NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

LEADERSHIP PROFILE REPORT

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Leadership Profile Assessment conducted by Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) on June 14 and 15, 2017 for the new superintendent of the New Haven Public School District, located in New Haven, CT.  The data contained herein were obtained from input the HYA consultants received when they met with individuals and groups in either individual interviews or focus group settings and from the results of the online survey completed by stakeholders.  The surveys, interviews, and focus group meetings were structured to gather input to assist the Board in determining the primary characteristics desired in the new superintendent. Additionally the stakeholder interviews and focus groups collected information regarding the strengths of the District and some of the challenges that it will be facing in the coming years. The data collected from the online surveys and that from the focus groups were consistent.

Participation

The numbers of participants, by stakeholder group, in the two methods of data gathering are listed below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Personal interviews**  **or focus groups** | **Online Survey** |
| Community Groups | 13 |  |
| Central Administrators | 3 | 76 |
| Building Administrators | 2 |
| Faculty | 7 | 351 |
| Community Members | 7 | 113 |
| Support Staff | 5 | 106 |
| Parents | 4 | 362 |
| Students |  | 14 |
| **Total** | 41 | 1022 |

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

It should be emphasized that the data are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be viewed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups to which they are attributed.  Items are included if, in the consultants’ judgment, they warranted the Board’s attention.

Strengths of the District

New Haven Public Schools (NHPS), located in New Haven, Connecticut, is a vibrant and diverse district of 22,319 students that is committed to standards of excellence in the classroom. Located on the northern shore of the Long Island Sound, New Haven is the second largest city in Connecticut with a population of over 129,000, and is 90 minutes’ northeast of New York City. New Haven is the home of the Ivy League school Yale University, New Haven's biggest taxpayer and employer. Health care (hospitals and biotechnology), professional services (legal, architectural, marketing, and engineering), financial services, and retail trade also help to form a strong economic base for the city.

Stakeholders described New Haven School District as deeply committed to the success of all students, with caring and dedicated teachers as well as active and supportive parents. The stakeholders also noted the following:

* A talented and diverse community, with culturally rich neighborhoods
* Strong support for New Haven Promise and community partnerships
* Dedicated administrators
* Students

Challenges and Issues Facing the District

Stakeholders generally agreed that issues of trust and communication must be addressed between the district and community. They also noted that the district should solve problems associated with school choice, magnet schools and busing. Also greater effort should be made to include the involvement of all parents and improve equity among schools.

Stakeholders felt that it was extremely important that the district establish a strategic plan with a clear vision, goals and expectations. In addition, emphasis should be placed on improving staff diversity and stabilizing turnover of staff and administrators.

Desired Characteristics

The new Superintendent can best establish a basis for success by being visible, active and accessible in the community. The position requires the superintendent to value input from staff and community as well as utilizing collaborative practices. A combination of outstanding knowledge and management skills (instruction, governance and finance), self-confidence and humility will serve the superintendent well. Also there is a strong expectation that the superintendent will be a visionary with a proven track record of successfully implementing programs that improve student learning.

The new Superintendent will also need to be masterful at establishing and maintaining genuine interpersonal relationships with a wide range of stakeholders, engaging all segments of the community proactively. In addition, the new superintendent must be able to manage the political process, with an affinity for forward planning

In looking at the desired characteristics identified through the online survey results, five characteristics were identified by the majority of respondents as being very important. They are:

* Foster a positive, professional climate of mutual trust and respect among faculty, staff and administrators (CE)
* Recruit, employ, and retain effective personnel throughout the District and its schools (M)
* Establish a culture of high expectations for all students and personnel (VV)
* Understand and be sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population (TL)
* Demonstrate a deep understanding of educational research and emerging best practices and implement strategies (VV)

HYA and the Board intend to meet the challenge of finding an individual who possesses most of the skills and character traits required to meet the needs of the district.  The search team will seek a new superintendent who can work with the New Haven Public School Board to provide the leadership needed to continue to raise academic standards and student performance, while meeting the unique needs of each of its schools and communities.

The search team would like to thank all the participants who attended focus groups meetings or completed the online survey and the New Haven Public School staff members who assisted with our meetings, particularly, Lisa Mack, who organized the search team’s time in the district.

