year is resolved another one is starting to emerge
- Equity in the location where schools are located within the district—example—in South Norwalk there is no elem. School-which makes it difficult for parents to connect with the school and their child's education
- Longevity of the superintendent—it seems like superintendents are only interested in coming for short periods of time—usually retired from somewhere else and want to retire again from Norwalk
- Students and teachers need leadership stability for continued success
- Career planning—students don't really know what they want to do in life
- More alternatives for students who do not want to attend the traditional 4 year college---provide multiple pathways for students to prepare for beyond high school

- More consistent focus on schools working together—having a school system verses a system of schools
- Moving away from the mental state of doing things because it's the way it has always been done
- Leadership that prepares students for the 21st century
- Engagement of the business community—more partnerships
- Diversity of the staff- both at schools and the district office
- Public pressure to improve schools-parents will look for other choices if great improvement does not happen
- The dysfunction of the school board is a negative
- The acceptance of good being good enough—goal should be excellence with continuous improvement
- Equity in the allocation of resources to schools and students

QUALITIES

- Experience with multiple cultures and backgrounds
- Politically savvy
- Backbone—someone who is not a "door mat"
- Someone who is not looking to retire in a few years
- Special education experience
- Finance background and experience-know how to manage budgets and best utilize resources
- Resource development- know where there are extra resources and can get them in the district
- Communicator—able to communicate with multiple audiences—written and oral
- Self-care—an individual who can handle the challenges of the job while also maintaining a balance in their personal life
- Committed to every child regardless of where they live or who their parents are
- Someone who can speak two or three languages
- Relationship builder
- Negotiator –can bring people together without giving away everything

Parents/Community Input Session – Brien McMahon High School – February 12, 2013

Attendance - 12

STRENGTHS

- We are America. We are a mirror image of America
- We have excellent Students and dedicated Teachers
- Have an Excellent Math Program which provides a good pathway to the Common Core
- There is some strong parental involvement throughout the school community
- We have a good Board of Education Chairperson
- The same Administrative Culture has existed with little or no change over time
- We need to increase the level of support for Bi-lingual/English Language Learners
- There is a serious concern for the addition of the Common Core. Teachers need to be properly trained to implement it properly
- Norwalk is a city built on diversity. There is a need to re-instill that philosophy/culture
- Putting diversity back into the City is essential
- Doing what's right for the kids and the community

CHALLENGES

- Connecting all organizations of the extended community with the district
- Increase the use of technology in every school in the district
- Shrinking funding and resources are stretched thin to the limit
- Sufficient supports for at-risk student populations
- A need for all stakeholders and power brokers to support the vision and mission of the new leader

QUALITIES

- Meets the needs of all students at both ends of the spectrum
- Understands the political landscape of the district
- Holds people accountable
- An "out of the box" thinker
- An authentic reformer who will stand up to people in spite of adversity
- Visible

- Long term vision, a business sense with a strategic plan, one who follows through
- Creative ideas which can be sold to the staff and school community
- A proven track record
- A leader who holds true to his/her Integrity
- The resiliency to spring back from adversity
- Has thick skin
- Makes sure the Common Core is implemented with fidelity
- Ability to run the district
- Understands that the bar is set too low
- Good personality
- Networker, navigator, has a presence

Administrators Focus Group – February 13, 2013

Attendance - 0

STRENGTHS

CHALLENGES

QUALITIES

Community Input Session – Stepping Stones – February 13, 2013

Attendance – 6

STRENGHS

- Children have had success in the Norwalk school System. Many children have gone on to college
- Strong community that is anxious to support schools in an active way
- District has a strong grant writer
- Partnership with Grossman Foundation and Norwalk Foundations are points of pride
- Tremendous diversity in the community
- Extended school community involvement with community partners

CHALLENGES

- Limited funding is a challenge
- Community wants to support the district and does not want to get bogged down in the politics
- Interference from unions could be a negative
- The Board knowing their place and not stepping beyond their intended role
- New Superintendent needs to be supported by everyone and given a chance to succeed
- Is this going to be a fair process?
- Public wants to have trust in the system
- Is due process being followed?
- Is this a done deal already?

QUALITIES

- Well-versed in multicultural school district population
- Knowledge and appreciation for the pre-k experience
- Skills in working with the public and political arena
- Does not use a closed door manner of doing business
- High standards and expectations
- An encourager, a chance taker
- A bilingual or even trilingual superintendent would be a plus

Norwalk Federation of Teachers Focus Group - February 19, 2013

Attendance: 36

STRENGTHS

- Diverse students
- Teachers have done more in the classroom with less financial support from central office
- Great opportunities in the community
- The community offers great opportunities for our students
- Golf courses
- Museums
- Music's
- Mentorship programs for students
- Fortune 500 companies in the community
- Expanding economic base within the community (economics are turning positive)
- Before school and after school programs are provided for those students that need coverage
- Adult Education programs are located in two middle schools and two high schools for those parents seeking their GED
- Great athletics and extra-curricular programs
- Summer school and sports camps offerings
- Veteran staff

CHALLENGES

- Board members are too involved with superintendent's day to day activities
- Insurance audit-not clear and communicated to staff and then it had to be completed almost immediately (lack of communication in a timely and thoughtful fashion)
- Norwalk is currently under a pilot teacher evaluation program for the state. The expectations and process is not clear within the district. Administrators are not consistent in the implementation of the evaluation, which confuses teachers
- Sharing of knowledge among buildings, teachers, and disciplines is not consistent or implemented. One school may have a great program that is very successful for their implementation but other schools have no knowledge of the success. Let's share the wealth between schools
- Transparency-we need clearer sharing of information bot horizontally and vertically

- Leadership makes quick decisions or not well thought out well without anticipating possible problematic areas
- Communication between buildings is bad or lacking at all
- Lack of communication from central office and amongst ourselves
- Flexibility
- Administrators need a plan and the ability to determining the big ticket items
- Central office is reactive and lacks of strategic planning
- Bills have not been paid on time and creates a barrier for those supplies that we need to do our job
- Diverse community
- Wealthy parents get what they want
- Everyone should benefit from our educational plan
- Resources are stretched too thin-we cannot do our job without resources and/or supplies
- Teachers have done more with less
- Don't be a stranger in the schools-superintendent should visit schools
- Lack of professional development for staff-it does not exist
- Cuts in literacy aides-we need them back to help children
- Parents of special education students intimidate the superintendent for private placement
- Personnel is supportive of professional development (but there is not enough time to work on it)
- Hard to pull new teachers into the district/community due to district negatives or the high price of gas for them to travel from other communities
- Site-based management is practiced in every building…no consistency in the implementation of programs
- Implementation of curriculum is not consistent
- Morale is low-very low
- Some schools require lesson plans handed in where others do not (lack of consistency)
- Political impact of Common Core State Standards (CCSS)
- Curriculum alignment-does not exist
- Evaluation system-not implemented consistently (state doesn't know if they are even going to use)
- Lack of quality preschool programs
- No alternative programs for K-12 students
- Special education students identified late--takes until 3rd grade to get services
- Need more special education teachers
- Achievement is low in sub groups

- Need more ELL support
- Technology is available but teachers may not know how to use –need training, vision, logistics, upgrades, and support (more technology techs)
- Negative publicity grass roots grow: (red apples group)
- Teachers are ignored
- Assessments of programs never happens
- No clear director/direction
- Who is watching the principals-some have not been evaluated
- How can we be master teachers when we continue to change the curriculum
- Crisis reaction-need a long range plans (forget flavor of the week)
- Do not want superintendent to use our district as a stepping stone for anyone
- This district should not be the superintendent's second or third pension option
- The district has received negative press pertaining to school board and changing of multiple superintendents
- Socioeconomic issues exist in the district/community
- We need to provide a great educational program to overcome poverty
- Unpredictable board vs. teacher union
- There is a perception that the old vets teachers are not worth the money they earn
- CCSS need students to do assessments online-we have OLD technology
- Consistency is needed
- Replace people that were taken away
- School libraries closed every other day
- Don't get to see the librarians for weeks
- Parent involvement is necessary-but there is no communication
- Transitional bouncing around of students-curriculum is not on the same page
- Evaluation of teachers and administration
- Competent superintendent
- Out of district students drawn in the magnet programs
- Low morale on the board
- Clear path dealing with CCSS $
- New materials that $$ to purchase to teach
- Politics

QUALITIES

- Superintendent needs to stand up for themselves
- Communicator
- Flexibility
- Visibility
- Budget competency
- Teaching experience
- Urban experience and understanding the community
- Sensitivity towards people
- Meet the needs of the stakeholders
- Strong individual with a high level of personal efficacy
- Get feedback from the teachers on how the district is doing
- Knowledge on how special education impacts the budget
- Collaborative with teachers
- Sense of unity, support, with the community
- Come in the classrooms to see us
- Never hire from within
- Be vested in community
- No second pension
- Must have the WOW factor when they come into the room
- Articulate their plan
- Integrity
- Support the teachers
- Respects education and the teachers
- Real teacher experience
- Navigates politics
- Reads a budget-moves forward
- Communication skills
- Not for only special interest groups must work for all groups
- Sees that the specials (music, art, and foreign languages) are important
- Change attitudes to improve morale
- Creates and executes budgets

- Looks for extra grant funding
- People person
- Assertive
- PreK-12 knowledge (Instructional leader)
- Strong educational credentials
- Takes a mess and handles it

Support Personnel Focus Group - February 19, 2013

Attendance - 5

STRENGTHS

- How diverse it is, giving students an opportunity of what is out there
- Individual schools vary and have great programs, great teachers providing education and growth from elementary to HS
- School support staff are all excellent (nurses, secretaries, aides, etc.)
- School support staff is part of school community, they share, they help
- Diversification/cross section of society with international diversity all places around the world
- A very accepting society/city and everyone fits in-a welcoming environment

CHALLENGES

- Budget – mishandled in last few years leading to big deficit and now make up for it by taking salaries/pensions and some practices they shouldn't be having
- Two budgets – the city and Board of Ed. Very different budgets it's not equitable across the board-salaries and supplies for students
- Budget cuts affecting staff (librarians)
- Superintendent needs to do an overview what they're walking into. Take the time to walk around Norwalk and see what's going on here what's the atmosphere
- Not cohesive – a battle ground
- Very difficult the players are entrenched and if you try to make a change you're beating your head against the wall. They said they wanted to bring in someone who would make a change and we tried this with a couple of Superintendents but they have either left or were let go because they can't get anywhere here.
- They're a lack of respect for a support system here. People are very quick to dismiss positions and no one really cares
- Most concentration has been on certified staff and not the support staff
- Very political
- BOE doesn't know what's going on they're not in the schools and they lie
- Personnel cuts
- Money and highly qualified staff to implement CCSS appropriately
- City (Mayor) and BOE/Central Office not getting along disconnect with superintendent relationship

