

**Board of Education
Newtown, Connecticut**

Minutes of the Board of Education special virtual meeting on May 28, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

A. Plante, Chair
J. Vouros, Vice Chair
D. Ramsey, Secretary
S. Tomai
C. Gilson
D. Linnetz
B. Leonardi (absent)

Mary Broderick, CABE
5 Public

Call to Order

Mrs. Plante called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Presentation and Discussion on Updated Leadership Profile for Superintendent Search

Mary Broderick presented her updated Superintendent Leadership Profile based on the 331 responses to the Board of Education's recent survey.

MOTION: Mr. Gilson moved to add Public Participation as an agenda item. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Public Participation – None

MOTION: Mr. Gilson moved to adjourn. Mr. Ramsey seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donald Ramsey
Secretary

Newtown Public Schools Superintendent Search Leadership Profile



Prepared by
Mary Broderick, Ed.D.
Search Consultant

May 2024

SUPERINTENDENT LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Introduction

The Newtown Board of Education initiated a search for a Superintendent of Schools in early May 2024. The Board engaged consultant Mary Broderick from CABA Search Services to support this endeavor. Since the Board had undertaken a comprehensive search two years earlier and was starting this search late in the school year, the Board decided to forego focus groups with stakeholders and invite broad community participation through an online survey. They asked the consultant to combine current survey findings with overall findings of that recent search.

This Leadership Profile presents findings from the survey conducted between May 8 and May 20, 2024. The consultant also incorporated into the profile the results of a recent focus group with the Board of Education and the findings included in the “Successful Candidate Profile” generated during the superintendent search in 2022.

In total, 331 Newtown residents and staff took the online survey in May 2024. In conducting the interviews and focus groups and developing the survey, the consultant used an unbiased, structured approach. In addition to asking about strengths and challenges of the Newtown schools and community which could affect future leadership requirements, she asked about the qualities and expertise most desirable in the next superintendent.

The Newtown Board of Education will use these results as it considers its next steps in order to find the best possible Superintendent of Schools for Newtown at this time. The consultant is presenting these findings to the Board of Education without revealing the identity of any individual contributor.

The Newtown Board of Education has hoped to include many voices from constituents from the schools and community. Many thanks to survey respondents whose commitment to the schools and Town of Newtown were evident as they provided perspectives. Special thanks to Kathy June for her help publicizing the opportunity to participate in the survey.

Mary Broderick
CABA Search Consultant
May 28, 2024

Newtown Board of Education

Alison Plante, Chair
John Vouros, Vice Chair
Donald Ramsey, Secretary, Co-chair of Search Committee
Chris Gilson, Co-chair of Search Committee
Brian Leonardi
Doria Linnetz
Shannon Tomai

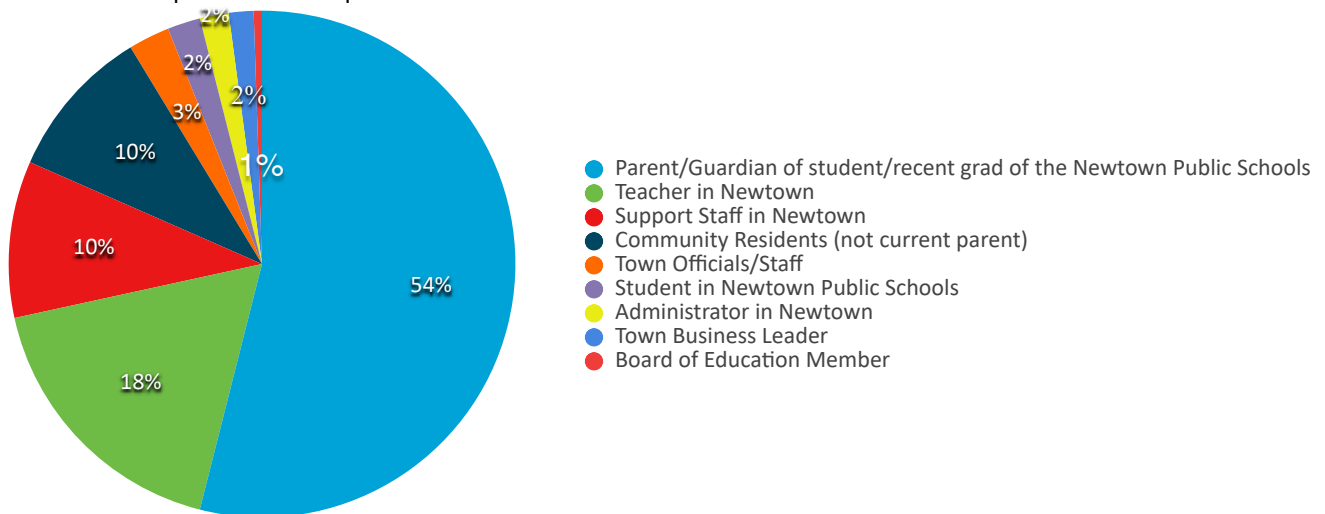
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Data Collection

