

GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Announcement

For immediate release: Thursday, May 14, 2009 – Greenwich, CT

GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTS SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Board of Education Chairman, Nancy Weissler, and
Board Search Committee Chairman, Steven Anderson,
announce the election of
Dr. Sidney A. Freund as Superintendent of Schools,
effective July 1, 2009.

In a unanimous vote today, the Board enthusiastically elected Dr. Freund to serve as superintendent of the Greenwich Public Schools. A New York State educator for 39 years, Dr. Freund has been a Superintendent of Schools for 26 years in four districts. His most recent permanent position was with the Dobbs Ferry School District in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. where he spent six and a half years and achieved impressive results in student performance, budget management, community and labor relations, and construction management.

Nancy Weissler said, “We feel very fortunate to have found in Dr. Sidney Freund an outstanding educational leader who is truly committed to meeting the educational needs of each and every student. As Dr. Freund shared with us, “A critical element to ensure student success is the recognition that each child has a unique way of learning, and that all children can learn.” Dr. Freund has a track record of improving academic achievement in the districts in which he has worked. As an educator with 26 years of experience as a superintendent, he also has a deep knowledge of school district operations and finances that will stand us in good stead in this challenging economic environment.”

Dr. Freund noted, “I look forward to the opportunity to work with the Board, staff, and community with a focus on improving outcomes for each student. After initial review of the programs and initiatives currently in place, I believe this district is well-positioned to achieve continuous improvement throughout all schools. I believe in high expectations for all students and for all staff and will work energetically and diligently toward meeting the goals of the District.”

Leslie Moriarty, Vice Chairman of the Board of Education, said, “We are excited about bringing Dr. Freund's energy and experience to our community. Working with our talented and committed staff, we are convinced he will be effective in leveraging his record of achievement through collaboration and high expectations for all.”

Steven Anderson said, “From a deep, strong pool of candidates (internal, external and even international in scope), I feel that our six-month search enabled us to find the person that fits the needs and wants of our Town and our school system as reflected in our community's Leadership Profile. As per the Leadership Profile, Dr. Freund brings with him high performance, vast experience as a superintendent, and an ability to really connect into, build relationships with, and understand the entire community. We have been able to negotiate a contract that is competitive with comparable Fairfield County districts, fiscally responsible in light of the current economic environment and carries a lower overall cost of the contract. I am very excited and highly confident that he will elevate the GPS system to ever-higher levels of achievement across all spectrums.”

The Board of Education conducted an extensive search and due diligence in selecting the new superintendent for Greenwich Public Schools. The Board contracted with Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, Ltd. to develop the Leadership Profile, and to recruit and screen candidates for the position. The Leadership Profile, developed using extensive interviews and focus group conversations with all stakeholder groups, was a key component of the recruitment and selection process. In addition, the Board thoroughly vetted the finalists and the proposed candidate through an extensive due diligence process that included reference checking, conducting a site visit, and meetings with key stakeholder representatives. Comments from some of the participants are included below.

First Selectman, Peter Tesei met with Dr. Freund earlier this week. Mr. Tesei remarked, “I was pleased to meet Dr. Freund and welcome his enthusiasm for and commitment to education and advancing learning for all school age children. His depth of experience as an educator and administrator will benefit our students, teachers and community at large.”

Steve Walko, Chairman of the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) also met with the new superintendent as part of this process, “After having the privilege of meeting Dr. Freund, I am excited about his breadth of experience and high energy level. I am confident that he will bring to the office of Superintendent of Schools integrity, fiscal discipline, transparency and above all else, a passion for excellent education.”

Eastern Middle School Principal and President of the Greenwich Organization of School Administrators (GOSA), Ralph Mayo attended the site visit at the Dobbs Ferry schools: “Parents, colleagues, and staff described him as someone who was a pleasure to work with and who was highly involved in all aspects of the operations of the school district. It is clear that each decision that Dr. Freund made as Superintendent was based on what was best for the students in his district. Dr. Freund is extremely visible in classrooms, sporting events and in the community; he was described as a leader who was always willing to collaborate with constituents to enhance the quality of the educational program for all students.”

