

President's Report Jan 22, 2025

Good evening, and welcome to our first community board meeting of 2025.

I want to start by recognizing the recent death of one of our students. It is heartbreaking to lose any member of our community, and to lose a student is especially difficult. Our hearts go out to the student's family and friends. It has been heartening to see the outpouring of support for the family during this tragedy.

The Board has been hard at work finding our next Superintendent. Dr. Lutinski announced his resignation in December and will retire at the end of the school year in June. As soon as he informed the Board of his intentions, we began to seek a search firm. We used our network of advisors to find firms, and 3 firms rose to the top. Each of them have extensive experience finding Superintendents in Westchester. We did a screening interview with each of the firms and determined that they would be a good fit for our district. Then we solicited formal proposals and reviewed these. We interviewed each of the firms using a common set of questions. School Leadership was a unanimous favorite among the Board members. We then performed 4 reference checks from similar school districts in Westchester that had used School Leadership; these were all positive. The price of the firm was in the middle of the others, and only School Leadership offered to defray some of the costs through a cooperative agreement with BOCES.

At our January 8th planning meeting, we unanimously passed a resolution to hire School Leadership and to spend up to \$35,000 on the Superintendent search. Two individuals at School Leadership will lead the search: Susan Wollin is a former president of the Bedford school district, former president of Westchester Putnam School Boards Association, and a professional executive search consultant for corporations, and Dr. Kenneth Mitchell, former superintendent of South Orangetown school district in Rockland, NY and current Associate Professor at Manhattanville College for the Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership. You can find information about the search, including a timeline, on a dedicated Superintendent Search page on the district website. We will also be giving regular updates on the web page, at our meetings, and through other written communications.

We are now in the process of soliciting community feedback on what qualities you want in our next Superintendent. For those of you who have filled out the survey, thank you. Your feedback and particularly the comments are very helpful. If you have not yet filled in the survey, you can find it on your email or the Superintendent Search page of the website. We will also be convening focus groups next week on January 27th and 28th. Representatives from many groups, including parents, students, teachers, administrators, the PTSA, Booster Club, Rye Neck School Foundation, and other community members have been invited to participate. We appreciate all of you taking the time and for giving us your feedback. We will use this information to draft a profile of our new Superintendent that will be used in advertisement for the position. We expect the job to be posted soon after we receive the feedback and review the Superintendent profile on February 5th.