



KAREN MURPHY
FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Superior Student Success
Through Transparency &
Accountability**

Commitments

I believe in accountability for all city officials and all appointed and elected boards and commissions, and that applies to me as a candidate, as well. Listed below are the promises I've made during this campaign. If elected, I promise to keep this page available for the duration of my term so that you can hold me accountable.

During my term as a school board member, I will introduce resolutions and/or work to accomplish the following¹:

Commitments to Students

- Ensure that every student in the Stamford has an opportunity to take part in challenging programs
- Significantly improve student achievement by requiring that every student reads at grade level - that means the focus will be on reading even at the expense of science and social studies for some students
- Place excellent teachers in the classroom
- Provide equitable funding to every child based on his/her needs, with more funds spent in the classroom
- Prepare our high school students with 21st century skills necessary to succeed in college, technical schools, business or trades
- Implement best practices

Commitments to Parents

¹ Note: Many of the commitments shown under one group heading also apply to other groups. For simplicity, the commitments reported under one heading are not repeated under other group headings.

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- Our district needs to operate in such a way that all parents can be confident that their children's needs are being addressed
- Implement School Governance Councils at all schools, with at least 2-3 successful business leaders serving on each council
- Provide opportunities for parents and retirees to share their career and life experiences with students at all levels
- Publish a district and school level scorecard to summarize the City's performance in an easy-to-understand format
- Report in an easy-to-understand format district and school level performance for special education, ESL and low income students for the purpose of improving performance
- Report district and school level college matriculation (entrance) rates for the purpose of improving performance
- Report district and school level workforce-entry rates for the purpose of improving performance
- Report measures of student safety—especially bullying—for the purpose of improving student safety
- Put all board review materials on the web prior to each board meeting and continue to make those materials available on the web after the meetings

Commitments to Teachers & Principals

- Make the Board of Education more accessible to the public, including teachers and principals
- Empower principals so that he/she can create an organization that fosters student and teacher growth and develop and maintain effective educational programs within his/her school that promote the improvement of teaching and learning
- Conduct Board of Education review meetings at each school in order to hear directly from principals and teachers their concerns and issues.
- Survey teacher, principal and staff satisfaction and report the results to the public for the purpose of improving teacher, principal and staff satisfaction
- Implement student based budgeting

Commitments to Taxpayers

- Hold City Officials, the Board of Education and the Superintendent accountable

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- Set ambitious goals for, and evaluate and report performance of, the school board itself; the Board must be accountable for student results
- Have all board members study Connecticut's Freedom of Information Act to ensure the Board is in compliance –an open, honest and transparent Board of Education is essential for a successful school district
- Ensure “educational excellence” is measured and reported in meaningful ways and the results are communicated to the community without bias or spin
- Implement strategic, transparent three (3) year operating budgets as required by the City's Charter, thus avoiding annual contentious budget battles and uncertainties
- Develop a properly prioritized infrastructure school plan, that includes a fair share of the City's bond proceeds for school infrastructure
- Introduce modern, affordable and competitive Board of Education employee benefit programs
- Increase efficiency in the use of taxpayer funds to provide excellent education for Stamford's children
- Share services with surrounding communities to reduce costs and share savings

Selection of New Superintendent

The Board of Education's decisions have a tremendous long-term impact on the City, most importantly on our children's future. More than 50% of your taxes go to the BOE. Your house values are directly related to the quality of our schools.

The search for Stamford's next superintendent is the most important decision the Board of Education will make. While the final selection of a superintendent belongs to the Board, I believe that there is a role for community members to advocate that the Board implements a process for searching and selecting a superintendent who will be an outstanding leader. The superintendent is the one individual, more than any other, who can move our schools toward becoming high achieving centers of excellence that work for all of the city's children. That is why this election is so important.

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I have no litmus test for the new superintendent other than that honesty and integrity are paramount. As for prior experience I would like to see someone who has participated in implementing real change in organizations and is secure in the position. I also believe that the superintendent and assistant superintendent team (i) should share a deep sense of purpose, (ii) have complementary skill set, and at times interchangeable skills, (iii) acknowledge their of joint accountability in addition to individual obligations to their specific roles, and (iv) set ambitious performance goals.

Am I Missing Anything?

If I have missed any commitment made to you or others, please let me know. I want to be held accountable. I will add it to the list so that you can do that - hold me accountable.