

3b. Each of the nine areas should be addressed:

*Standards & Curriculum* – curriculum guides, standards, benchmarks, assessments, rubrics and timetables should be available online in a format that will help teachers to create their lesson plans.

*Instructional Practices* – time must be allotted for staff to collaboratively create instructional materials, and lesson plans that use a common format that is standards based (i.e. Understanding by Design) and agreed upon by the staff.

*Assessment & Growth, Learner Profile, Analysis & Reporting and Data Integration* – these areas can be addressed with the formation of PLC (Professional Learning Communities). Staff will need to be trained on how to collect and analyze data, create rubrics, analyze student work and use this information to modify or change instruction or re-teach. Analyzing data helps to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and to set individual student educational goals. Parents should be able to monitor progress electronically and students should receive continuous feedback on their progress during class. Also, report cards for students should be standards based.

*Facilitator Profile* – such a management system will serve not only as a transcript for teachers but identification of their professional growth goals. These goals should be in alignment with student learning needs, new initiatives and personal growth of the teacher. Professional development plans should be in conjunction with teacher evaluation, schools improvement plan and the district's strategic plan.

*Documentation and Support* – review current resources in the district for teacher and administrator growth, ensure that each school has a resource room to house literature, videos/DVDs to assist in best practices. Also, allow teachers who may need additional support to work with a lead teacher. Upgrade the use of technology to service parents and students allowing access to policies, trends and best practices that can be incorporated at home to assist in the progress of students. This may include webinars or podcast for parents.

*IT Platform & Security* – make sure that the software program that the County invested in is teacher and parent friendly. A program that I am familiar with is Power School. This allows staff to accurately document student information with easy access for parents at the same time. Regulations and policies will need to be in place in terms of uploading information at a timely manner. We must also ensure that families who may not have access to the internet via computer or smartphone to strategically set up family resource sites with computers throughout the five districts at a local school.

9. Yes, it is important to allow teachers to have a voice especially in matters that affect their working conditions. Teachers are one of the most important factors when serving our students and the Superintendent should be supportive in providing essentials to assisting in meeting the goals of the district. While serving as an Assistant Superintendent in Hamden, Connecticut, I attended monthly meetings with the Union

President. These meetings allowed time to discuss issues of concern and to prevent possible grievances. I tried to employ a similar method in New Bedford, I was successful with two of three of the main unions but the political environment was very different. There were factions of teachers who did not agree with union politics. To make sure I was capturing a cross culture of teachers, I formed committees that included representatives from all the schools and for some issues, I conducted focus groups. Many times, I would be invited to staff meetings so that teachers had the opportunity to talk with me. I also made myself visible in the schools and teachers felt comfortable enough to approach me one-on-one. Staff that had legitimate concerns that were personal and confidential in nature, and feared retaliation, met with me directly or my deputy superintendent. Of course in many cases, some issues had to be investigated and this was done with what ever appropriate staff assigned to the task. In such a large County School district, again it would be important to establish a line of communication with staff. I would probably design councils that consisted of representatives from each of the 55 schools and by level. Such councils would give teachers an opportunity to communicate concerns and creatively share innovative ideas as we moved towards obtaining the district's goals.

10. Difficult parent could be one who only wants the best for his or her child and is frustrated with the process of seeking help. The key to dealing with any parent is to first remember that we are here to serve them, review the issue and come up with a resolution together. Many times it could be misunderstanding of policies or they just want to be heard. It is also important to include the administrator and or teacher that the issue may involve in the resolution. It is important not to undermine their authority.

Board communication, professionalism and mutual respect for each other are three areas that are important for a Board and Superintendent to be effective. This comes with working together as a team for the same goals, setting guidelines of how the Board keeps informed, professional demeanor towards each other, defining each others roles and building a trusting relationship.

14. I believe the arts are just as important as literacy and mathematics. It allows students the opportunity to be creative, imaginative and innovative which are all twenty first century skills. The arts allow students to apply skills and concepts learned in other disciplines. In some cases the arts is the only motivating factor keeping some of our students in school! I would expect that the arts remain apart of the core curriculum at both elementary and secondary levels.