Respectfully submitted,

Randall Collins

Don Macrino

Edward L McCormick

# CONSISTENT THEMES

## *STRENGTHS*

Active and supportive parents   
Community support, resources and involvement   
Dedicated faculty, staff and administrators- committed to the District  
Talented and diverse community, with culturally rich neighborhoods   
Early childhood programs, Magna Schools  
New Haven Promise, Students and community partnerships  
Teachers are caring and dedicated to student success

## *CHALLENGES/CONCERNS/ISSUES*

Inequity of resources between schools   
District needs a clear vision, a strategic plan   
More diversity among the staff   
Manage school choice, magnet schools and busing   
Need more administrative accountability, i.e. directors vs principals inconsistencies   
Manage public expectations and roles  
Need to formalize systems structure – define roles and systems – lack of consistency   
Need to rebuild trust and communications channels   
Need to stabilize turnover of administrators and staff   
Guidance is lacking  
Involvement of all parents  
BOE at war

## *DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS*

Able to build trust/civility within the Board, District and the community

Courage of convictions – can make tough decisions

Experience in establishing a strategic plan, a bold visionary

Outgoing, engaging with great interpersonal skills

Proven track record of success

Respect for everyone, understand cultural challenges

Strong instructional leader and places emphasis on Early Childhood initiatives

Strong proponent of Public Education

Understands the budget

Understands the whole child,

Urban and small city experience preferred

Urban experience, educational background as a teacher and principal

Visible in the schools and the community

Summary of Comments from Focus Group Meetings

**FOCUS GROUP: Community Groups/Individuals**

**STRENGTHS**

Early childhood programs  
Committed teachers and administrators  
New Haven Promise  
Community engagement  
Restorative Practices  
Good relationship with Dept of Ed  
Great community resources  
City has great diversity-a small international city  
Partnering with others  
Culturally diverse  
Community agencies involved in comprehensive approach  
Teachers are treated fairly and compensated well  
Each neighborhood has its own flavor – urban environment  
Homegrown leadership  
Territorial pride in the community  
Mayor is fair

**CHALLENGES**

Overly political school system  
Diversity of teachers and administrators  
Parent engagement (must be challenged regarding their role)  
District is rudderless right now  
Not shown appreciation for home grown talent  
Inequity among the schools regarding resources  
Diversity  
Not great support at High School-too many students  
Economy of the City  
Lack of neighborhood schools  
Social-emotional support –economics, justice, immigration   
High dropout-rate  
High Taxes/low education results  
Need a strategic plan  
School choice, magnet schools, busing  
Conversation about what 21st Century Schools needs to be  
Large percent of kids who do not attend NHPS  
BOE at war  
New Haven territorial , resistant to change  
Different management/tracking systems in every school  
School Security

**CHARACTERISTICS**

Familiar with district, public school district  
Teaching background, prior experienced and success elsewhere  
Managed a HS or District that is large  
Instructional leader  
Understanding of cultural challenges, teacher development, student development  
Grasp of state law, collective bargaining  
Understanding of political landscape  
Strong appreciation of early childhood   
Must understand budget, able to work with board, good communicator  
Strong leader, able to manage board and politically savvy   
Strong instructional leader, recruitment, able to manage the magnet system  
Experience in developing a strategic plan, with vision  
Urban experience, education background, great interpersonal skills,   
Not important if an assistant superintendent  
Good business sense  
Integrity, respect for all cultures, collaborator,   
Developmental knowledge, brain science  
Able to review before making sweeping changes  
Shrewd and courageous   
Able to determine SWOT of the district  
Ability to separate from the mayor  
Fundraising  
Pursue black male leadership  
  
  
**FOCUS GROUP: Internal School Groups/Individuals**

**STRENGTHS:**

So many opportunities  
New Haven Promise – College Free  
Summer Meal Program  
Magnet School  
New Haven City very supportive  
Opportunities to partner with other community groups  
Connection to Yale  
Diversity   
Physical plant  
Caring for students  
Professional Development for staff

**CHALLENGES**:

More diverse teaching staff  
Money(lack of) – reduced summer program, no transportation  
Lack of adequate staffing to support special education  
Lack of parental participation  
Lack of male role models   
Board of Education  
Equity between schools  
Equity in school enrollment   
Leadership Skills  
Student healthcare, food care, mental health, safely  
Sustainability of funding  
Staff turnover   
Completion of strategic plan  
Address all community members  
  
**CHARACTERISTICS:**Grant writing, special education experience  
Able to inspire parents to become engaged, proven track record of working with parents  
Visible part of New Haven, known to all students and parents  
Open minded, curriculum knowledge,   
Reaches out to staff, former teacher, principal  
Great organization skills  
Urban experience and similar experiences  
Understand the whole child  
Leadership , comfortable working with all community groups  
Places an emphasis on Preschool/Early Childhood  
Open communications  
Technology savvy  
Promote kids’ learning

**FOCUS GROUPS: Administrators, Principals, NHFT**

**STRENGTHS:**  
Cultural diversity  
Culture around academic behavioral data  
Give voice to stakeholders  
Dedication teachers, staff  
Magnet program  
New Haven Promise, early childhood program, early college experience, AD, etc  
Physical plant – state of the art  
Children are amazing, resilient, diverse  
Teachers caring and hardworking  
Association with higher education partners  
Sanctuary school district/city  
Staff development  
Supportive community