In total, 331 individuals participated through the online survey. The data collected constitute a representation of the Newtown Public Schools and community at a moment in time. The survey was voluntary and anonymous. Though this profile cannot entirely capture the complexity and nuances of the schools and town; nevertheless, the information gathered yields useful insights for the search process. Items are included in the following report if, in the consultant’s judgment, they were repeated by a sufficient number of respondents to warrant the Board’s attention.

PARTICIPANTS*		%
Parent/Guardian of student/recent grad of the Newtown Public Schools	205	53.9%
Teacher in Newtown	67	17.6%
Support Staff in Newtown	38	10.0%
Community Residents (not current parent)	37	9.7%
Town Officials/Staff	10	2.6%
Student in Newtown Public Schools	8	2.1%
Administrator in Newtown	7	1.8%
Town Business Leader	6	1.6%
Board of Education Member	2	0.5%
Total Respondents: 329*	380	100.0%

*Please note that survey participants identified themselves under multiple categories so numbers add up to more than the 329 who responded to this question.



Strengths of Newtown and its Public Schools



Comments from survey participants and a board focus group reflect a community that highly values its dedicated teachers and staff, community and parental involvement, academics and curriculum, extracurricular and sports programs, school environment and safety, resources and support systems, school leadership, and communication.

Dedicated Teachers and Staff

Newtown's educational success is largely attributed to its exceptional teachers and staff, according to 113 participants. These educators are highly dedicated, committed to both students and families, and consistently go above and beyond the call to ensure each student receives the best education possible. Their hard work, passion, and expertise are evident at every educational level, from elementary through high school. Teachers and staff foster a nurturing and supportive environment, contributing to the district's reputation for academic excellence. Their dedication to student success, both academically and emotionally, highlights the strength of Newtown's teaching community.

Community and Parental Involvement

A strong sense of community and parental involvement in Newtown, according to 73 participants, plays a crucial role in the district's educational achievements. Parents and community members actively support schools through a myriad of engagement and advocacy. This broad community support creates a family-oriented atmosphere that enhances student learning and well-being. The collaboration between schools and the community helps to ensure that educational initiatives receive backing, and fosters a close-knit, supportive environment in which students can thrive.

Academics and Curriculum

Newtown's robust academic programs and well-developed curriculum, highlighted by 65 individuals, provide students with a wonderfully diverse range of learning opportunities. The district offers advanced classes, specialized programs, and rigorous academic and co-curricular opportunities across all levels. A commitment to curriculum development ensures that students receive a high-quality education, preparing them for future academic and professional success. The emphasis on academic excellence is evident through the variety of subjects and advanced coursework available, catering to students' diverse interests and abilities.

Extracurricular and Sports

Extracurricular activities and sports programs are a significant strength of Newtown, mentioned 39 times. The district provides a wide range of clubs, sports, and arts programs that enrich students' educational experience. These activities foster teamwork, discipline, and personal growth, offering students opportunities to explore their interests and develop new skills. The strong support for

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extracurriculars highlights Newtown's commitment to a well-rounded education, ensuring that students have ample opportunities for personal and social development outside the classroom.

