

Burlington School District
150 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

December 21, 2019

Dear Commissioners Gulick and Sowers:

I am writing to express my interest in the Superintendent of Schools position in Burlington, VT. This position presents an exciting opportunity to lead a school system devoted to providing all students the opportunity to engage critically and achieve at high levels in a supportive and caring environment. I would work with resolve to prepare students for lifelong success through targeted strategic planning, data based decision-making, and collaboration that leads to increased student achievement. I also believe districts must focus on excellent teaching that challenges students to think critically, to connect their learning to the real world, and to learn with and from each other. To do this, I seek to empower school leaders and teachers via professional learning communities so they can utilize their expertise to make school engaging and rigorous. I am also well versed in facilities management, restorative practices, social-emotional learning, instructional rounds, and improving educational opportunities through teaching and learning practices that promote equity for students that have been historically underserved. Furthermore, I have family in Vermont and I would be honored to raise my young children in Burlington and have them attend Burlington public schools.

In my current role as Chief Academic Officer for Providence Public Schools I lead the district toward a vision of improving outcomes for all students through collaboration, reflection, and hard work. I focus on developing teams and instructional leadership among school leaders through coaching and building autonomy. In my time with the district, we have successfully implemented professional learning communities throughout the organization, which has led to increased agency among staff. My team has developed a curriculum framework with standards bundles, interim assessments, and high quality curricular materials all aligned with job embedded professional learning. We have also implemented strategies to improve schools holistically, which has led to reducing the number of schools identified as needing state intervention, reducing suspensions, and increasing the number of students taking AP and college credit courses. I also oversaw the creation of a Newcomer Academy to address the academic and social-emotional needs of high school-age English learner students with interrupted formal education. In doing this work we have been committed to engaging families and the community, and I have led the development of community advisory boards as active decision-makers in the school improvement process.

I began my career as a teacher in the DC area, and I moved into school leadership after nine years in the classroom. I have experience in independent, charter, and public schools and my years as an assistant principal and principal were in the public school sector. I then led the Division of Specialized Instruction in the District of Columbia Public School (DCPS) system and oversaw all aspects of special education programming for approximately 8,000 students. Under my leadership, DCPS increased graduation rates for students with disabilities and decreased non-public enrollment from 2,500 students in 2012 to 720 students in 2015. Furthermore, DCPS became one of the fastest growing Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) districts on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in special education. I also scaled best practices and built capacity, which included opening a new state of the art special education school to serve students with the greatest needs by providing individualized wrap-around services, transition planning, independent living skills, and workforce development.

I am particularly interested in the professional health of organizations and have spent a great deal of time developing a positive organizational culture among my teams that focuses on student outcomes. It is my goal to dedicate myself to a district so we can see long-term improvements and build upon community strengths.

Sincerely,



Thomas P. Flanagan, Jr.

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Dedicated district leader with a clear vision of effective instruction and how to execute programs that will improve learning for all students and prepare them for postsecondary success. Committed to equitable practices to foster learning that is empowering and applicable for students who have been historically underserved. Experienced administrator with a record of building, leading, and retaining diverse high-performing teams. Facilitative leader and skilled communicator who builds authentic relationships with students, families, teachers, and other stakeholders.

SKILLS

Deeper Learning & Equity Leadership · Social Emotional Learning · Strategic Planning · Budgetary Planning
Community Outreach · Growth Mindset · Executive Coaching · Inclusive Practices · Restorative Practices
English Language Learner Programming · Personalized Learning · Curriculum Development
Instructional Rounds · Professional Development · Program Development & Assessment

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief Academic Officer, Providence Public School Department, Providence, RI **2016-present**

- Decreased number of schools identified by the state for intervention from 22 to 11.
- Manage budget in excess of \$50 million dollars from local, state, and federal sources to align to strategic priorities.
- Decreased out-of-school suspensions by 28% and expanded restorative practices, social emotional learning, and behavioral health supports and services.
- Significantly increased the number of high school students enrolled in college credit-bearing courses from 1,096 in 2015 to 1,973 in 2018.
- Successfully implement and expand student-centered learning through school-based decision-making, teacher and school leader voice, and strategic partnerships.
- Guide school leader professional learning through PLCs that provide choice and build agency.
- Lead principals and principal supervisors toward instructional leadership focused on rigor, deeper learning experiences, and equity for staff and students.
- Develop and implement an instructional rounds model for schools and central office staff.
- Collaborate with the state to transition to ESSA and develop and lead school improvement efforts.
- Exited Department of Justice Interim Settlement Agreement early by developing transitional services and supports for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Coordinate with the Department of Justice to ensure effective special education and language acquisition programs.
- Develop systems to involve families and the community in the decision-making process for schools identified as needing comprehensive support and improvement under ESSA.
- Design and oversee Community Advisory Boards that provide guidance and advocacy for 15 schools.
- Collaborate with the city and the state to develop and implement strategies to increase Pre-K opportunities.
- Develop and implement strategies to improve instruction and services for English learners and emergent multilingual students, including an enhanced staffing model, updated eligibility processes, and district-wide professional development.
- Opened a Newcomer Academy to address the academic and social-emotional needs of high school-age English learner students with interrupted formal education.
- Ensure all high schools develop pathways that prepare students for college and career, including increased access to Career and Technical Education (CTE).