**CHALLENGES:**

Needs more diverse thinking among staff –broader cultural awareness  
Lack of input into curriculum development  
Talent drain, resources and lack of training  
Administrative accountability, i.e. Director vs Principals inconsistencies  
Professional development from outside  
Too much time on standardized test  
Lack of diversity among staff  
K-8 supports not extended to HS  
Administrators voice not heard  
Lack of support for new staff  
Guidance is lacking/college placements  
Curriculum does not align to 21st Century skills  
Lack of adequate IT in all schools  
Equity among Schools  
Manage the divide between black and brown  
Developing systematic protocols for the district  
Sustainability of grants and funding  
Support of school principals  
Need to clean house (be accountable or get out)

**CHARACTERISTICS:**

Understanding of Turnaround Schools  
Strong supporter of high quality teacher generated assessment and instruction  
Know the exemplary teachers  
Autonomy for teachers  
Strong proponent of Public Education  
Understands budget, politically savvy  
Urban, public teaching background, restorative practices  
Able to prioritize direct student support service i.e. social workers  
Preference for teachers leadership voice at the district level  
Able to leverage resources  
Knowledge of grants  
Strategic planner  
Educator – who has progressed thru the ranks  
Proponent of Public Education  
Community oriented – know the stakeholders  
Seasoned superintendent at creating and managing systems  
Focuses on whole child  
Understanding of students with mental health issues  
Respects diversity at all levels  
Focus on staff development, student learning  
Good communicator, visible, decisive, and loves children  
Understanding of how children learn (brain science)  
Ability to unify the district/community  
Able to handle the politics among Mayor, City and District  
Experiences in urban districts  
Bring civility to Board meetings

**FOCUS GROUP: Community Forum**

**STRENGTHS:**

Variety of choices in New Haven  
Magnet Schools  
Physical plants  
Lot of partnerships, i.e. higher ed, business  
Talented and diverse community

**CHALLENGES:**

Involvement of all parents  
Teachers professional development  
New Haveners cannot get into their choice of schools  
Summer school- cut transportation  
Pay of the superintendent  
Social/emotions needs of children  
No clear direction /strategic plan to unite the district  
Decentralizing of CAO  
Visibility of superintendent  
Diversity of the staff  
Communication protocols/public relations  
Input not always welcome  
School choice or not   
Equal access for every school  
Establish a goal that every student will get 1st choice  
Lot of instability, number of schools  
Discipline in school  
Teaching of Spanish  
Lack of trust – community to board  
District priorities

**CHARACTERISTICS:**

Background in finance/budget  
Politically savvy  
Teaching background/education background  
Strategic planner, visionary  
Understand urban community  
Ensure students are competitive  
Understands working with the community  
Develop short term goals into a long-term goals  
Some one that students can look up to   
Proven track record of success  
Outsider  
5 years as a superintendent  
PHD- Education  
Good communication skills  
An advocate for public education  
Commitment to the district  
Residency required  
Bilingual background  
Insure staff accountability  
Improve communications within the district and community  
Compassion for all people  
Bold vision  
Able to engage the community  
Good manager  
Understand the dynamics of community  
Improve the level of trust In the community

**NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

**DESIRED CHARACTERISTICS**

After seeking input from students, teachers, parents, staff, and community members via focus groups, interviews, and an online survey, the New Haven Public School Board of Education seeks a **strong and energetic educational leader** who possesses the following characteristics:

**A knowledgeable and innovative instructional leader** who:

* Creates and guides an educational institution that maximizes and supports the individual potential of each student.
* Continues the progressive roots of New Haven Public Schools by ensuring that all students are provided with a rigorous, relevant and dynamic curriculum delivered by outstanding teachers.
* Builds trust and engenders respect through collaborative interactions with teachers, staff, parents and community members.
* Understands the struggles and challenges facing urban youth from under sourced communities and has a proven track record of improving educational opportunities for these individuals.

**A systems thinker and proactive manager who:**

* Communicates regularly and systematically with all stakeholder groups by both sharing information and seeking input before decisions are made.
* Ensures effective/efficient daily operations of New Haven Schools including long-range planning for the school and skillful financial management.
* Supports, enhances and expands the partnerships that exist between New Haven Schools and the greater community.

**An effective communicator and committed consensus-builder** who:

* Establishes deep and meaningful relationships with all segments of New Haven and the community.
* Is visible throughout the school and actively engaged in the community.

In regard to **leadership experiences and accomplishments**, the successful candidate will:

* Have, or be capable of gaining, certification in Connecticut.
* Have experience as an educational leader.
* Have experience in an urban setting.
* Have experience and commitment to serving an inclusive and diverse community.