- Lack of cohesiveness
- Superintendent lack of truly knowing the community well
- Strong unions especially teacher's union
- Common Council
- Staff doesn't resemble the community diversification-need a diverse staff
- Lack of transparency
- Low morale
- Media presence is a concern
- Turn-over of superintendents within less than a two year span came here with no commitment to stay came with other intentions
- Hiring of candidates that are knowledgeable about education
- BOE lack of support for superintendent and their initiatives/very adversarial

QUALITIES

- Strong, strong person to take on the challenges that face this district for the community and the children of Norwalk, someone who takes the helm
- Know the players, come spend time in the community prior to becoming a superintendent
- Needs to be transparent
- Needs to be an educator, middle aged with experience in the classroom worked up the ladder, a school administrator and supervisor
- Needs to be held accountable on what he/she does on a daily basis
- Holds people accountable instructional and non-instructional staff
- Buy in to Norwalk and understand its community
- Vision for Norwalk and knows and interacts with the community
- Live in Norwalk or close proximity 10-15 miles away
- Visible and approachable leader
- Experience with diversification
- Knowledgeable of all academic programs
- Needs to be the best qualified for the job
- Passionate about children and their job
- Knowledgeable about the board members and know what they're up against and have a cohesive working relationship to move academic agenda forward
- Someone who is not a retired educator

- A leader who will reward personnel from within by promoting them
- Hire from within is first priority before hiring from outside-knows Norwalk/system
- Respected for their leadership who they are and not the position they hold

Community Input Session – South Norwalk Community Center – February 19, 2013

(Conducted in Spanish)

Attendance - 12

STRENGTHS

- Diversity
- Hispanic Community of students is growing 40% of population
- Hispanics are becoming the majority soon
- Music Programs
- Sports
- Principal of Brian McMahon School makes sure to communicate that students' academic and social needs are being met
- After School program for children and adults
- Good school buildings compared to other cities
- Technology

CHALLENGES

- Budget/Economic cuts – lack of productivity less people with same amount of responsibility
- Lack of communication with the Hispanic parents
- Lack of Hispanic employees to help students academically and identify with them
- Support of our Hispanic children is missing
- The major obstacle at this moment is the language. Need a superintendent and staff in central office that speak Spanish to communicate and know culture
- Lack of communication with BOE and parents
- BOE needs to be more collaborative with the parents/school community (i.e. school closings)
- Use of technology-not all parents have access to it to communicate
- Lack of respect and sensitivity for the Hispanic Community
- Need proper resources to address the Hispanic community that will be the majority shortly
- Parents are not allowed to speak in their native language when they are inside the schools by the school personnel
- Hispanic parents don't feel welcomed or comfortable when entering schools there is no one who can greet or address them in their native language; therefore parents are afraid to go to the schools

- Need a liaison to represent the Hispanic community
- A diversified BOE staff representative of the community and well versed in Bilingual education and needs of minorities
- School principals treating Hispanic students unfairly; dislike of minorities
- Too much politics in Central Office
- Lack of parental involvement of Hispanics
- Reduction of programs – after school without informing the community
- High School – lack of effective guidance counselors for student population about 250-300 students for one counselor; lack of relationship with them; no schedule and organization with the services they are to provide
- Schools need more schools-to-career programs and internships; community based organizations and community provide incentives for internships
- Academic programs very poor very low level skills being addressed
- Implementation of CCSS lack of information to parents
- Need for more rigorous programs
- No orientation/lack of communication to inform parents on various academic levels of performance available to the students
- Teachers not motivated to teach, therefore can't motivate the students
- Middle school and high school transition is where kids are failing
- Counselors in middle schools are placing students improperly in high school courses – lower levels than they are performing in when graduating 8th grade
- Hispanic liaison to work specifically w/Hispanic students for proper scheduling and correct placement of students
- Lack of an effective Bilingual Coordinator in Central Office
- Hispanic community lack of unity/need for Hispanic politician to unite the community to help fight for our schools to give us what we need
- Lack of Hispanic personnel-teachers, no administrators, support staff therefore can't communicate with parents due to language barrier
- Special needs students not being helped instead removed from schools/not equitable with White students/lack of equity
- Newly arrived Bilingual students not properly addressed-lack of support system
- Parental orientation workshops for newly arrived immigrants/refugees
- Every school should have a Bilingual liaison point person to address the Hispanic population
- Administrators need to educate themselves on immigration laws and Bilingual programs and options afforded to them
- PTO in Spanish

- BOE needs more educated Hispanics serving on it
- BOE terms too long need to be changed
- Buy outs need to end happening since 1998
- Hiring of past superintendents with failing record in prior districts-need thorough review of candidates capabilities to do the job
- Top down leadership – decisions made behind closed doors with no school community constituency input

QUALITIES

- Superintendent needs to be Hispanic
- Have a clear notion of politics (politically savvy) and economics
- Proven track record of academic excellence
- Charismatic leader
- Sensitive to people especially Hispanic and other groups
- A Hispanic who truly knows our culture and can identify w/low poverty and the struggles to make a living for their family (not a Hispanic who graduated Harvard but has never had any struggles and can't identify with our community and our struggles with being poor)
- Experience with human relations and know how to deal with people
- Accessible with an open door policy
- Experience in Bilingual/ESL education and knowledgeable and capability on how to create effective Bilingual programs and different programs that have to be created to properly address all the needs of our children
- Visionary
- Change agent able to demonstrate to the community the ability to do drastic needed changes
- Needs to live close to Norwalk
- Have search process conducted properly not like prior candidates searches where someone was just placed even after a search process had taken place-political and not choosing the best candidate to meet the needs of Norwalk PS
- A match with what the community wants and needs
- Responsible, honest, knows how to gain the trust of people
- Knowledgeable of effective educational strategies proven to have raised test schools in previous district
- Knows how to negotiate with the unions

Parent/Community Input Session – Norwalk High School – February 19, 2013

Attendance - 38

STRENGTHS

- Diversity
- Special education-inclusive model
- Possess great intentions with resources they have
- Students to gain real life experiences
- Adaptability –benefits our children and community
- Strength in conviction
- Math curriculum is good
- Great things are going on in our schools
- Good PTO's
- Parents are committed

CHALLENGES

- Not aligned with CCSS materials
- Literacy is now in the computer – teachers do not know how to use it
- Superintendent to hold people accountable
- No scope and sequence in the curriculum
- If students move from one school to the next there is no consistency in the curriculum and instructional strategies
- Principals are not held accountable to all standards
- Need a strategic plan implemented
- Need innovated ways to present curriculum/instructions-sharing the wealth of information
- Need more collaboration of best practices
- Instructional leader that does the K-12 curriculum
- Get more buy-in from the staff.
- Budget
- Little funding from the state

- Skelton central office
- Union relations
- Board of Education
- Politics
- Establishing board government vs. the superintendent's operations/job description (What/where are the boundaries?)
- Technology-teachers need staff development
- Staff Development/best practices
- Revamping of programs
- SharePoint implementation-how can we use to our advantage
- Different schools have different technology –need an inventory/needs assessment
- Needs assessment of what teachers know in the area of technology implementation within the classroom
- Grants-go after all we can get
- Vision to use instructional technology
- Improving achievement gap
- K-12 assessment programs –what data do we use?
- Hard look at child of color lagging behind
- Literacy specialist-more emphasis on literacy
- More communication
- Conduct deeper candidate research to find out what track record the candidates have had in other districts. (Proven track record)
- Board needs to be supportive of the selected person. What are their past accomplishments
- Our board of education is not aligned
- Current interim has the support of the board
- Very large Hispanic population (48% is now the majority of the population of students)
- Bilingual and trilingual languages in the district
- Norwalk does not reflect its demographics
- Keeping people here in town
- Class size is good compared to other districts-we are doing a good job
- Early childhood development needs to be a focus
- What could we offer to get a great leader

QUALITIES

- Superintendent needs to hold people accountable
- Get someone from out of state
- Hire someone inside the district
- Cannot cave to political influence
- Reinvent the district
- What are we doing different now in the search for a superintendent
- Turning the perception around-we need someone that will act as a PR person to promote a positive attitude
- Be smart on the political landscape
- Why would they want to take this job
- Be a people person
- Global vision
- Strong leader stand up to the board of education and the city
- Need a political animal-deal with the board and union
- Instructional leader no curriculum people in the central office as of now
- Can breakdown the duties
- Can the superintendent bring his or her own team
- What do other superintendents do in other districts
- Can demonstrate that they can put forth guiding principles, drives decisions-what is their track record
- Do they know job description
- Best practice for best superintendent
- Do not want someone looking for a second pension
- Want someone with longevity
- Not wanting someone using us as a stepping stone
- Background in special education…knowledge of special education services
- Work for all students
- Bridgeport-discuss with their search committee as to how they got their superintendent
- Master's and strong academic record-work experience, person of great character
- Problem solver
- Duration of time in other jobs
- Need to have an accountability system

- Needs to have a good team
- Manage people
- Consistent communication
- Constructive accountability
- Trusting
- Collaboration
- Transparency
- Confident
- On a mission
- Stay with non-negotiables
- Say what you mean and mean what you say

Student Focus Group – Norwalk High School – February 20, 2013

Attendance - 25

STRENGTHS

- Diverse student population
- Music programs offered
- Wide varieties of clubs
- Gives everyone an opportunity to succeed
- Good athletics programs
- School spirit
- Good programs for ESL students
- Teacher's knowledgeable of subject matter
- Opportunities for tutoring
- Art programs offered
- Resources for technology
- Test prep (SAT)
- School library is a great resource
- Counselors/Guidance program
- New safe zones- four houses in our school
- Security
- Good personality – individual differences respected

CHALLENGES

- Waited GPA – transcript challenge
- Honors classes shouldn't have waited GPA
- Facilities/maintenance-cleanliness of building and bathrooms are locked many times; lack of supplies in bathrooms; a/c not available in entire building/heat problems with regulating properly; change of bulbs (3 months to change)
- Janitors standing around building not doing their work
- More days built in for snow/weather instead of going into late June
- Communication/phone calls out in timely to parents for school closings

- Enforcement of school policy – hallway not enough monitoring
- Lack of communication w/administrators and students
- Teachers not teaching all students
- Teachers not strong/effective
- Tenured teachers don't care as much
- Amount of exposure to technology varies in teachers; not unified/not on same page on what to do; no clear directions on what to do on midterms
- Courses focused on passing and there needs to be more content and practical applications
- Freshmen scheduled for double periods of study hall instead of getting needed classes
- Foreign language teachers should be a native speaker of the language
- Strength of schedule
- Technology isn't being repaired/out dated computers
- Disrespect of school property-steeling technology items (mouses)
- School whole computer labs/SMART boards and resources are not being used to its best potential
- Mature teachers not using technology at all
- Our current court yard locked out not being used at all
- Safety issues
- Collaborative meetings not happening