School Environment and Safety

Newtown's school environment and safety, according to 31 participants, create a positive and inclusive atmosphere conducive to learning. The district prioritizes small class sizes, a climate of inclusivity, and strong school safety measures. Efforts to maintain a safe and welcoming environment ensure that students feel secure and supported, allowing them to focus on their academic and personal growth. This commitment to safety and positive school climate contributes to the overall well-being and success of the student body.

Resources and Support Systems

Newtown's extensive resources and support systems, highlighted 22 times, provide essential assistance to students and staff. The district offers high-quality resources for special education, academic support, and early intervention services. Strong communication and support networks ensure that students receive the help they need to succeed academically and emotionally. These resources, combined with a focus on social and emotional learning, demonstrate Newtown's dedication to fostering a supportive and enriching educational environment.

School Leadership

Effective school leadership in Newtown, mentioned by 11 participants, plays a pivotal role in guiding the district towards success. Strong, supportive school leaders ensure that staff and students are well-supported and motivated. High school principals and building administrators demonstrate exceptional leadership skills, fostering an environment where educational excellence and student well-being are prioritized. Their ability to understand and implement educational strategies contributes significantly to the district's positive outcomes.

Communication

Effective communication, noted 10 times, is a cornerstone of Newtown's educational approach. The district maintains consistent and transparent communication channels between schools, parents, and the community. Timely updates and clear communications ensure that stakeholders are informed about student progress and school initiatives. This open dialogue fosters trust and collaboration, enhancing the overall educational experience and supporting student success.

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improving morale, and providing adequate compensation and support are necessary to prevent burnout and ensure a skilled and motivated teaching workforce.

Parental and Community Involvement

According to 18 participants, Newtown needs to improve communication and involvement with parents and the community in order to foster a collaborative educational environment. Addressing parental agendas, enhancing communication channels, and promoting community participation are key to building trust and ensuring the success of educational initiatives. Respondents expressed conflicting opinions regarding the extent of parental involvement in school decision-making processes, as well as the best methods to engage with diverse community stakeholders.

Security and Safety

Eighteen (18) participants noted oversight issues in security functions and the lack of appropriate discipline processes they felt were compromising the safety and well-being of students and staff alike. Addressing threats of violence, bullying, and escalating student behaviors requires proactive measures to enforce discipline, provide support services, and create a secure learning environment conducive to academic success. There may be conflicting opinions regarding the most effective strategies to address security and safety concerns, as well as the balance between maintaining a safe environment and respecting students' rights.

Special Education

Several (10) participants identified a need to revamp the special education department to improve accessibility, communication, and resource allocations in order to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. They cited the need to address staff shortages, improve support services, and deal with behavioral issues in order to foster an inclusive learning environment that promotes academic success for all students. They offered conflicting opinions regarding the best approach to provide specialized education services, as well as how to allocate resources effectively to support students with special needs.

Community Engagement and Public Relations

Though cited by 73 as a strength, nine (9) participants mentioned challenges in community engagement and public relations and the importance of fostering open communication channels between the Board of Education and the community. Bridging the gap between differing viewpoints, establishing a cohesive vision for academic improvement, and effectively communicating the importance of budget priorities are essential for building trust and promoting community involvement in educational initiatives.

These themes provide a comprehensive overview of the key concerns and priorities within the Newtown Public Schools community at a moment in time, shedding light on multifaceted challenges and aspirations for the future.

For comparison, the NESDEC Report of 2022 identified the following challenges:

Learning Loss:

Develop a clear, student-focused plan to address the learning loss during the pandemic. While Newtown was one of the school systems that returned to hybrid learning fairly quickly, there is still work to do.

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Communication:

Communicate clearly and listen to all voices to ensure all are heard. Ensure that you seek out and communicate with all groups in the community on an on-going basis. Create a structure whereby all will feel that they can have a voice.

The current debate over Diversity/Equity/Inclusion and Academic Achievement (returning Newtown to a Blue Ribbon school district) needs someone who can bring the two groups together for the good of the students. This is not and should not be a “one or the other” debate as both goals are essential to a school system that desires to be all it can be for every student. Currently people are talking past each other, and the gap is not as significant as it appears.