Cathy Delehanty, President of the Greenwich Education Association (GEA) noted, “I am glad that I had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Freund. He gave me an overall sense that he is ready to roll up his sleeves and dig into his new job and to be an advocate for teachers and education. I look forward to the staff meeting him in the upcoming weeks and creating a process for ongoing and open communication.

Julie Faryniarz, President of PTA Council, said, “It was a true pleasure meeting with Dr. Freund in his former district this week and hear praises of him from his former colleagues about his work ethic and his dedication to education. He is a collaborative leader who develops his staff and actively works with teachers and parents for the betterment of children.”

Bio Brief for Dr. Sidney A. Freund:

A superintendent with vast experience, Dr. Sidney A. Freund spent over six years as the Superintendent of Schools for the Dobbs Ferry public schools in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., from 2000-2006. During this time, and under his leadership, the district increased the percent of students receiving Regents Diplomas from 49% 1999-2000 to 91% in 2004-05. He successfully addressed a stalled construction project, passing a large bond initiative and completing the project. Dr. Freund increased the margin of voter approval on the District’s budget and never experienced a defeated budget during his tenure with Dobbs Ferry. He also successfully negotiated a five-year contract with the Dobbs Ferry teachers. As a result of Dr. Freund’s efforts, the district was named one of New York’s “outperforming” school districts by Standard & Poors in 2004-05 and the high school was ranked 49th out of the top 100 high schools in the country in Newsweek Magazine’s May 2005 issue.

Prior to Dobbs Ferry, Dr. Freund was Superintendent of Schools for the Herricks school district, New Hyde Park, N.Y. for nine years, from 1991 to 2000. Dr. Freund noted, at Herricks, “I built a strong partnership with the community teaching staff, based on trust, fairness and mutual respect.” From 1986 to 1991, he was the Superintendent for the Oyster Bay-East Norwich Schools in Oyster Bay, N.Y., bringing stability to a district that had had four superintendents in the prior decade. Dr. Freund’s first superintendent position was with the Valley Stream school district in Valley Stream, N.Y. from 1982-1986. During this four-year period, he led the district through a difficult time, marked by community strife, Board of Education divergence, strained labor relations and three years of austerity budgets.

Prior to becoming a superintendent, Dr. Freund held administrator positions with the Public Schools of Tarrytown, NY as the Director of Personnel and Co-Director of Programs (1978-1982); the Edgemont School District as the Assistant to the Superintendent (1976-78); and as the Assistant to the Principal with the Edgemont Junior/Senior High School in Scarsdale, N.Y. (1974-1976). Dr. Freund began his career in education as a sixth grade teacher in 1970 at Public School 154 Manhattan in New York, N.Y. and then in 1971 as a General Science and Physics teacher at the Rye Neck Middle and High School in Mamaroneck, N.Y.

Retiring in 2006, Dr. Freund immediately returned to work as Interim Superintendent for one year in North Salem, N.Y. and then for six months in Hartsdale, N.Y. This year, he has chaired a task force for a State Senator on school finance reform in New York, volunteers at a youth shelter tutoring young men to prepare them to take their high school equivalency exam, and works as a consultant on an early childhood reading software and hardware project. Dr. Freund noted, “Although, I have never actually ‘retired’ from education, I am anxious to return to the role of full time superintendent, particularly in Greenwich.”

A resident of Scarsdale, N.Y., Dr. Freund is married to Lisa Freund, a special education teacher with the Rye Brook, N.Y. public schools. They have two daughters, Erica, an art teacher in Massachusetts, and Cara, a high school sophomore.

Dr. Freund received a B.S. in Biological Sciences from Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. in 1970; a M.S. in Elementary Education in 1972 from City College of New York in New York, N.Y.; and a M.Ed. in 1976 and an Ed.D. in 1978 in Educational Administration from Teachers College, Columbia University in New York, N.Y.

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