QUALITIES

- Set a higher bar for teachers to teach and expectation that students have to work/produce and progress
- Visible leader that visits the schools regularly
- Firm person who makes decisions and stands its own ground
- Involved with student activities – Sports games, shows and concerts
- Someone with integrity and is honest – downtown central office always lies
- Strong visionary who will make changes and a difference in our education
- Someone who can handle the pressure and not crack under it
- Not afraid to make significant changes have a new set of eyes
- Take the voice/input of all the students (K-12) in decision making process
- Not burnt out from the educational system
- Good organizational schools
- Able to balance the budget

- Willing to listen to all stakeholders and is accepting of everyone's opinions
- Sticks firmly to decisions made
- Strong/firm person able to deal with the difficulty of the district
- Charismatic leader
- Works well with others
- Able to work positively with current BOE to put children's education first
- New and from the outside and not tangled with the politics
- Someone who is not biased of the system here
- Someone who provides equity and resources and services to all schools
- Scholarship selection process to be fair for all students
- Know right from wrong

Student Focus Group - Brien McMahon High School - February 20, 2013

Attendance: 22

STRENGTHS

- Diverse
- Learning environments focus on education
- Teachers care about us
- Very involved teachers
- Teachers are easy to connect with when you need to talk or get extra help
- Good Advanced Placement (AP) programs for students
- As a city school we function well
- We do well with our class size of almost 30 students
- Sports programs allow us to be connected with other students we may not see in other classes
- Sports create a family atmosphere for the students
- Get to meet different students when you are out for sports or extra-curricular than what you have in school classes
- Many teachers are also coaches so we have different relationships outside of the classroom environment
- Sports teams still allow students to play even with the GPA of 1.7
- Need to set higher standards for students to aspire too. Raise standards so that our students and student athletes have the ability to compete in college
- School gives students opportunities-teachers are very supportive
- Teacher / student relationships are good
- Teachers have helped students with financial needs, as example field trips
- Activities are good, music, yearbook, photography
- Teachers allow for creativity and do not put us down-they are motivators
- Great to have new teachers on board…very similar to what kids are and know what they will need in college
- Young teachers can related and know what we need for technology
- Motivational teachers
- Student council is very proactive (we work to promote positive causes)
- Great school spirit

- Socially active school good social events
- Global studies-allow students to learn different languages
- Principal is very engaging

CHALLENGES

- Climate for playing sports
- Attitude of student body to take higher level classes-some just strive for easier classes for good grades
- Technology
- Some teachers frown on us if we want to use our own technology (we tell them that our technology isn't as slow.)
- Homework help-should motivate students to do move out of comfort zones
- Budget and money-don't hurt sports and extra-curricular-we need those activities
- If the board needs to cut they take from groups that already have to do with less when meeting the needs of students already
- Decisions are made too quickly-more research needs to be done by central office relating to sports and clubs
- Set priorities-what happens if students are not successful
- Need higher standards
- Standards are not high enough for college bound students
- Disadvantages are not motivated enough by teachers-set higher standards
- Teachers meet/make lower expectations of students from lower socioeconomic groups
- NHS offers privileges to members-we need support for those students who are not achieving to have privileges to the library for academic support (Give support/privileges to those who need it)
- Lack of parental involvement and/or communication to our parents (especially those that do not speak English)
- District is always concerned with test scores that they ONLY teach to the test-we do not receive a well-rounded education
- Middle School did not prepare us for High School
- MS teachers only teach to the test
- Help students in ESL need to push the students more. Do not have low expectations…much depends on their current level of English
- More rigorous programs needed in bilingual
- Guidance department lacking ability to help in all areas for students
- Need more individual attention for students in the guidance department

- Students have been forced to become their own advocate to get guidance counselors to pay attention to them
- Guidance Counselors are not attentive to student needs
- Guidance Counselors are more focused on the lower and upper students in the schools. Middle of the field students are ignored
- Guidance Counselors need to focus on students earlier in their educational career, face to face, with grade level meetings, and have consistency when dealing with students.
- Some students want to switch counselors at times…different level of counselors and how they interact with students
- Students may switch guidance counselors because of lack of communication
- Hire more knowledgeable and compassionate counselors
- Role of parents…some do not know English-reach out to the parents. How to reach out to those parents without discriminating against them because of the language barrier

QUALITIES

- Be involved think more about the budget
- Demonstrate more caring for the needs of the students
- Strong communicator-get involved, visible
- Care about student input
- Listening-honor the voice of the students
- Stay out of the politics do what is best for the students
- High expectations for the students-raise the bar
- Lead us –be a good leader-be able to relate to the community
- Focus on the students—provide recognition
- Be proud to be the superintendent in Norwalk
- Decisive in decision making
- Lead and don't be influenced by the Board of Education
- Do your research on all decisions prior to making those significant decisions
- Research says students involved in athletics and extra-curricular activities do better schools
- Superintendent should support extra-curricular activities
- Rank and order priorities
- Do not treat us as babies—treat us as young adults
- Be someone who respects young adults
- Make timely decisions on the school calendar

- Call before 6:00 AM if you call off school due to weather
- Superintendent should get input from students (as example: midterms and calendar dates)
- Superintendent should respect the teachers who come to board meetings to advocate for students and/or programs
- Listen to the voice of ALL stakeholders
- Superintendent should not be a celebrity they should be there for kids!
- Superintendent should ask us questions and be hands-on
- Priorities-endorse academics and extra-curricular activities
- Learn how to handle the money.
- Teachers have students bring in supplies for extra credit
- Teachers get blamed---when we need to print out something
- Students get blamed for printing too much in the library
- Review the needs and budget appropriately
- Security-review processes on how decisions are made and the logistics (example-students entering the building every morning-1000 kids trying to get into one door-logistical nightmare)
- Think ahead for possible security breeches
- Equity of the big picture-review (all schools should have the same resources)
- Assessment of the systems (instructional and operational) for appropriateness in reaching the desired goals.
- Prepare for the global picture

Community Focus Group – Norwalk City Hall - February 20, 2013

Attendance: 16

STRENGTHS

- Diverse community and schools
- Dedicated and committed teachers
- Dedicated and committed parents
- Strong music programs inclusive of strings, band, and choral programs
- Elementary, middle school "specials" (music and art) are very comprehensive at the lower levels
- We have good students at all levels
- Good Advanced Placement (AP) programs at the high school level
- Good selection of honors courses and variety of course selections for students to choose from
- ROTC programs at the high schools that students are dedicated to the goals
- Students are prepared for college
- Students have the necessary skills to achieve at the community college level
- Students can take community college classes during senior year and get credit

CHALLENGES

- We need full implementation of our core curriculum K-12
- We need to explore other curriculum that teaches social skills to some of our students that we know may not be college bound
- Technology is a challenge since the new common core state standards will be assessed online
- Budget
- There needs to exploration how there could be term limits for board of education members
- Some board members use the board of education platform as a springboard into another political office
- The terms maybe too long for board members (four years)
- It is very difficult to find people that are willing to run for the school board
- Board members do not do their homework on important issues that require their attention and decisiveness
- Board members are many times aligned with a political party
- Board members come from each district and try to represent their district rather than what is good for students

- There needs to be a charter revision to change board member elections
- Question was asked how do we elect a more efficient/effective board
- Superintendent could be part of the next election—not so much to rest on the board of education
- The district needs to begin meeting the needs of special education by making sure there are enough resources in the budget
- Students are not prepared for the next level (elementary to middle school, middle school to high school)
- There is a huge gap between 8th grade and high school. Many students are missing basic skills. (Writing a paper, preparing for a test, conducting research)
- Parents are not available to support students in high school and the teachers do not chase down the students to hold them accountable.
- Within the next 3-5 years we need the board of education, superintendent to start finding some funding outside of the tax rolls.
- Work with unions-negotiate together and increase staff morale…need to boost enthusiasm
- Need new union leadership
- Need to review the educational cost sharing with the state-what formula can we used or maximize to increase revenue?
- We need to realize that some of our residents have high land values but are retired on fixed income
- Hire teachers that set high expectations for student success (Hispanic specifically)
- Need to unite to overcome the issues plaguing the district (Get Hispanic parents involved)

QUALITIES

- Innovated
- Creative
- Vested in the community
- Proven track record
- Conduct research on candidates that is far and wide like and umbrella
- Send a team of individuals to interview other districts the candidate has been a superintendent/administrator
- Canvas all of his or her district
- Courageous
- Visionary
- Goal driven
- Someone how understands and educational system
- Has the superintendent candidates been proven in other districts

- Looking for someone that is long term…10 years or more
- Find someone that is young and full of energy to do the job
- Urban superintendent experience
- Awareness of diversity
- Bilingual
- Motivator
- Holds people accountable
- Strong negotiator
- Building coalitions with stakeholders
- Move with the decisions
- Set priorities
- Build good relationships with stakeholders
- Be political
- Surround themselves with good people
- Work with the Hispanic voices that are not heard
- Bilingual, Spanish speaking
- Invite parent involvement (Hispanic)
- Have a “can do” attitude
- Set high expectations for all district employees
- Be able to communicate with all publics

District Administration Focus Group – Norwalk City Hall – February 21, 2013

Attendance - 13

STRENGTHS:

- Diversity
- Teachers – strong and dedicated to their job and children
- Building strong instructional leaders
- Commitment to early childhood
- Support staff- HS guidance support services
- Para professionals very dedicated
- District's focus – continuous improvement from good to better
- Core group of building principals excited about implementing CCSS-district PD well done
- Great community and resources integrated
- Resilience of staff and dedication/exemplary trying to make it work even with budget challenges
- Community partners and funders are proactive: Norwalk ACTS, Andy House, Kindergarten Transition Program, Grossman Family Foundation, Before & After School Programs
- Support from local and regional foundations (Grossman)
- Collaboration with health department, Americare, etc.
- Early Childhood Councils
- Great parents – PTO Council in each school
- Parents very committed to the district willing to fund SMART boards, technology in schools not designated as a Title I school
- Open to new initiatives and cutting edge – have drive
- Strive to have capacity to take on new challenges and look at progress
- Collaborative data management team

CHALLENGES:

- Silent support and consistency of CCSS implementation otherwise students are at risk of not achieving
- Better balance centralized control autonomy with vision in all buildings-a common agenda to move forward
- Integrated data management system needed to track from birth-college