Both the previous and current superintendents have developed a committee structure to ensure community input – committees such as PEAC, Climate and Culture Committee, A- Team meetings, etc. It is important to maintain these avenues for constructive input, ensure that members of the committees are representative of their respective communities and do a careful analysis prior to making changes.

Special Education/ Social Emotional Support:

Provide a focused special needs support, especially social/emotional support, for students. Assess the needs of the special education programs. Pay close attention to the findings of the SPED Self-Study Action Steps. Ensure that the plan is still relevant and, if so, that the findings have been implemented.

Pay particular attention to the social and emotional needs of families and staff throughout the transition. Newtown is unlike any other town because of the ongoing effects of December 14 2012, and the pandemic has compounded the unique needs for students and community. It will require an understanding, gentle approach to the healing that will take a long time. It would be wise to consult with those who have an understanding of the needs.

Budget:

Deal creatively and effectively with budget issues. Ensure transparent communication of budget spending and needs. Student population is declining until very recently, and many of the positions that were created during the pandemic are grant positions that will need to be integrated into the school budget if they are to remain.

Relationship Building:

Develop an effective and collaborative working relationship with the Newtown Board of Education and with the teachers' union in general, but especially during upcoming contract negotiations. Be visible in the schools and community. Establish a process where parents and the community at large can have a voice on a regular basis regarding decisions that impact the children of Newtown.

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Desired Expertise and Qualities in a New Superintendent

This section will couple survey results with the findings reported from the 2022 superintendent search. What would be the most important expertise and qualities in a new superintendent to tap the Newtown Public Schools' strengths and meet its challenges? An analysis of 2024 survey responses yielded the following:

Expertise

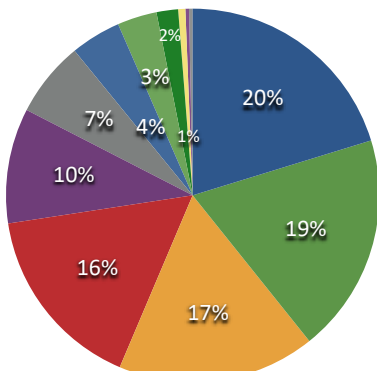
Survey respondents weighted four of the 10 areas of **desired expertise** in a new superintendent significantly higher than the other skills. If we look at participants' **first choice**, *Builds trusting relationships with students, staff, and community*, at 19.8%, was the top selection. Coming in a fairly close second was *Has experience running a school district*, at 18.5%. Following close behind were *Shares district-wide vision of excellence and innovative instruction* (16.7%) and *Communicates and collaborates effectively in schools and community*, at 15.8%.

If we look at respondents' **top three choices combined**, we see that priorities shift a bit. Now ranking first, *Communicates and collaborates effectively in schools and community* at 18.1% is followed closely by *Builds trusting relationships with students, staff, and community* at 16.9%. A more distant third is *Shares district-wide vision of excellence and innovative instruction* (11.8%), followed very closely by *Has experience running a school district* (11.2%).

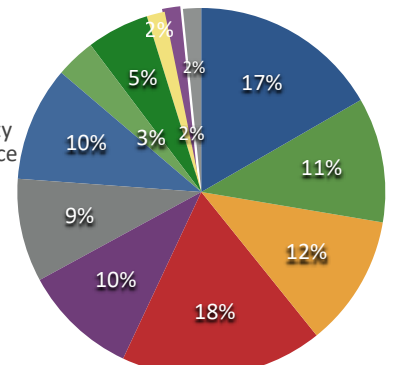
DESIRED EXPERTISE IN NEW SUPERINTENDENT	#1	%	#2	%	#3	%	TOP 3 #	TOP 3 %
Builds trusting relationships with students, staff, & community	65	19.8%	45	13.7%	57	17.3%	167	16.9%
Has experience running a school district	61	18.5%	22	6.7%	27	8.2%	110	11.2%
Shares district-wide vision of excellence & innovative Instruction	55	16.7%	33	10.1%	28	8.5%	116	11.8%
Communicates and collaborates effectively in school and community	52	15.8%	72	22.0%	54	16.4%	178	18.1%
Demonstrates proven track record of success improving performance	32	9.7%	37	11.3%	32	9.7%	101	10.2%
Has a broad base of knowledge of educational issues/practices	21	6.4%	35	10.7%	35	10.6%	91	9.2%
Possesses strong budget and finance knowledge and skills	14	4.3%	48	14.6%	39	11.9%	101	10.2%
Shares and delegates leadership	11	3.3%	12	3.7%	12	3.6%	35	3.5%
Fosters professional development, team building, & staff growth	6	1.8%	17	5.2%	32	9.7%	55	5.6%
Thinks well on their feet	2	0.6%	5	1.5%	9	2.7%	16	1.6%
Other	10	3.0%	2	0.6%	4	1.2%	16	1.6%
Totals	329	100.0%	328	100.0%	329	100.0%	986	100.0%