16. As a school teacher and department head of science, I was a part of an initiative for co-teaching in our district. In my classes, I used the co-teaching model working with a special education instructor. We discussed the students IEP goals, planned lessons, discuss how to modify the lesson and the role of each teacher. The larger goal of the district was to increase time of students with disabilities with regular education peers and to ensure equity in the quality of teaching and meeting curriculum standards. The effectiveness of this model was contingent on the time for planning, working relationships of the teachers, reviewing and knowing the needs of the students and being

able to differentiate instruction. On a larger scale, in New Bedford, we used a similar model with teachers at the elementary level primarily focusing on literacy and mathematics. By using this model, we increased time of students with disabilities with regular education peers, meeting educational standards and IEP goals and improved the overall performance of students with disabilities which was evident on State test.

Students who were talented and gifted were serviced in a pullout program beginning in grade five in the Hamden Public School District, and in New Bedford, we were just beginning to institute enrichment programs for identified students.

In each of the districts that I have served, the diversity included a high population of LEP. While in Waterbury, I was a part of the district's move from the most restrictive environment of bilingual classes to sheltered English where teachers spoke in dual or in some cases multilinguals. Hamden and New Bedford used similar approaches to teaching LEP, but was more stringent on targets for mainstreaming students. New Bedford had a large Cape Verdean and Latino population and we used a co-teaching model at the middle and high school level and SEI (Student English Immersion) program at the elementary which was a self-contained class of Portuguese /Kriol or Spanish. These single classes were sometimes housed outside of a student's attendance zone to better use resources. In either case, these programs improved performance on the State's assessment for fluency.

17. While serving as a Superintendent in New Bedford, four of nine schools were removed from the State's list of Needs Improvement. These four schools improved their performance in literacy, and closed the achievement gap between regular and special education students. Also, because of our district initiatives in literacy, we improved student performance on literacy across the district. At the start of my tenure, through focus groups of key stakeholders, we developed a three-year strategic plan. This plan targeted academic rigor, increased focus on literacy at all levels and began to address all students' educational needs.

19. For the last twenty years of my career, I have worked in urban districts with diverse populations of students and staff. I believe motivation comes with knowing and striving towards a common vision, mission and goals. Allowing teachers, students, parents, community and Board input to shaping and defining the vision, mission and goals creates ownership and a commitment to working together for the desired outcome.

20. My teaching and leadership experience comes mainly from an urban environment and I find that it is an asset to my leadership style. Prior to my last two positions, I taught and worked in an urban high school of a district with a student enrollment of then 15,000 students. In this high school, over 85% received free and reduced lunch, 60% were minority of which a large English Language Learners population existed. Hamden Public Schools where I served as assistant superintendent was considered to be a transitional district that has doubled its students of color population from 23% to 47% within the ten last years. Economically, the district sees extreme disparity with the "haves and have nots" and has a unique geographical setting which is inclusive to rural,

suburban and urban in one district. The last census classified the town's poverty level at 9%. However, when you review the number of students receiving free or reduced meals, 30% of the student body meets the criteria for economically disadvantaged. While in this district, I was part of the equity team, engaging in *Courageous Conversations* about race and partnering with National Urban Alliance to implement culturally responsive instructional strategies to begin addressing the achievement gap at a deep level for our youth in urban centers and throughout the nation.

New Bedford Public Schools, one of the fifteen urban districts in Massachusetts and one of the Commissioner's districts, 53% of students were minority while the free and reduced lunch population was approximately 83%. Also important to note, the district suffers from a high drop out rate as well as the community has an educational attainment average if ninth grade.

23. Privatization is one alternative to cost containment in such difficult economic times. However before entering into an agreement with a vendor, we should assess the long term effects and future cost increases over time. Also, see if the private vendor will hire those county employees who may be unemployed due to the change.

25. I have both effective and mediocre relationships with unions. In order for a district to reform, both parties must be willing to make concessions as needed for the betterment of the clientele in which we serve.

32. I am just learning about Osceola County and the five district areas that make up this large county school district. The county itself is diverse in its population with 14% foreign born, Hispanic or Latino being the largest minority group, mainly Puerto Rican, followed by African Americans. 33.3% of the county population speaks another language other than English and the number of individuals holding Bachelor Degrees or higher is less than the State's average.