- Transitioning successfully to CCSS
- Budgeting (84.7% currently goes to teacher's salaries) not enough money for being innovative
- Many resources already lost because of budget crisis-Elementary part time Assistance Principals are being shared with school buildings
- New evaluation system how to implement with fidelity without resources
- Retention of good staff
- Special education need to create a transition class – resources needed
- Keeping highly challenged/smart students to stay in our middle schools – losing them to private schools
- Comprehensive approach to engaging parents
- Succession planning needed to grow own leaders within need the system and need partnerships to accomplish this
- Professional development - More time, resources and materials; organized system for PD and equitable across all school buildings
- Staff dedicated to designing the plan with a depleted staff
- Elementary staff suffered the most administrators feel like glorified secretary and unable to be instructional leaders (last 2 years due to budget cuts)
- Middle school after school program took cuts
- Art, music, physical education need to be looked at
- Short staffed in Central Office only one Math & one ELA person for entire district; personnel cuts in all schools
- Title I money in seven schools staff needed (paraprofessionals cut) students are suffering and loosing programs
- Dependent on entitlement funding more for curriculum
- Disparity - money from school to school not equitable
- More value placed on sports program than on academics program
- BOE as a whole and individually the politics taking place are not in the best interest of children-more focus needs to be on academics and children

QUALITIES:

- Experience working with unions and more flexibility and working together
- Strong person in a positive way able to make hard decisions and stand by them so administrators feel more empowered
- Leader able to make culture change and create bridges that are needed to be formed a CO & Superintendent to be a consistent positive change culture

- Extremely strong collaborator and strong willed person able to sustain and tolerate/no nonsense and never compromising the best interest of children
- Willing to come in and clean house and to do the things that need to be done
- Strength of character
- Enforces protocol
- Aware of issues and application of Early Childhood
- Long term commitment to the job here at Norwalk
- Experience in multicultural education and special programs and understands the challenges
- Proven track record of success as a superintendent somewhere else
- Someone who has “cleaned house somewhere else”
- Someone who has worked in a similar environment (urban) and size
- Financial wizard
- Values support staff and all members of the school community-a people person
- Educational landscape fragmented-experience with that kind of environment
- Advocate with the state for Norwalk PS market district and do positive PR/marketing of district-current on what’s happening
- Understands state of Connecticut changing with funding and state issues/testing
- Someone with the “stomach” and knowledge to change culture and willingness to take the wheel and turn it, if unable to do that nothing else will matter
- Very collaborative and interested in forming relationship not “silos”

District Community Partners Focus Group - February 21, 2013

Attendance: 17

STRENGTHS

- Diverse student body
- Students
- Early Childhood
- Excellent staff members (as example: director of counseling)
- District has a community of vast resources
- Broad committee that supports the Norwalk Public Schools
- Check Norwalk Acts (online?)
- There are pockets of people that are willing to partner up with stakeholders-there is an effort to move towards a centralized approach to promote equity
- The Center for Global Studies is a strength
- Afterschool programs are great for students
- Our music program is the best in the United States
- There are a number of excellent programs for children coming into our school system
- Parents-there is growing support in this area/or more of a desire to become involved
- Upgrade of the math curriculum in grades K-8 (stronger administrator that has pushed for this)
- There a stronger effort for the alignment of CCSS
- Youth Leadership Program-committed students that are community minded
- Briggs Alternative High School-meeting the needs of throw-away youth
- Teachers possess pride working in the district
- The district is rich in second tiered positions

CHALLENGES

- School district is not cohesive
- All students should be college ready
- Management of the district should have a plan and cohesive interaction
- Building capacity

- Institution of the board of education is dysfunctional
- Political issues impact the board of education
- Infighting of board members-communication of the negative comments reach the staff
- Too many political games
- Too much Facebook sharing and tweeting
- Fear in the community providers and district when talking about who is going to pay for what
- Comment about good teachers but where are the results?
- Dealing with political realities
- Some teachers have been discouraged…perception there to not raise the bar
- Some people are more reactive then proactive
- In the past the superintendent has plowed in one direction and was not receptive to new ideas
- There are entrenched behaviors (we have always done it this way)
- Lack of negotiations between groups-power struggles
- One in three students in the district are obese-need to coordinate services to provide health literacy
- Community gives teachers resources but the need and implementation is different in each building for different things
- State is not providing appropriate direction on the new teacher evaluation model
- One administrator has not been evaluated in 12 years
- No centralize approach to deal with issues/communication
- Some teachers are just buying time
- Teachers need to be supported
- Tired teachers are protected by tenure
- Individual schools in the district are like silos-they all do different things
- Students moving from school to school are not on the same page in the curriculum—each school does different things or uses different curriculums
- Need an organizational flow chart
- Too much autonomy for principals
- Changing demographics

QUALITIES

- Have a thick skin
- Define policies

- School safety
- Awareness and importance of mental health issues of students
- Be able to rock the boat
- Have non-threatening conversations with all constituents
- Listen and be strong to do programs
- Lead and engage us-work as our partner
- Work through students strengths
- Dynamic leader
- Have a WOW factor
- Be visible
- Innovated
- Become the face of the district
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse groups-look, listen, collaborate with interested community partnerships
- Need to work together to provide a service (district and community partners)
- Build capacity for collaboration
- Be involved with the community
- Engage with everyone in the community
- Work with people and with our children
- Great community-will support you
- Need to be able to negotiate with board of education-need a supporting cast
- Need a background with unions and contract negotiations
- Has to have diversity at the top with your central office staff
- Students need to see people that look like them ‘
- 10 years’ experience in education at all levels
- Ability to raise public and private dollars
- Build relationships with the private sector
- Does Norwalk Public Schools have a profile? Do we know what we look like to others?
- Pleased with past superintendent in the way of visibility but she was not supported
- Must be able to plow through resistant people or organizations
- Savvy, experience, tough-wanting to be the best
- Someone who came through the ranks all levels

- Know people in the district-nothing is a greater compliment if your superintendent knows your name and what you do
- Pass out warm fuzzies (letters, phone calls to thank people etc.)
- Have leadership qualities works well with a team

IMF Focus Group - February 21, 2013

Attendance: 15

STRENGTHS

- We have people who care
- We have some good teachers
- There is a “can do” attitude
- Opportunity for parents to get involved, some choose not to
- Teachers have an open door policy to assist and support students-they communicate with parents when necessary
- There are resources available for those students who are deficient academically
- The district does have alternative education opportunities for students when they do not meet the traditional high school model
- Diversity, different cultural backgrounds and nationalities
- Appreciated the former superintendent reaching out to the community
- She (former superintendent) came out to us in the churches
- Accessible and approachable
- E-mail system is wonderful for communicating with parents-teachers are on top of the students and communicate when necessary
- Former superintendent had that special way of getting involved (as example serving Thanksgiving dinner to students with particular foundations, sending notes or letters thanking people for their service)

CHALLENGES

- There are many challenges in the district
- Dysfunctional-it is more about politics and not about the kids
- Newspaper should not put so much negative information in the paper-it motivates people to stay away from our community
- The board of education members fight with each other
- There is a problem with students failing academically but still being about to participate in athletics and extra-curricular with a 1.7 GPA
- There should be more sensitivity to cultural differences and recognize the cultural differences
- Diversity-lack of knowledge on people of color

- Need sensitivity to culture (as example instead of suspending a child for using the F word, find out what the root of the problem is…know the culture)
- Site based management creates a huge weakness and lack of consistency
- Crime rate is high among teenagers-why are they not in school
- Make it a priority to work with agency who have children as their top priority
- We need school uniforms
- Uniforms create a level of respect and expectations
- Budget
- Accountability-it is missing (as example when there was $4M missing from the budget)
- Libraries need to be open all of the time for student and staff access
- The board of education members need to reach the parents

QUALITIES

- All things to all people
- Culturally astute
- Experience with people of color
- Experience with an urban setting
- Experience dealing with unions
- Consensus builder
- Someone who is involved with the community
- Possess an open door policy-ability to create coalitions
- Possess an attitude for an open door-be approachable
- Compassionate to people
- Communicator
- Proven track record
- Awareness of student safety (as example when children run to the bus stop and are out of sight of their parents/parents want to see their students get on the bus)
- Intervention specialists are not treated right-new superintendent should meet with them about job conditions
- Would the superintendent consider more vocational schools for students that are not college bound

NAACP/Community Input Session - Grace Baptist Church – February 21, 2013

Attendance - 40

STRENGTHS:

- Diversity
- After school programs
- Partnerships within the community
- Dedicated staff
- Staff's commitment/willingness to work even with the dysfunctional and difficult circumstances
- Caring and involved community
- Bilingual/Trilingual staff
- Nursing services
- Location and surrounding
- Music/Arts programs
- Magnet schools
- Extremely bright and talented students
- Strong athletic programs
- Academics and talented program at the Middle Schools
- Foreign language program to include Japanese
- ESL program
- Parent outreach
- Math and science
- Community is its strength

CHALLENGES:

- Voicing opinions of what is needed – public mistrusts the process
- Inability to look within our system for a district leader losing money with search process
- Concern with very short timelines for hiring new superintendent needs to be extended with input from the community for an effective leader
- Board needs to come out to community-openness of the board members/stereotypes

- How to present candidates to the community not just the BOE
- Norwalk community doesn't feel empowered, heard or valued
- Budget – dependent on what city cares to give
- BOE personalities dysfunctional with some members
- Union under mining the vision of the superintendent
- Achievement gap
- Creating a centralized process- equity
- Unification across the district not to operate like "silos"(resources for teachers and our classrooms the same across the district for each school)
- Increase staff to mirror our student minority population
- Restore to level of funding to do the job-adequate financial resources available
- Finding leadership who understands and experienced with diversity, demographics and understands our population/culture of Norwalk-have walked in those shoes before
- Technology desperate for
- Buildings
- "Red Apples" under current negative group
- Cooperative collaboration working together
- Effective communication between the city, BOE and community
- Cliques
- Better understanding of Special Education need a better system
- The bar needs to be set higher for Special Education
- Clear strategic plan where we know where the district will go
- Student safety
- 3-5 year strategic plan to follow through and not deviate from it-carry it out
- Strong Public Relations department needed
- Time between where we are and where we need to go-meeting those ideas
- Need to hire nurses that are diverse to reflect the community to service students
- Lack of transparency
- Briggs Alternative HS's voice needs to be heard
- Vocational schools needed – not all students will be attending college but are interested in a trade instead
- Able to bring back our after school junior high and high school programs
- Restore funding cuts

QUALITIES:

- Minimum of 10 years of experience as a K-12 educator who rose through the ranks as a teacher and administrator
- Strong leadership skills and consensus building
- Strong leader who stands on their own and sticks to decisions
- Honest, has the street smart & knows about our gang issues and addresses it
- Oversees with authority and credits students, parents and staff
- Background with Broad educational program
- Well respected, approachable and fair
- Well spoken, great communicator and writer
- Focus on student achievement
- Centralized focus – no personalized individual agendas for schools
- Able to create trust and worthiness within the community - dependable
- Understanding and sensitivity to the culture/diversity of Norwalk
- Sets the tone early not to be manipulated by negative groups/politicians/officials and won't get pushed aside
- Able to listen, learn and act
- Able to work with all groups and address the community
- Able to be transparent
- Innovative and creative leader bringing new 21st century skills and technology willing to think "outside of the box"
- Knows how to listen to all stakeholders-respect for current staff/community
- Goes beyond the work day to accomplish the job (not just a 9-5 person)
- Visible in the community & school activities
- Knows what's going on with all children- proactive with our middle schools and high schools students- able to communicate with our children
- Puts the job first and keeping people happy second
- Not a retiree/not someone from corporate sector
- Successful career with similar environment, demographics, size, culture and ethnic composition
- Visionary that sees the school system as a resource
- Believes in the promise and mission of Norwalk PS

- Understands Connecticut laws, requirements & how Norwalk functions
- Has a plan of what to do in Norwalk for success
- Lives in Norwalk, pays taxes here and knows our children
- Local who knows the history of Fairfield county, city and state
- Able to implement an effective teacher evaluation process
- Understands equity throughout the district
- Able to work within the district for fair and equitable discipline with rules that are consistent and applied for everyone equally across all district schools
- Strong Special Education background
- Able to demonstrate to partner with corporations and negotiate budget needs

Please note that in the NAACP/Community Input Session, the following suggestions were made:

- A Focus Group meeting should be held with PROACT representatives and Briggs Alternative High School students
- Provide the Norwalk Public School community with the process of the input on the candidates
- Make candidate resumes and names public to the Norwalk community
- Make the Stakeholder Engagement Report available to not just the BOE but to the school community by meeting/focus groups, not just as a general report
- Revise current timelines to be extended for the hiring of new superintendent, current ones are too short
- Have a representative from PROACT attend the next Board meeting

SURVEY RESULTS

PROACT Search reached out to the District and to the larger community through a survey form to gain additional data about what the greater community is looking for in their next Superintendent. By the time we gathered the data, on February 25, 2013, we had received 316 survey responses from different community groups.

Below is a summary of the groups that responded to the summary:

GROUP	SURVEY RESPONSE
Parent/Guardian	213
Student	4
Teacher	42
Principal/Building Administrator	0
District Administrator	2
Support Staff	10
Community Member	33
Paraprofessional	4
Other	8
TOTAL	**316**

Participants were asked to select no more than 10 of the most important characteristics that the new Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools should have. The following is a break-down of those responses, ranked in order from most to least selected.

ALL RESPONSES

Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	**187**
Puts students first	**186**
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	**165**
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**160**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**147**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**143**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**139**
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	**122**
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	**121**
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	**111**
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	109
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	108
Successful strategic planning experience	106
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	96
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	91
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	90
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	89
Work experience in a similar district	88
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	79
Strong instructional leadership skills	79
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	71
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	69
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	68
Uses data to make decisions	68
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	64
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	62
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	60
Able to work with federal and state legislators	51
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	48
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	48
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	39
Experience in school district capital projects	33
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	13
TOTAL	**316**

PARENT / GUARDIAN

Puts students first	**130**
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	**124**
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	**115**
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**103**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**94**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**91**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**90**
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	**85**
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	**85**
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	**78**
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	76
Successful strategic planning experience	76
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	67
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	64
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	58
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	57
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	55
Work experience in a similar district	55
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	51
Strong instructional leadership skills	51
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	48
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	45
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	45
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	42
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	42
Uses data to make decisions	42
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	41
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	35
Able to work with federal and state legislators	34
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	33
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	26
Experience in school district capital projects	25
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	5
TOTAL	**211**

STUDENT

Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**4**
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	**4**
Puts students first	**4**
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	**3**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**3**
Successful strategic planning experience	**3**
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	**3**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**3**
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	2
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	2
Experience in school district capital projects	2
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	2
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	2
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	2
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	2
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	2
Strong instructional leadership skills	2
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	2
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	2
Uses data to make decisions	2
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	2
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	2
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	1
Able to work with federal and state legislators	1
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	1
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	1
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	1
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	1
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	1
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	1
Work experience in a similar district	1
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	1
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	1
TOTAL	**4**

TEACHER

Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	**32**
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**27**
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	**23**
Puts students first	**23**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**22**
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	**20**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**19**
Strong instructional leadership skills	**16**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**15**
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	**14**
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	**14**
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	**14**
Work experience in a similar district	**14**
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	13
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	13
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	13
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	13
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	13
Successful strategic planning experience	12
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	12
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	11
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	11
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	9
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	8
Uses data to make decisions	8
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	7
Able to work with federal and state legislators	6
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	6
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	4
Experience in school district capital projects	4
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	4
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	3
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	1
TOTAL	**41**

PRINCIPAL / BUILDING ADMINISTRATOR

Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	
Puts students first	
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	
Successful strategic planning experience	
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	
Work experience in a similar district	
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	
Strong instructional leadership skills	
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	
Uses data to make decisions	
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	
Able to work with federal and state legislators	
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	
Experience in school district capital projects	
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	
TOTAL	**0**

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**2**
Puts students first	**2**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**2**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**2**
Uses data to make decisions	**2**
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	1
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	1
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	1
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	1
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	1
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	1
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	1
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	1
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	1
Strong instructional leadership skills	1
Work experience in a similar district	1
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	1
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	1
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	0
Able to work with federal and state legislators	0
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	0
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	0
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	0
Successful strategic planning experience	0
Experience in school district capital projects	0
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	0
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	0
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	0
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	0
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	0
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	0
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	0
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	0
TOTAL	**2**

SUPPORT STAFF

Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**7**
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	**7**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**6**
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	**5**
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	**5**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**5**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**4**
Puts students first	**4**
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	**4**
Work experience in a similar district	**4**
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	**4**
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	3
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	3
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	3
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	3
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	3
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	3
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	3
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	3
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	3
Strong instructional leadership skills	3
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	2
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	2
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	2
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	2
Uses data to make decisions	2
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	2
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	1
Able to work with federal and state legislators	1
Successful strategic planning experience	1
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	1
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	0
Experience in school district capital projects	0
TOTAL	**10**

COMMUNITY MEMBER

Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	**24**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**23**
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	**17**
Puts students first	**16**
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	**14**
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	**14**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**14**
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	**13**
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**12**
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	**12**
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	**12**
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	**12**
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	11
Successful strategic planning experience	10
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	10
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	10
Work experience in a similar district	10
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	8
Uses data to make decisions	8
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	7
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	6
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	6
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	5
Strong instructional leadership skills	5
Able to work with federal and state legislators	4
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	4
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	4
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	4
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	4
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	3
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	2
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	2
Experience in school district capital projects	1
TOTAL	**33**

PARAPROFESSIONAL

Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**3**
Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**3**
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, Board, Administrators, and Staff	**3**
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	**3**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**3**
Able to work with federal and state legislators	**2**
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	**2**
Successful strategic planning experience	**2**
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	**2**
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	**2**
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	**2**
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	1
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	1
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	1
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	1
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	1
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	1
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	1
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	1
Puts students first	1
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	1
Work experience in a similar district	1
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	1
Uses data to make decisions	1
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	0
Experience in school district capital projects	0
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	0
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	0
Strong instructional leadership skills	0
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	0
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	0
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	0
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	0
TOTAL	**4**

OTHER

Has the strength to thrive in a contentious environment	**6**
Puts students first	**6**
Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community	**5**
Demonstrated ability to work successfully with teacher/paraprofessional union	**5**
Possesses sound management experience that includes a participatory processes	**4**
Ability to hire the right people to get the job done	**4**
Willing to listen to input but able to make a decision	**3**
Able to work with federal and state legislators	**3**
Possession of an earned Ed.D or Ph.D degree	**3**
Ability to build consensus within and among the community, School Board, Administrators, and Staff	**3**
Uses data to make decisions	**3**
Takes leadership in instructional issues based on best practice and current research.	**3**
Knowledge and understanding of the importance of Special Education	**3**
Has “non-traditional” occupational experience (e.g. private business, military, etc)	2
Has a proven commitment to building students' knowledge of a core curriculum	2
Successful strategic planning experience	2
Sound familiarity with CT education laws	2
Strong knowledge of financial and budgeting procedures	2
Experience balancing budgets in challenging fiscal environments	2
Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments	2
Ability to develop both long and short term goals for the District	2
Visionary and facilitator for the district goal of being a high performing school district	2
Ability to secure and promote positive student behavior	2
Work experience in a similar district	2
Is a visible presence in the schools and with the school leadership	2
Experience in school district capital projects	1
Ability to delegate authority appropriately	1
Committed to informing and advising the School Board	1
Strong instructional leadership skills	1
Ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with the business community	1
Demonstrates ability to work with the media	1
Demonstrated ability at integrating technology into the daily work	0
Shows experience and expertise in operational management	0
TOTAL	**8**

ONLINE SURVEY COMMENTS

Parent/Guardian

- New Superintendant needs to implement assessment of Principal and Vice Principal positions in the schools.....who are the Principals accountable to? Who reviews a Principal on an annual basis? 2. New Superintendant needs to acknowledge high performing students in this district. with more resources and support...stop teaching to the lowest denominator and concentrate more on higher achievers the rest will follow. 3. New Superintendant needs to review diversity in the schools.....schools are not equally balanced. Schools needs to be re-districted!
- A proven leader. Experience as a veteran supt. Track record of leadership, and success
- A Superintendent who pushes instruction relating to 21st century skills such as problem solving, higher order thinking, collaboration with peers, and authentic learning opportunities. Someone who will rise above the chaos and dysfunction of city politics and focus on what is best for children. Someone strong enough to stand before a BOE and demand a commitment to best practices regardless of any other distractions.
- A supervisor has to be able to deal with strong personalities. He/she should be able to listen to all parties, have the knowledge to ask for the right information, make sure he/she understands the information presented and then make objective decisions based on that information. A good manager does not have to be an ace of all trades but knows to ask someone who IS an ace in each area to explain to him/her what is going on and advise on courses of action--then the manager makes the decision. The hiring committee should create some scenarios--similar to what Norwalk has gone through--and ask each candidate how he/she would handle that particular scenario...the candidates should not be able to give answers without asking questions first--and the quality of those questions will indicate who is best for the job.
- Ability to obtain board members who have best qualifications to serve. Norwalk presently has incompetent board members on the Board of Education. We need a Mayor who will create some incentives to attract qualified citizens who would come forward and be held accountable for their service. You need to be out of your mind to want to sit through torture and hours of endless meetings with no vision and closure in mind. May be there a theory to this method. If you obtain board members who don't realize or just serve for the tittle. You simply get what you attract. Garbage in turns out to be recycled garbage.
- All of these prerequisites are good...I suggest you look at the past few Superintendents and evaluate where their strengths and weaknesses impacted their performance in Norwalk. This is such a highly paid and important position, I believe we must not repeat past mistakes. Our community is unique in it's social, racial & economic mix - we are a "city population" living in a "small town". I have two children who have graduated from NHS and one who attends West Rocks MS. I have been active in leadership roles at four Norwalk schools over the past 17 years/
- Although the qualifications of the right candidate are extremly important, so are the systems and leadership that are in place to ensure their success. The district - and most importantly the BOE and Norwalk City Government - need to identify AND hold themselves accountable for the right behaviors and procedures to support this role. What are the capabilities of these government agencies to support the same needs identified for our school's Superintendent? Success will require teamwork, partnering and a holistic approach to leveraging our strengths and overcoming our gaps and challenges.