First Choice Expertise

Top Three Choices



- Builds trusting relationships with students, staff, & community
- Has experience running a school district
- Shares district-wide vision of excellence & innovative Instruction
- Communicates and collaborates effectively in school and community
- Demonstrates proven track record of success improving performance
- Has a broad base of knowledge of educational issues/practices
- Possesses strong budget and finance knowledge and skills
- Shares and delegates leadership
- Fosters professional development, team building, & staff growth
- Thinks well on their feet
- Thinks well on their feet
- Other



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Qualities

In addition to the leadership characteristics and expertise identified in the prior section, Newtown survey respondents reflected some clear preferences for **qualities** desired in a new leader. The top **first choices** respondents identified were *Keeps students' growth and wellbeing the primary focus* (24.6%), followed by *Trustworthy, honest, respectful* (19.5%), then *Accessible, approachable, visible in schools and community* (18.8%), and finally, *Decisive, confident, and objective problem solver* (17.3%).

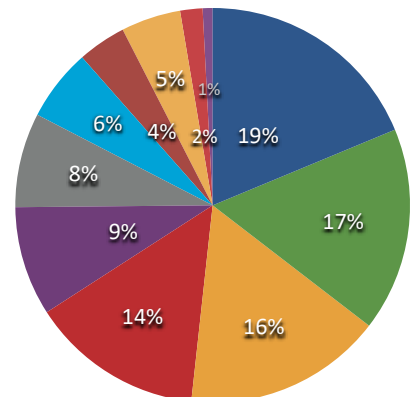
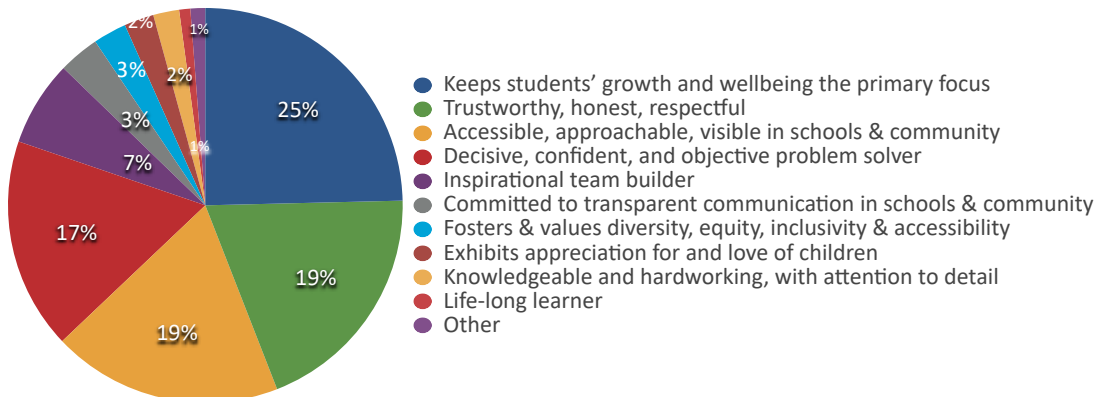
These areas lead in the "top three" category, too, and in the same order. *Keeps students' growth and wellbeing the primary focus* is 18.7%, *Trustworthy, honest, respectful* is now 16.7%, *Accessible, approachable, visible in schools and community* is 16.3%, and *Decisive, confident, and objective problem solver* is 14.2% of participants' top three choices.