Deputy Chief, Division of Specialized Instruction, DCPS, Washington, DC

2013-2016

Director and Interim Deputy Chief, Division of Specialized Instruction, DCPS

6/2012-3/2013

- Led a staff of over 300 central office and school-based employees and over 900 teachers and paraprofessionals to implement special education programming and services for ~8,000 students.
- Oversaw budget and contracts in excess of \$42 million dollars.
- Built and implemented data-based performance assessment system.
- Continually informed staff of internal and external developments affecting their areas of responsibility through systems of communication and collaboration.
- Led strategic planning implementation for 2012-15 for the inclusive programming division.
- Led strategic plan development for 2015-19 for special education in DCPS.
- Developed and implemented open and collaborative data review process to identify risks and track progress toward strategic initiatives.
- Built a budget management process for directors to effectively manage team budgets that aligned with strategic priorities.
- Led enrollment and staff allocation process for special education.
- Designed 175 new program classes to provide a continuum of services across the district to support the most involved students in neighborhood schools.
- Developed an inclusion model for the district through effective school budgeting model.
- Led collaboration across offices to develop a revised special education teacher evaluation rubric.
- Designed and implemented a job-embedded professional development model to support special education teachers in the district.
- Developed and implemented an instructional rounds model for a cluster of schools and central office staff.
- Directed and designed a Tier 3 literacy model to provide evidence-based practices for students in full-time special education programs.

Principal, Friendship Public Charter School, Tech Prep Academy, Washington, DC

2011-2012

- Oversaw instructional and operational activities for a STEM school.
- Implemented data talks for departmental and grade level teams to use short cycle assessments to guide instruction.
- Developed high school course progression for STEM that allowed for multiple AP offerings and two STEM pathways in Environmental Science and Engineering.
- Designed professional development based on identified teacher and schoolwide needs.
- Worked closely with Parent Action Committee to ensure parent communication and support.
- Worked with the district to plan school modernization and new construction.
- Collaborated with Teach for America and Urban Teacher Center to recruit high-quality teachers.

Principal, DCPS/Friendship Public Charter School, The Academies at Anacostia, DC

2009-2011

- Developed and implemented the mission and vision for The Charles Drew Academy, one of four small schools in one high school building.
- Developed data cycle: comprehensive data tracker, weekly data talks, common interim assessments.
- Oversaw and developed professional development.
- Facilitated the Local School Advisory Team.
- Built relationship with local universities and Teach for America to recruit high-quality teachers.
- Managed teacher preparation partnership with The George Washington University.

Assistant Principal, DCPS, Cardozo Senior High School, Washington, DC	2008-2009
Special Education Coordinator, Nia Community PCS, Washington, DC	2007-2008
Special Education Inclusion Teacher, Prince George's County Public Schools, MD	2006-2007
Director of Community Outreach, Edmund Burke School, Washington, DC	2004-2006
Social Studies Teacher, Edmund Burke School, Washington, DC	1998-2006

MEMBERSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

Deeper Learning Equity Fellowship	2017-2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A multi-year fellowship to provide perspectives and tools necessary for effective and expanded Deeper Learning leadership in the public school sector	
Presenter – Council of the Great City Schools 61st Annual Fall Conference, Cleveland, OH:	2017
<i>It's All You: Providing Personalized Learning Opportunities for Students</i>	
Participant – Harvard Graduate School of Education	2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none">By All Means: Redesigning Education to Restore Opportunity	
Participant – Harvard Graduate School of Education & Harvard Business School	2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public Education Leadership Project (PELP)Examine management practices to improve student performance in urban districts	
Participant – Mary Jane Patterson Fellowship Principal Coaching	2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Received training to mentor emerging school leaders	
Central Office Leader of the Year, District of Columbia Public Schools	2014
Advisory Board Member - Drexel University: Urban Special Education Leaders of Tomorrow	2014
<i>Doctoral program preparing urban special education leaders</i>	
Presenter – Council of the Great City Schools 58th Annual Conference, Milwaukee, WI:	2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Implementing Tier 3 Interventions for Students with Disabilities District-Wide</i><i>Using Instructional Rounds to Improve Special Education Programming</i>	
Participant – Harvard Graduate School of Education	2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Redesigning High Schools for Improved Instruction	

EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Special Education, Catholic University of America
Master of Science in Administration, Educational Administration, Trinity University
Bachelor of Arts, Religious Studies, University of Oregon

CERTIFICATIONS

Rhode Island Department of Education, Providence RI:

Superintendent of Schools Certification
Building Level Administrator PK-12
District Level Administrator - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, Malden, MA:

Superintendent, Initial

Vermont Agency of Education, Montpelier, VT:

Superintendent PK-12

Office of the State Superintendent of Education, Washington, DC:

Administrative Services Credential/Regular Administrator K-12