- Although there are budget concerns, salary must be competitive in order to attract a highly qualified person.
- Candidate must know that position may be phased out when districts are consolidated and superintendent positions are eliminated. He/she must be willing to add in this process and not use job security as a motif to produce action against making CT a more efficient school system.
- Committed to informing and advising the School Board. Willingness to go to local housing authority sites and churches to encourage parent. involvement since the district consists of 60% minority students. Ability to delegate authority appropriately. Sound familiarity with CT education laws. Commitment to high degree of visibility in the community Ability to build consensus within and among the community, School Board, Administrators, and Staff Experience in elementary, middle, and high school environments
- Critical for superintendent to have a track record of bridging the gap for minority groups (African-Americans, Hispanics, other ELLs... and special ed). We are a district that is largely minority and yet failing them. It would be great if the Super spoke Spanish (although more important for every building to have an administrator who does). Superintendent should have a track record as a strong supervisor of the building administrators. In Norwalk, the principals each have their own fiefdom--getting them to pull together is like herding cats. The superintendent needs to get them pointed in the same direction under one vision--and also evaluate their performance. No more letting crappy principals slide, or creating "jobs" at Central Office just to keep failing principals on payroll. Superintendent needs to be able to get the union to make decisions that are in the best interest of the kids. It's not just about teacher salaries! Our extremely well paid teachers get to work fewer days than elsewhere (and don't get me started with all the days and days of movie watching as "the end of the year is approaching"), despite their unimpressive results. They also virtually never get any professional development. The union needs to build in standards of professionalism, continuing education, and commitment to education.
- Don't allow the same people who hired the new NHS principal anywhere near this hiring process!
- Get rid of Daddona. He's done NOTHING.
- Has demonstrated success as a classroom teacher Has a strong history of educational experience Listens to teachers This Pro Act list is clearly biased. This list of suggested criteria looks as if you are looking for a figurehead who will get us good PR in the community, not someone who understand teaching, learning, how to get the best from all people, and how to functionally manage the school system.
- I am looking for someone who put student's first, not their pay and status quo to continue that pay. I am looking for responsive leadership. Someone who has proven that they can respect and understand the layers of our multifaceted community and not just say they can. I am looking for a master teacher. Before we lost Melissa Muller-Jenkins to the Bridgeport School System, I saw this in her. She analyzed student scores and found ways to teach teachers new ways of reaching students. She stood up for students. I see this quality in David Hay as well. You have some good teachers in Norwalk and they deserve strong leadership. You also have lazy teachers who have tenure/cronyism on their sides and we need someone who can energize teachers who are merely waiting for retirement. I would like to have a Superintendent who has turned around a district that is similar to Norwalk and let this person come in and do what is best for the children, tax payers and all citizens. I'm glad Lyons has a realtor on the search committee. Many are concerned about our property values and school district's reputation.
- I believe it is important for students to leave high school prepared to do college level work. I find it unacceptable that some students, after graduating from high school, need to take remedial classes at a school like NCC before they are able to do college level work. I also believe that if we are really going to prepare our students to compete in a global economy and gain better knowledge of other culture, the

study of world language should be mandatory in high school, with a few exceptions, say if a student has a disability that adversely affects his or her ability to communicate verbally.

- I believe the most important characteristics are: 1)experience in similar diverse, urban school system 2)strategic planning experience including five year financial plans 3)experience managing a centralized data system that includes integrating technology into the daily work 4)Ability to build consensus with all stakeholders and have a high degree of visibility in the community
- I believe this position should be filled by a seasoned superintendent. Experience and past actions should be their greatest tool!
- I can only hope that the new superintendent will be allowed to come in, make some difficult decisions and changes and be supported by the entire board. Why bother hiring an administrator if they will be micromanaged, continuously second guessed, subjected to board member ridicule and not allowed to perform the job that they are hired to do. It is quite difficult to thrive in a contentious environment, and why would someone want to be subjected to that?
- I do not think that the acting superintendent is a good candidate for this job. He does not bring the schools together to form an educational community. I know that he has not been encouraging the high schools to work together to form a collaborative group. This needs to be done with both high schools going through the NEASC process in the upcoming years.
- I don't know why we keep hiring from out of district when we have a great capable candidate in Tony Daddona
- I feel it is extremely important for this person to have presence in our schools and to hold teachers and schools to some accountability.
- I read the instructions and understand I am asked to choose what I feel are the 10 most important characteristics. My apologies but I selected 11.
- If Jeffery Canada or Micheel Rhee available?
- It is concerning that the concepts of equity and access were absent from this list. The next leader should possess a strong vision for how a system works with all students and families to support a pathway to academic achievement and school membership.
- It is important to choose a superintendent with experience in schools, and NOT someone from the business community. Education is a highly specific and specialized field. Although some aspects of business may translate well to education, particularly in terms of budgets and financial decisions, many aspects of the business model will ruin public education and take the focus away from teaching our students what they need to succeed in the world.
- It is inappropropriate that that the Superintendent would have to "thrive in a contentious environment". To allow that type of environment to exist is unhealthy and steps should ne taken to eliminate the "problem" types who cause the contention.
- It is time for the superintendent to be a person of action and change for our community. We need a leader who will filter out those who are not visionaries and just been in the system too long, and bring in fresh new minds with new innovative ideas to move our schools forward. We need someone who is willing to go to many lengths and seek many avenues of support so that our district can thrive and provide quality schools in our community.We need someone who is going to take all the bulls out and bring in some strong voices, strong minds that are devoted to trully providing for our children of the

community. We need someone who is willing to travel this road until it's completion. Someone who makes this their vocation.

- It was hard to pick just ten! Everything here applies!!!
- Let's get going and speed up the process, please. This process has taken far too long, and our students, teachers and Norwalk's school district reputation suffer because of it.
- limiting to only 10 is tough -
- Make the tough decisions. Kids come first not the unions! Hold school principals accountable - with same standards that the teachers are accountable to. Develop better measurements to determine school success including higher than norm teacher turn over (should raise some eyebrows at some schools - particularly West Rocks). Too many of our schools have weak principals or jus plain old bullies who should be retired or managed out!
- More important than any of these attributes is that the BOE clearly define the responsibility and authority of the superintendent, and then refrain from interfering within that zone. The BOE should not engage in micromanaging the operations of the Superintendent and his/her staff, but should limit itself to appropriate oversight.
- Must be able to stand up to the unions and change the paradigm. The structure of our union contracts is bankrupting us and only guaranteeing hangers on. Pay should be based on innovation and success.
- My concerns are focused on the large majority of the students who need constant challenging (less so on the disproportionate amount of money spent on Special Education), the need for Norwalk to get it's fair share of state and federal dollars, the need to return library media and technology specialists to every school especially elementary level, and to focus on becoming a model school that values and educates well our diverse population.
- New Superintendent should come from outside the district- successful turnaround experience in a similarly sized, highly diverse district.
- No more same ol, same ol'.... Bring competition and accountability to the table. No more union cronyism. Performance based pay, ability shed poor perf teachers and reward strong performance. The way it's been done has failed. Don't replicate failure...again. It hurts everyone.
- Norwalk Public Schools needs a visionary leader. Relying on the way things have traditionally been done has led to an underperforming system. Norwalk has a very disruptive mix of political and union in-fighting which the next Superintendent will need to quash. This person will need to be a strong leader and will need to be empowered to make decisions in the best interest of the children of this district, not the adults.
- Our next Superintendent should respect the staff that is here and listen to them and what they have to say. Norwalk wants grand results with little money and it's always the kids who lose out. In other states they have programs to help aides become teachers, we have no incentives for our support staff this needs to change. Also we need someone with fresh ideas and a new outlook. I want them to put the kids first but I also want them to support the staff members. example (calling a snow day but wanting the priniciples and secratery to still report to work. If it's not safe for kids to get to the building, why would it be ok to put your staff at risk? We need new energy and a brand new outlook.
- Perhaps it's time for a new leader of the teacher's union. Additionally, work with surrounding superintendents to share best practices in particular with none traditional curriculum/programs such as Stamford's AITE and New Haven's Amistad Academy as well as Wilton, New Canaan, Darien public

school systems. Norwalk has some incredible teachers but is suffering from a system that favors tenured complacency over enthusiasm and skill. Newer teachers who are not performing need to be moved out of the school system. Conversely tenured under performing teachers need to be moved out of classroom teaching positions into other administration roles where less students could be impacted negatively .

- Please be very selective in the search for a superintendent for our students. Our district has been through quite enough and the students in middle and high school show the effects. Our superintendent must focus on students' needs first and be highly effective at communicating those needs to the community, city administration, district administration and teaching staff. The superintendent must have experience leading a successful district that has a diverse community, financial constraints and politicized BOE, teachers' and administrators' unions. The superintendent must recognize that a plan forward is not always a restoration of what was cut for history or labors' sake. It is instead a vision of a district that provides students (the customer) the quality and level of service they need for a successful future.
- Please find someone with a business background, high energy, and strong vision and ambition. We need to completely renovate this school system and we can't do it without strong leadership... We need someone who is not a yes man. It's important that the search be focused not on one or two special interests. The new leader must be free of bias and not aligned with any particular "population."
- Please hire a NEW person for the position and give that person what ever is needed to SUCCEED in the position. Very tired of the "good old boy" network in Norwalk - taking the easy way out by putting people who are grew up in Norwalk or have been working in the system forever and ever just because it is easier to do it that way. We need a leader who is given the support required to move this district forward for so our children can succeed. Thank you.
- Please hire someone who is not going to pander to special interest or minority groups for the sake of political correctness. A superintendent should be fair and equitable to everyone regardless of what race, religion, gender, etc. Also, one that is not going to allow an anti religious agenda to take place in schools such as kids not being able to say God bless you or mention Christmas in a school that's probably 85% christian. Not saying religion should be pushed but it shouldn't be squashed from all speech. Its a violation of the First Amendment. A pandering Superintendent is repulsive and divisive. We dont need any more of that.
- Please please find someone who is not part of the Norwalk old boy network and is strong enough to successfully deal with the teacher's union
- Que pueda hablar y entender las necesidades de la comunidad hispana
- RESIDES IN NORWALK
- someone that can get this district back in shape...get norwalk to ehat it once was!!!!!!!
- Someone who can stand on his/her own and make tough decisions. Get rid of teachers, staff, maintenance that do not perform -- and there are a lot of them. Do we really need an assistant superintendant? Seems like a giant waste of money to me. Get our students ready for college. They are very behind many other schools when they get into the college environment. Stop wasting money. Professional person with excellent communication skills that is very polished and has a strong management background has been lacking overall in Norwalk.
- Someone with a fresh perspective and no prior alliances in the district. We need a clean slate and someone who will feel comfortable making tough decisions.