Needless to say, all of these qualities and skills are essential in a leader, yet they point to the prioritized needs of the Newtown Public Schools at this point in time. This profile will explore these areas of expertise and qualities of leadership, integrating perspectives garnered two years ago with 2024 survey comments.

DESIRED QUALITIES IN SUPERINTENDENT	#1	%	#2	%	#3	%	TOP 3 #	TOP 3 %
Keeps students' growth and wellbeing the primary focus	81	24.6%	64	19.5%	39	12.0%	184	18.7%
Trustworthy, honest, respectful	64	19.5%	54	16.5%	46	14.2%	164	16.7%
Accessible, approachable, visible in schools & community	62	18.8%	52	15.9%	46	14.2%	160	16.3%
Decisive, confident, and objective problem solver	57	17.3%	49	14.9%	33	10.2%	139	14.2%
Inspirational team builder	23	7.0%	22	6.7%	43	13.2%	88	9.0%
Committed to transparent communication in schools & community	11	3.3%	25	7.6%	40	12.3%	76	7.7%
Fosters & values diversity, equity, inclusivity & accessibility	9	2.7%	20	6.1%	29	8.9%	58	5.9%
Exhibits appreciation for and love of children	8	2.4%	15	4.6%	16	4.9%	39	4.0%
Knowledgeable and hardworking, with attention to detail	7	2.1%	16	4.9%	25	7.7%	48	4.9%
Life-long learner	3	0.9%	10	3.0%	5	1.5%	18	1.8%
Other	4	1.2%	1	0.3%	3	0.9%	8	0.8%
Totals	329	100.0%	328	100.0%	325	100.0%	982	100.0%

First Choice Qualities

Top Three Choices



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Experience and Qualifications

Participants felt that the ideal superintendent would have prior experience leading a school district, not just serving as an assistant superintendent. The successful candidate should have demonstrated success in transforming a district facing challenges, showcasing an ability to navigate complex educational environments effectively.

Proven Leadership

Respondents would like to see a superintendent with strong, proven leadership skills who can guide and manage diverse and strong personalities within the Central Office. This leader should have the ability to drive necessary changes and maintain a cohesive, productive administrative team.

Commitment and Longevity

Newtown seeks a superintendent committed to staying in the position for five years or more. The candidate should show genuine interest in Newtown, signaling a long-term commitment rather than viewing this role as a final career stop.

Integrity and Resilience

Newtown would value a superintendent with integrity, a thick skin, and confidence to withstand external pressures and make tough decisions. This leader should possess the resilience to stand firm against challenges and drive necessary changes to improve the district.

Compassion and Empathy

A strong sense of compassion is crucial, especially given the trauma the district has endured. The superintendent should have high emotional intelligence, connecting deeply with students and staff to foster a supportive educational environment.

Focus on Academics

The superintendent must prioritize academic excellence and quality education, steering clear of— or navigating effectively— political and social ideologies. The leader's primary focus should be on student growth and well-being, ensuring that educational outcomes remain at the forefront of decision-making.

Support for Educators

Newtown needs a superintendent who respects and supports its teachers, recognizing their professional expertise and addressing their needs. Focusing on teacher retention and ensuring a supportive work environment will be essential for maintaining educational quality.

Equity and Inclusivity

A number of respondents believe a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is vital for all students to thrive. The superintendent should actively work to hire more educators of color and stand up against community resistance to DEI initiatives, promoting a more inclusive educational environment. This will require careful navigation on the leader's part, since it is a source of community division.

Communication and Collaboration

Effective communication with all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and the board of education, is essential. The superintendent must maintain an open and transparent communication style, fostering trust and collaboration within the community.

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Data-Driven Decision Making

The superintendent should use data to drive decisions and improve educational outcomes. The leader should apply metrics and performance indicators to evaluate and reallocate resources effectively, ensuring that decisions are informed and strategic.

Innovation and Fresh Approach

Newtown seeks a superintendent with a fresh approach to addressing underperformance. This leader should be willing to audit existing barriers to effective instruction and implement innovative, forward-thinking solutions to enhance educational outcomes.