Academically, the countywide performance on the FCAT, the county did not meet adequate yearly progress for 2010. Only 62% of the criteria were met. Both reading and mathematics proficiency was not met for individual subgroups with exception of Asian and American Indian for reading only. It will be interesting to see the performance on the new generation of FCAT for 2011. The number of twelfth graders taking ACT/SAT was low; just over 50% took either or both test.

42. Since I am just learning about the district, I would first assess the current organization and work with the Business and Finance Officer and Chief facilities Officer to do a feasibility study of what is the most fiscally responsible way to service the 55 schools in the district.

43. I have been in districts where the service is privatized or locally operated. This is a conversation to have with the School Board as to cost containment, efficiency and nutritional meals. The district that was privatized provided healthier choices for students, kept an accurate account of services to free or reduced students, allowed optional

payment plans for parents and operated in the black supporting the districts subsequent budget.

49. Immediately do web-research to pull the history of the legislation that was enacted and the standards set. Also, meet with state consultants to ascertain how this will affect our district.

While serving in Connecticut and Massachusetts, it was important for me to keep abreast of changes in legislation. I attended State meetings by the DOE, and was a part of organizations that were composed of Superintendents and School Board members (MASC, MASS, CAPSS, CABE). I also am affiliate with many organizations on the national level. I am an avid reader of educational literature and attend conferences for professional growth.

50. I am not familiar with PIV; however in my former district I initiated a pilot for a system that allowed parent access to student information from attendance to academic performance. We also had instituted an autocal system with the capability to send reminders, announcements and emergency notifications. Other methods of communication included school newsletters, updated active website, and quarterly district newsletters and use of the media.

As for grade status – paper interim reports were sent out informing parents of student’s progress in between quarters or trimesters. Posting of assignments and test grades, I feel that it is important to give feedback as soon as possible on average 1-2 days. Realistically, the turnaround time is contingent on the length and duration of the assignment. I would expect essays, term papers, laboratory reports to take longer to grade. I would expect teachers to use a rubric for grading but also take the time to give written critical feedback especially on compositions.

51. The expectation is that principals and assistant superintendents work with teachers to ensure that procedures are followed.

52. In Connecticut, each district had to develop policies concerning nutrition. To eliminate the concerns for sugary products, the operation of vending machines were limited and items in the machine followed nutritional guidelines. As well as the cafeteria sales were limited, and there always had to be an alternative healthy choice. I would recommend working with staff, parents, community and the Board to draft policy that speaks to this issue. Another key component is to address healthy choices within the curriculum and improve physical exercise.

53 a. Drafted polices in two districts and implemented protocol for reporting, intervening and resolution. Also included within the elementary curriculum values on building relationships with others. Trained staff on dealing with issues in the classroom and provided workshops for parents and staff on cyberbullying.

b. Collaboratively work with community, staff, students and school board to draft policy and protocol that is effective in reporting and addressing issues and then conduct training and workshops for both staff and parents. Incorporate strategies for dealing with bullying within the curriculum, i.e., in the health curriculum at the elementary and middle school level and provide a mandatory 10-12 hour session for freshmen over the course of a semester at the high school level.

c. Because this is an area of heightened concern, I would request that principals conduct walkthroughs during these lessons, and evaluate lesson plans; and a set schedule for trainings and workshops would be documented and reoccurring as needed.

54. District policy should dictate the rules and regulations concerning attendance zones. When referring to out-of-zone students, I am viewing it in two ways: students attending schools outside of their attendance zone that are within the county or students attending schools from neighboring counties. I believe in following the policy that is in place by the district unless exceptions are made and addressed in the policy. For instance are allowance made for transient students who move during mid-year to remain at their school until the end of the school year, or needs a school close by for the after school care. Students who are out of county, notification should be sent to them and the receiving district. It would be up to the School Board to pursue tuition for the time the student was attending a county school.

55. To increase minority recruitment of staff, I would develop partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities Education Departments to encourage students to serve in the county. Another avenue is to develop a Future Educators Club that targets students in the county and assist with post secondary education with the promise that they would serve in county schools for a set amount of time. This mimics a similar program that New York City Schools adopted. Recruiting may come easy, but support needs to be given to retain minority staff. I would work with the Human Resource Director in further developing a plan and share with the Board.