- Special Education knowledge, education and experience is a must have for the new Superintendent. Implement changes recommended by the CREC report throughout the district. 2 or 3 reports are enough to see that the same changes have to be made to solve many shortcomings within the Special Education arena. Consistency in procedures and educational methods throughout the entire district among all schools is of utmost importance. There needs to be a level playing field for all students.
- The new super needs to know how to motivate and turn around a school system. S/he needs to roll up their sleeves and work closely with the Board of Ed and financials to run the district - keeping an eye on everything...while also moving the district forward. S/he is coming into a fairly toxic environment and needs to be a very savvy communicator, as well as, a tough negotiator who has turned around a school district with similar issues. We cannot hire a superintendent who has "yet another vision" of what this school system could be or keeps at "business as usual". We need someone who knows how to turn around our district and make it happen tactic by tactic - tried and proven.
- the next superintendant needs to be a strong force with good decision making abilities. They need to be able to work with all different aspects of local government, unions and teachers as well as lead norwalk public school systems where they can be compared with some of our neighboring districts. This person needs to know how to raise money from private sector and work with the state level to ensure we are getting our fair share.
- The next superintendent must have a clear vision that he/she is able to communicate for all stakeholders to understand. The vision must be based on best practices/research. Most importantly, there must be a commitment to professional development of all teachers/administrators. A good teacher has the greatest impact on student learning.
- The Prmary characteristic for a new Superintendent is always putting the student first, making certain they(student) are equip to succeed after graduation. Dr. Marks our prior superintendent was really just that person, it is truly too bad she was not given the support needed to complete the task at hand....helping our children grow and succeed.
- The superintendent should be a leader. He or she should hire leaders as well. This especially includes the principals at ALL schools. These individuals should be very visible and involved with students as well as teachers.
- The Superintendent should have the following qualities and credentials: 1) Celebrate the diversity of Norwalk's student community, including different learning styles/special education, ethnic and economic backgrounds. 2) Share a common goal, positive "anything is possible" attitude, and passion for educating the whole child in a purposeful way. Emphasize lifelong learning experiences. 3) Emphasize integrated arts in all core curriculum areas. 4) Support a growing public preschool program. 5) Be a successful and democratic communicator. 6) Be organized and have the ability to delegate.
- There are so many important attributes on this list. I'd like to think that someone who is a visionary, using best practice methods, will also use technology and data to inform decision making. We also need someone who doesn't engage in intimidation practices and back room deal making. Norwalk's strengths are also its weaknesses- generations of families who have stayed local and a resistance to change.
- There is a status quo of board of ed members, administrators, teachers and union leaders who value power above all else. They speak “it’s all about the kids” until they’re blue in the face, but it’s not. It’s about preserving pensions, salaries, benefits, and favors. The next leader of Norwalk Schools CANNOT be someone from the district. It has to be an outsider with experience in education and a military-type leadership style who makes informed, rational decisions based on data and has a backbone to take on cronyism, nepotism, and an entrenchment that makes this a failing district. They must be a change

agent. Over the past several years, there has been bright flight of all races from Norwalk (analyze the data). We are now almost 50% free and reduced lunch and 2/3 minority which is not a reflection of the City of Norwalk demographics. Just stand on a corner in Rowayton one morning and count the number of private school buses picking up children. This is because the district has been failing Norwalk families for years. If the next Superintendent, BOE, and Mayor do not turn it around (and again NO ONE currently in a position in Norwalk Schools has the skill sets to do this), then we will become just another Bridgeport. The school demographic and socio-economic data are already trending this. It's just a matter of time.

- There more than 10 that any given leader should have in order to fill this position. Is there a reason why we can not hire Mr. Tony Daddona? At this current time he is doing a good job and what I find amazing is he is responsive to emails, phone calls, etc. I don't recall having a leader that was so on top of things before ... why are we reinventing the wheel when we see we already have somone who understands the district, is a team player, leader and is familary as he has already worked with the district in other capacities. Let's save the dollars from doing a search and get to work at NPS. I'd hate to see someone come in that is new that has no idea how the system works and who does what, etc - I could go on. . We need to get Norwalk Public Schools back on the map in CT to where they used to be ....
- This person has to be good with budgets and bridging the money gap somehow to reach the goals of the core curriculum. Good saleman to norwalk public about the inportance of a solid publis school system and how this will benifit all the people of norwalk. We need to have a strong school system to keep good hard working peole from moving to other towns with better systems.
- This person should have experience as a superintendent in a school system similar to Norwalk. Their leadership skills are of utmost importance since they must deal with a highly dysfunctional school board who seem to have no clear agenda.
- Throwing money at a broken system without a long range strategic plan is a waste of time and money. We currently spend half the year arguing about the budget and very little time spent in long term planning. Language Arts is the weakest link from Kindergarten - 12th grade. Reading by 3rd grade should be at the top of the list. I think the current model is broken and the new superintendent needs to look at different ways of teaching students. Using technology in the classroom i.e. Kahn Academy, redistricting, creating magnet schools for Science, ESL, Stem etc.. should all be looked at. Teaching to the middle is not working. Vocational schools would be a dream for all those smart children who don't thrive in a classroom environment. My children are graduating in 2013 (University of Rochester) and 2014(?) but I would be thrilled as a tax payer if we were to hire a Corey Booker or Michelle Rhee. Smart, driven, young, aggressive professionals up for the challenge of cleaning up Norwalk.
- We are an under-performing district due to 2-3 decades of administration and union leadership that want the status quo to remain. This city pays its staff well, but we are caught in a time-warp with respect to educational management or reform. Norwalk is at a cross-roads with respect to its student population -with Free and Reduced Lunch population up by almost 10% in the past several years. We need a Michelle Rhee or Paul Vallas type to come in and kick some butt and bring the local community back to the public schools! So long as the district remains status quo, we will continue to lose the middle class student population. The status quo ran the last superintendent out. This can't happen again and the status quo must not win!
- We do not have the right person leading the way. Get rid of Daddona. Only thinks of himself and his croonies. No consideration for other people, misuse of funds, unprofessional ruthless person. Worst in the city!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! We need a person with a professional background who knows how to run a business. That's the person that can run a school. Smart, intelligent, and experienced in working with

people and making people feel valued - students, teachers, staff, parents. Professionals need only apply.

- We need a reformer!!! Someone who isn't going to get sucked into the old boy cronny public official network of Norwalk or cave to the unions -- someone who will instead stand up to them and take Norwalk's public educational system into the 21st Century with an emphasis on 21st century learning skill sets. Someone who can figure out how to make public private partnership a reality here to compensate for lack of funds. A real leader who inspires change and can motivate everyone to get on board with educational reform.
- We need a strong, confident and dedicated Superintendent with vision! She or he should have the ability to stand up to the local political shenanigans of Norwalk and take action that will finally make Norwalk Public Schools shine! We need a leader that will make changes that will result in a cohesive, well informed and prepared school district. Finally and most importantly, we need a Superintendent that will put Norwalk students first!
- We need a Superintendent that can think on his own and form his own decisions without being influenced by strong groups. A strong background in management and finance is key to success. A person with a BACKBONE that has morals that are valued. No favoritism. Professionalism and keeping important situations confidential is very important, which we have not had in a very, very, very long time. Our school system has become quite embarrasing to the community and it is time for strong change that will improve the school system, get rid of teachers and staff that do not belong there and give the students a chance to succeeed upon graduation and be college ready.
- We need someone who will focus on higher standards for curriculum. We need better resources for our teachers to create a more rigorous academic Enviornment for our students.
- We need to hire a superintendent who is not afraid to stand up to the community and the Board of Education. A strong leader would be able to guide competing groups through discussion and build consensus through the budget process. We need our superintendent to be a presence in Norwalk. He/She must be visable, approachable, yet able to grasp situations quickly in order to make decisions.
- Why has it been so hard to fill this postion for the past few years?
- Willing to live in Norwalk, ability to create a positive image of the school system, willing to work with news media to improve overall image of NPS

Student

- I would like to see a superintendent who isn't afraid to be bold and bring major changes to the district, as well as be able to create a sense of unity among all the stakeholders. I would especially like to see a superintendent who can act as a leader to students and devotes time to engaging students in substantive ways.

Teacher

- A person who is going to evaluate ,over see and monitor administrators not only based on their data and success of their schools, but also based upon the morale they promote in their buildings with teachers and students.
- I am very thankful that you have taken the time to reach out to the community to find out our opinion on who would be the best fit for out leadership. I would like to note that among many of the teachers

this is an important step towards better communication within the district. Unfortunately in the past our advice was asked on issues, and it seems it was ignored. First and foremost I would like the new Superintendent to be a person who has taught. Not a person who taught for a year and then climbed the ladder to higher pay, I mean a teacher. A person who has a minimum 8 years experience in the classroom. Second- this persons resume should reflect they have a commitment to the place they are located. Norwalk needs a revolutionary leader, a person who is honest, blunt, and ready for the long haul. For too long we have not had clear leadership. This person is going to need to be someone who can take on the biased news of the city, the inept leadership in and out of the classroom, the teachers union, state and federal requirements, and miss use of funds. They will need all the help they can get as long as they realize there are teachers willing to help. With 27 teachers retiring at NHS alone next year, it would seem like next fall our city will have a large number of new teachers looking strong leadership.