Political Neutrality

The successful superintendent will stay focused on educational goals. The leader will balance diverse views within the community and create collaborative solutions that benefit all stakeholders, maintaining a neutral stance on political issues and serving as a champion for all students to feel a sense of belonging.

Budget Management

Strong budgetary management skills are crucial. The superintendent should galvanize support for budgets, ensuring that financial resources are used effectively to support educational initiatives and improve overall district performance.

The NESDEC Report in 2022 identified the following “measures” for a successful Newtown Superintendent:

I. Ability to Cultivate an Environment of Academic Achievement for all Newtown Students, Address their Social-Emotional Needs, and Support the District’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Efforts

- ◆ communicates a clear plan for the academic future of Newtown Public Schools
- ◆ can work with others to develop and implement a plan to close the gap in learning
- ◆ has clear and well-defined transition plan
- ◆ ensures that the academic program provides equity of services and supports for all students, including those with emotional and behavioral needs, those who need increased academic challenges, or those with special needs
- ◆ must be familiar with and supportive of the diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in a manner that enhances the central task of providing a quality education for all students
- ◆ unites the community behind solid, fundamental, and inclusive education for every child
- ◆ is innovative and can be sure our students are receiving best programs and education possible.
- ◆ focuses on the appropriate definition and goals of DEI
- ◆ demonstrates a genuine openness to all ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives
- ◆ values the input of the professional educators working in the school system
- ◆ articulates a clear plan to offer support for the social-emotional needs of Newtown students
- ◆ ensures that the needs of special education students and other diverse learners are being met and that the unique support required is provided
- ◆ has the ability to analyze and address the delivery of special education services

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- ◆ is the superintendent of every student, including those with special needs and those who are not college-bound; provides differentiated supports and structures to address the multiple and varied academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students
- ◆ demonstrates support for diversity, equity and inclusion; someone who supports the DEI Coordinator and the Board of Education resolution “Promoting Diversity and Equity” (adopted 7/7/20)
- ◆ has demonstrated skill in ensuring equal treatment of expectations, access, and quality across all schools; ensures that each school building is treated fairly
- ◆ leads with compassion, empathy, and sensitivity
- ◆ ensures that the academic program provides equity of services and supports for all students, including those with emotional and behavioral needs, those who need increased academic challenge, or those who have special needs
- ◆ someone who does not push an agenda but takes the time to understand and learn what is working in Newtown and what needs to improve

II. Has Demonstrated Collaborative Leadership and Team-Building Success

- ◆ builds a culture that is inclusive; someone who understands and invites involvement; establishes shared goals; once a decision is made holds administration accountable for implementing those goals with fidelity
- ◆ takes the pulse of the community; is receptive to listening; able to work with administration to develop a cohesive team
- ◆ engages all stakeholders, including students, in discussions, planning, and problem solving; willingly shares and seeks information from all stakeholders to ensure that the results and direction reflect a representative consideration of community input and build a common vision and understanding
- ◆ engages in collaborative negotiations and collaborative budget development
- ◆ establishes a collaborative working relationship with the Board of Education
- ◆ models a tone of collaboration and a common purpose; works closely with teachers, administrators, and the Board of Education to create a team that operates with mutual respect with the goal of academic excellence and diversity
- ◆ keeps the lines of communication open and is visible in the schools and the classrooms
- ◆ has excellent strategic planning and implementation experience and skills
- ◆ has great interpersonal skills and can build a team with a common focus and vision
- ◆ is committed to staying on the job and making a difference
- ◆ demonstrates visibility, communication and taking action, which will be key to building strong relationships with teachers, administrators and students

III. Has Excellent Organizational and People Skills and is a Good Communicator;

Proven Ability to Resolve Organizational Conflicts

- ◆ is visible in the schools, at school activities and is an active member of the community
- ◆ is someone who will not marginalize people holding minority opinions
- ◆ practices transparent communication and strong interpersonal skills
- ◆ provides programs and practices that effectively support the social and emotional health of students
- ◆ listens and is responsive; keeps people informed throughout the process, and explains decisions
- ◆ is someone who takes the time to listen attentively prior to reaching conclusions
- ◆ provides parents, community members, students, and staff great opportunities to be heard on a regular basis; establishes regular times to engage both staff and community in ongoing communication; is a transparent communicator
- ◆ is an articulate, knowledgeable, and respectful advocate for students

