

To: Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 Hiring Committee – Superintendent of Schools

From: Dr. Joseph Erardi

Re: Community Profile / Community Engagement

Date: May 15, 2019

### **Engagement and Collection of Information**

JE Consulting gathered information from multiple stakeholders starting on April 13, 2019 thru May 9, 2019. There were ten separate meetings held during this four-week window and an online survey was live on multiple sites.

In summary, well over 300 faculty/staff/community members attended a session, completed a survey, or spoke directly to the issue via electronic mail or phone.

### **Findings**

The Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 community has prioritized the following **skills** as essential needs for the new superintendent:

1. A superintendent who has a deep understanding of PK-12 **teaching and learning**;
2. A superintendent who is comfortable and competent in the **political** and **fiscal** frame;
3. A superintendent who champions a **communication protocol** with staff, BOE, and parents that is embraced and understood by all;
4. A superintendent who **empowers multiple stakeholders** within the organization to enhance **efficiency and effectiveness** in all schools;
5. A superintendent who is a **critical thinker** and one who **is proactive in decision making**.
- 6.

The Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 community has prioritized the following **character traits** as essential needs for the new superintendent:

1. **Honesty**
2. **Caring**
3. **Trusting**
4. **Strong Moral Compass**
5. **Enthusiastic / Genuine / Sense of Humor**

Those who participated in the data collection believe that the greatest **successes** within the Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 district are:

1. The **student** who graduates from a K-12 regional experience;
2. The **staff** (defined as all layers within the organization) who comprise the region;
3. The **depth of opportunity and experiences** (most recently illustrated by the VRHS IB program) that are available for students;
4. The **community / regional partnerships** that works in harmony for students;
5. That students and staff work in a **safe and nurturing environment**.

Those who participated in the data collection believe that the greatest **challenges** within the Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 district are:

1. Maintaining the level of excellence within the district due to the turbulent **fiscal** picture of both state and local dollars;
2. The present **governance structure** as it pertains to efficiency and student opportunity;
3. Retaining key staff members (**administration and teachers**);
4. Ensuring **equity in opportunity** for all children as they emerge from three different towns to a regional middle school and high school;
5. Appropriately navigating through the current **decline in enrollment** throughout the three-town regional district.

In addition, those who participated in the focus groups and those who shared additional comments on the survey believe the following is important for board consideration within the hiring process:

- **The superintendent and the school board have an absolute clear and meaningful understanding of their respective roles and that this partnership and protocol is understood by the Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 community;**
- That the new superintendent makes a commitment to Chester, Deep River, Essex, Region 4 and plans to stay in that role for many years;
- The new superintendent needs to be visible within the school community and the community-at-large;
- The new superintendent can retain, lead, and inspire the present staff;
- The new superintendent works collaboratively with local boards (particular mentioned multiple times – fiscal boards) in a proactive manner;
- The new superintendent embraces the beauty of the region and recognizes the unyielding support multiple stakeholders have for teaching and learning;
- The new superintendent is clear, concise, and detailed with communication to all stakeholders;
- The new superintendent respects and understands the importance of the arts and athletics (whole child);
- The new superintendent is willing to watch the district work before implementing any substantive change;
- The new superintendent is confident with her/his own personal credo and has an inner strength to always do what is right for children;
- The new superintendent embraces parents as partners;
- The new superintendent never loses sight of children.