- I feel that the next superitendent should be an individual that has outstanding leadership skills in running a school district of this size. He or she should be an individual that makes people accountable everyday. He or she should be a person that's a big part of the community and gives the community a chance to speak to reach out to all needs; academically, socially and personal growth. Sometimes when you go out and search for the right person like we have done in the past you have overlooked people that are right there in front of your eyes. For one reason for another, your decision has been wrong. I feel that you cannot let this happen again. Please approach this decision for what's best for the district. I feel you should respect individuals for who they are and not the position they hold. In the past you went out and looked for a prestigious educator to take over this district and you looked over the basic needs of this community. I am coming to the end of my career as an educator in Norwalk. I hope to retire within the next seven years and I would like to retire with someone that will last for seven years in this district. Someone like Ralph Sloan. Thank you for time. Joe Madaffari
- Let Tony Dadonna stay on through the end of the 2013-14 school year. Norwalk's BOE is dysfunctional unit that MUST be cleaned up. A new superintendent coming in now would be saddled with the same issue as Dr. Marks (granted she did nothing to even try to take charge..but that's another survey topic). Once the likes of Chiaramonte & Haynie are gone, only then can we get Norwalk back to great school district it was once and will, hopefully, be again.
- Not what we have now. We need leadershsip with a vision. There is currently no vision, no plan, and with CCSS around the corner, our district is fairly well behind in implementing curriculum and pedagogical strategies. The only way this will happen is to totally revamp central office and that means a new Supt & Asst Supt. The other problem is that you need someone strong enough to deal with Bruce. As we all know, Bruce will undermine any meaningful change in the district as he pretty much ran the last two superintendents out of dodge. You need a person to come in, with his/her own people, that has a vision and will not be derailed by the subversive nonsense that exists currently; otherwise the district cannot move forward!
- Please find someone who is a LEADER who has a passion helping kids. The last choice for superintendent was a complete disaster He or she needs to be commited to Norwalk and should LIVE here with us. We can't afford any more rear-echelon, double-dipping, bureaucratic carpet baggers! Further, we need to shed failed insiders who have brought this district to a mere shadow of its long, illustrious history. Read that as NO MORE OPERATIKS or schmoozers. Norwalk is chock full of great people, terrific students, and teachers who have proven time and again that they're willing to give their very best. We deserve to be led by someone of similar quality.

- Someone who is willing to be all inclusive. Someone who wants to work with TEACHERS, parents administrator and students to form a coalition of cooperation to move this district to the level it used to be with Dr. Sloan.
- Superintendent needs to talk to staff, parents and students. Dr. Marks had some coffee sessions which were a great idea. We need someone to weed out the dead wood and watch central office.
- Superintendent should be able to make school delay/cancelation/early dismissal decisions that take into account the fact that many of the NPS employees commute to Norwalk from other cities/towns.
- The best choice, in my opinion, is a superintendent that is not from the Norwalk system. Although this did not work out last time, I do not believe the failure was due to this.
- The Superintendent must be able to make informed decisions and realize that after students, teachers must come first! The elimination of teachers and enlargement of class sizes, while protecting high salary administrative positions, will only hurt students in the long run. We need a new leader who has spent the MAJORITY of his/her carreer in the classroom!
- This district has not had any leadership (excluding Interim Daddona) since Dr. Sloan, which accounts for its total disfunctionality. The present board members to not help the situation. PLEASE SELECT SOMEONE WHO HAS A BACKGROUND IN EDUCATION, IS NOT A RETIRE, AND IS FAMILIAR WITH CT STATE EDUCATION LAW. THIS PERSON CANNOT HAVE AN EGO, BE ON A POWER TRIP, OR DICTATE FROM THE TOP DOWN. WE NEED SOMEONE WHO WILL GET NORWALK PUBLIC SCHOOLS BACK ON TRACK. IT HAS GREAT TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS---NOW WE JUST NEED AN EXCELLENT LEADER.
- We need a solid, experienced LEADER and one that is familiar with Norwalk and all its politics. We need someone that is approachable and someone that can work with our parents, board, unions and teachers. The teachers work with the students - a superintendent needs to work well with the adults.
- We should hire Mr. Daddona as our permanenet Superintendent. Thank you,
- What we need in Norwalk is a Leader. Someone who can get right to the brass tacks of our organization. A person who has a vision of how we can be the BEST in the state. Someone who looks for the good and works with others to accomplish the GREAT!. The ability to get the job done does not depend on an educational degree, it demands a people understanding and someone who can make decisions with sound reason.
- Why don't we just hire Tony Daddona. He has done a terrific job.

Principal/Building Administrator

None.

District Administrator

None.

Support Staff

- We have Mr. Daddona - please consider him.
- This district needs a strong leeader that will stand up to the teachers' union and to the Board of Education. The teachers' union has far too much input into the decisions that are made in this district. In addition, the BOE needs to to be put in their place and to stop micro-managing this district. It is the

Board's responsibiltiy to set policies and then to hire professional educators to implement those policies. The Board then needs to listen to those professionals' opinions and support their decisions on how best to implement the established policies.

Community Member

- Perhaps on purpose some of these items are redundant. 2. Surprised there is nothing about EVIDENCE of SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE in some of these areas e.g., evidence of leading an educational organization that demonstrated increases in student performance, evidence of experience aligning resource allocation to strategic plan priorities, etc.
- Ability to handle a difficult political environment for funding the schools adequately willingness to be "tough' in union negotiations and demanding in evaluating performance of teachers and administrators
- Ability to work with a contentious Board of Education which is unable to act in a way to enhance student learning and is more interested in their own particular issues.
- Also: -Ability to delegate responsibility -Work experience in a similar school district -Building and maintaining relationships with the business community (GE, Diagio, Pitney Bowes, etc.)
- I believe that the most important part of the job should be that they are from Norwalk. It should be someone from the community who has a vested interest in the community, someone who know the people in the area, and knows our problems. Someone who truly cares about the development of our town. It seems like without that, there will be a constant revolving door of people who don't know what they are truly getting into or how to handle it.
- I would like the politics and politicians to keep their noses out of education. Susan Marks had potential, but the bullshit she encountered in the city was unnecessary. The education system is for our children, not for the politicians to play games with. Get our of our hair.
- I'll be blunt. The Norwalk School District is dragged down by a generation of difficult union leadership with unreasonable older ideas. We need someone who is strong and can handle that situation in a professional manner without fear. A lot is at stake in Norwalk. If we don't get the schools under control soon and going toward a single purpose, our property values will plummet--no one will want to live here. We do not necessarily need a former teacher or administrator in this position. We need a leader who can make a difference. I only hope those people apply.
- I'm torn on recommending anyone for work in this district. The School Board, mayor and the teacher's union each believe that they are way too important than the children. The mayor inserts himself in the middle of every issue and the head of the teacher's union does not represent the view of the teachers in the district. There is some hope for the School Board, but we'll see. Be very honest with the interviewees so that they have the true picture. It's not fair to ask someone to move into this position without the full picture. By the way, the teachers are dedicated, consummate professionals who always put the children first. The deserve better support.
- It is critical that the Board of Education & School District starts partnering more effectively with the community and allows others to be part of the problem solving/solution. The next superintendent must be able and willing to do this. There is no way the schools will thrive without working together with the community!!
- New superintendent needs to have a backbone and not get involved with any particular "special interest" group. It's kids first - don't be afraid to go toe to toe with union leadership (union leadership

and teachers are two different things in my mind) and the board of ed. Both seem to be the only consistent things in this rapidly declining school district.

- Not sure why we are spending all this money looking for a superintendent when the interim we have is doing such a great job. Has anyone asked him if he would take the job full time? He has been very effective in creating a budget for 2014 that was accepted by the BOE and created no waves with the finance board so far. The press for the schools has been positive lately. Things seem to be running smoothly in the schools. Only the BOE seems to be creating waves and all that is political nonsense. ASK HIM IF HE WILL STAY. He has 30 years experience here in Norwalk. He knows how to create a budget. He knows the schools. He knows the staff. He knows the administrators. He knows how to get things done here in Norwalk. The only people who don't like him are the ones he won't bow to. He holds people accountable. He makes people responsible and gives them the tools they need to get things done. His priorities are student safety and student achievement. He sets the bar high for student learning. He knows how to deal with the state. He is more than familiar with CT education laws. He is experience in school district capital projects. He works with the unions. He definitely promotes positive student behavior - just look at how he turned around Norwalk High. He integrates fabulous programs. He knows special education and he knows curriculum. We would be hard pressed to find a better candidate! Just because a few board members have an agenda, we shouldn't dismiss him as an outstanding option. SO WHY DOESN'T SOMEONE ASK HIM TO STAY AND SAVE A LOT OF HEADACHE? Do we really need to go through another failed period with another superintendent from out of state and another failed learning curve? Haven't we learned yet?
- Since the unions in this town have such an inordinate amount of power and manipulate the system for the gain of the union leaders' power, the current regime cannot be trusted to have the best interests of Norwalk in mind. The new superintendent needs to have significant skills in making difficult and unpopular decisions regardless of the influence and machinations of the unions. I believe the new superintendent needs to clean house and put more well qualified individuals in place in central office at every level and create a highly functional TEAM. The fractious environment and small mindedness must end. There are too many silos of information and job duties in which people only do the minimum required of them without working towards the collective success of the district. It's disgraceful. The new superintendent also needs to be able to rally the support of the teachers, the parents, politicians, businesses and the community at large in meeting the goals of creating an excellent school system. We are all in this together and the success of the school system is the success of Norwalk. Can you imagine if we had a superintendent that we could trust and all worked together towards the same goal of an quality school system?
- Someone with a strong vision Someone who can eliminate the wasteful spending of the district Someone who will re-evaluate all current positions and practices
- The new superintendent must be willing to live in Norwalk and function as a part of this community. The new superintendent must be willing to visit schools on a regular basis to gain first hand knowledge of what is going on in the classrooms and listen to teacher concerns.
- The next Superintendent needs to be a fighter on behalf of our kids. I only chose the one box because that's the prerequisite for me. The job is tough. This city is tough. We have a diverse population with plenty of opinions on how everyone can do their jobs better. The choice has to have thick skin and understand that the BOE, like many other parts of our city, needs leadership right away. There's no metric that measures leadership, you either have it or you don't.
- This person needs to be comfortable working with and engaging members of the community who have been in the past been unengaged. The Latino community's presence in schools is increasing and their

input must be taken seriously. A superintendent who is willing to get out into the community and speak to parents and families of these students is essential.

- We need a leader this time with a need to succeed. We can not hire someone to whom failiar is an option. Young, hungry and wanting to make their mark. Not someone to whom retirement is an option after a couple of tough years. This time around our superintendent needs to make it known to the unions, the BofE and probably most importantly to the principals that he/she is in change. The right candidate may not have the best resume submitted but what Norwalk needs at this moment in time might not be found on the resume.

Paraprofessional

- I feel that it would be economical and worthwhile to hire someone who has prior knowledge of how the Norwalk Public Schools operate. Also, to hire someone who will make a 100% commitment to the community of Norwalk to improve the respectability of the schools, People want to live in Norwalk but how can we make them stay and educate their children to the utmost?

Other

None.