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- ◆ speaks, writes, and presents well through multiple mediums; is experienced and comfortable with social media
- ◆ is someone who wants to lead and not dictate; can connect the town back to the school and get families involved
- ◆ someone who can establish credibility with the community and not look at Newtown as a stepping-stone in career advancement; this individual should be somebody committed to staying in Newtown and making a difference; administrative stability, including the superintendent, is essential to real and prolonged growth and success
- ◆ models open, responsive, and respectful communication
- ◆ understands that the superintendent is the "face" of the district
- ◆ focuses on the appropriate definition and goals of DEI
- ◆ demonstrates a genuine openness to all ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives
- ◆ values the input of the professional educators working in the school system
- ◆ articulates a clear plan to offer support for the social-emotional needs of Newtown students
- ◆ ensures that the needs of special needs students are being met and that the unique support required is provided
- ◆ has the ability to analyze the special education services and when needed make changes

IV. Demonstrates the Ability to Involve the Community in Goal Setting and Implementation

- ◆ involves the community in goal setting and, most importantly, implementation
- ◆ is someone who can listen effectively, given the many emotionally driven factors affecting Newtown Schools, but can facilitate, produce and effectively communicate a district-wide vision regarding K-12 education
- ◆ is someone who wants to lead and not dictate; can connect the town back to the schools and get families involved
- ◆ has the ability to listen to parents, staff and the community regarding their concerns and help create a solution and follow through on the solution
- ◆ is a leader who views themselves as a member of a larger team, with unique duties within that team
- ◆ develops a process that encourages, enables and facilitates community voices in the development of goal setting direction for the school system
- ◆ guards against the silencing of voices that may articulate a minority or different opinion
- ◆ focuses on the students and ensures that the word inclusion applies to special needs students, students of color, students from lower social-economic background, etc.

V. Has the Ability to Recruit and Maintain High Quality Staff; Strong Personnel Management Skills

- ◆ analyzes the reasons why teachers are leaving Newtown and develops a plan to address teacher retention
- ◆ structures the teacher recruitment process to ensure that the pool of candidates is representative of all ethnic groups
- ◆ works with the coordinator of DEI to ensure that questions asked of candidates do not inadvertently contain bias
- ◆ is someone who knows and works with the staff so they can develop relationships and retain good staff
- ◆ is someone who should be visible and connected in order to understand the needs of students and staff

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- ◆ is someone who absolutely holds staff accountable as professionals, but also lets them know that as superintendent they have their back
- ◆ is a superintendent with excellent people skills who values climate and culture
- ◆ is a strong leader; who puts the children first while motivating the staff and personnel
- ◆ practices shared decision making through committees focusing on district beliefs and purpose

VI. Understands School Budgeting and Financial Oversight

- ◆ is willing and able to be fully transparent about how school budget is utilized
- ◆ keeps the community informed; is someone who is transparent with the community about where their tax money is going
- ◆ is diplomatic, patient, and honest
- ◆ understands special education laws and regulations and is an experienced overseer of the special education budget
- ◆ can work with the town to meet the needs of all students; builds a strong school system into a highly competitive system.
- ◆ understands all aspects of school budgeting and can explain the needs to the community in a forthright, understandable manner; can discuss and explain the budget without jargon, and in language that clearly reflects the needs of the school system
- ◆ constructs and administers budgets with a focus on and support for diversity, academic excellence, mental health needs and one that is fair to the needs of all buildings.

VII. Desired Experience

- ◆ has experience with negotiations and working successfully with unions
- ◆ has classroom experience
- ◆ has demonstrated support for academic excellence, diversity, students with special needs and the social-emotional needs of all students
- ◆ has building level leadership experience
- ◆ has experience in special education
- ◆ has been an assistant superintendent or superintendent
- ◆ has experience working effectively and cooperatively with a Board of Education