

School Reform Commission Criteria for next SDP Leader

MODERATOR REPORT FORMAT

Gratz Mastery High School
February 1, 2012

Group 1

Moderators: Ted Enoch, with Ian Charlton

Moderator's description of the group:

Small group #1 proved to be a gathering of deeply concerned Philadelphians with a diverse, extensive and significant collection of histories connecting to nearly all facets of the school district's operational life. Among the group was an active student leader from Gratz Mastery Charter, a former school security guard (worked at several schools), two retired school teachers with decades of experience within the district, a former Home & School president, a retired school district administrator (40+ years experience), a school district service provider and several parents and grandparents with numerous children attending many schools within the district. About half of the participants were African American women from the immediate neighborhood, while others traveled some distance within the city to participate. This group was passionate but not optimistic about the search for the new superintendent. A significant percentage of the group had little to no faith that the community engagement forums would have any bearing on the search committee's selection efforts and raised these concerns throughout all phases of the discussion.

Hopes and Fears for next leader of the SDP:

HOPES:

- That the next leader will have a sincere desire to engage with the community
- That efforts will lead to a higher percentage of H.S graduations.
- That a full budget will support the needs and efforts of the school district.
- That a true, genuine and proved passion/concern for students will exist. A second group member echoed that a passion exist to propel teachers to be more involved with students and parents.
- That transparency will exist in all budget and spending related matters and that operations and decisions will not be influenced with graft or hush money.
- That s/he be a willing risk-taker and not settle for business as usual.
- That the "turnaround efforts" not be abandoned.
- That the success be such that our grandchildren are benefiting from this work.

- That there is better communication with the public, starting now with this search process.

FEARS:

- That the leader will be overly influenced by politics, starting with this search itself.
- That the District will just continue business as usual.
- That hush money will corrupt the efforts of the leader and mire the teaching of out students.
- That this search and public engagement process is simply fake, a “dog and pony show” that is for appearances and not for real inquire into the communities priorities.
- That more disruptive turnarounds impact our schools and communities.
- That more principals and teachers continue being uprooted.

Parts of the Framework that Make sense to participants, and why:

- The group all agreed that – proven – commitment and passion needs to be a present and documented.
- The group believed that criteria two need three need to be combined, that leadership capacity of a large organization must go hand in hand with an appreciation of teaching and learning dynamics, and thus the leader will be an educational leader and not just a CEO.
- That point four (team builder) is important. This leader will need talented advisors to succeed and that they will need to be a good listener.
- That points five and seven are related and important. There was a belief among many (though not all) that charter schools have provided invaluable shifts in learning and safety/climate issues for their children, promoting positive learning for students. Also, charter schools provide an excellent opportunity to promote decentralization and localized creativity and leadership.

Parts of the Framework about which participants are concerned, and why:

- How do we quantify and assess “passion and commitment”?
- For point two - knowledge and capacity to lead large org. – that the experience be in education and in an urban environment. This group wanted an educational leader, not a CEO of a corporation.
- And further on point two, this leader of the district needs to rely on transparency to counter the historic manipulation of school district funds on all levels, and that this leader can manage funds and regulations from the federal, state and local funding streams.
- For point five – portfolio of schools – charter schools need more oversight and management. Standards still must apply. Students who attend and graduate from these schools should not be penalized because key aspects – foreign language studies were a specific example cited – of a standard education were ignored and neglected. The group was nearly unanimous that charter schools need more oversight and management. Further, it was an important concern for some that charter schools not deplete funds that serve traditional schools. Some believed that

charter schools were inefficient and more costly and diverting resources where they are needed most, traditional neighborhood schools.

What difference it would make if the successful candidate is/is not from Philadelphia, and why:

- Group 1 was a bit divided on this, but as the discussion evolved certain points of agreement came forth:
- That there is likely excellent and qualified talent here locally and that we should look locally first.
- That our district deserves an excellent leader and if needed, a national search is important.
- That if the leader is not a former principal or administrator, that s/he will need to work closely with experienced veterans from Philadelphia.
- One thought was that it would be good to get an outsider, one who is uncorrupted from the status quo of Philly politics in our school district.

Other important ideas:

- That the search committee needs a teacher – at least one - a member of the teachers union, on the committee.
- That a student(s) should also be on the search committee.
- That there is far too little information available for the public about what the district's plans are for decentralization, and that it makes in very difficult to understand what type of leader we really need.
- Several members of the group were upset and unsatisfied that these 9 points of criteria were the basis of the public engagement. Several felt this document was “pre-approved” or “a-done-deal” and that feedback was too little too late. This sentiment was aggravated in the moderators opinion because one of both of the speakers who addressed the large group during opening comments said something to the effect that we had 7 points, and that now we have 9 and its not going to change.
- This furtherer a lack of trust in the process and for several of the group members, only continued their deep concerns about an aloof, corrupt school district that cared little for true community engagement and the inclusion of teachers, families and students as meaningful stakeholders.
- The group needed clarity as to who was on the search committee and they wanted some mechanism for direct access to this committee or members of the committee.

Group 2

Moderators: Guillermo Lopez and Harmony Elsley

Moderator's description of the group:

8 people

4 African American women

1 white women, (a news reporter)

1 Adult African American man

2 Young African American men

This group very focused on Special Ed.

Hopes and Fears for next leader of the SDP:

- Fears of the Philly politics, either lack of knowledge of the way politics work or politics playing to big a role in the position.
- Hopes that the new SPD will wade the waters to success.

Parts of the Framework that Make sense to participants, and why:

- Commitment to education
- Commitment to engaging students, parents, and stakeholders. Also making sure engagement is enforced at the school level.
- Clear understanding of the way management decisions on teaching, training and leadership
- Active principles (out of the office and involved)
- Knowledge and capacity to run large organization
- Confidence and understanding of what they are doing.
- Embraces the idea of a portfolio of schools regardless of provider
- Is familiar with 2014 Vision, Charters
- Ability to rethink service model
- Strong listening skills and makes good use of influence

Parts of the Framework about which participants are concerned, and why:

- Decreased centralization of following programs.
 - ELL
 - Early Childhood
 - Special Ed
 - Title 1

Consensus of the group is: Principals are not knowledgeable enough about the programs mentioned above.

- What will be decentralized?
- Portfolio regardless of provider:
 - Challenges of Charter Schools & Special Ed have not been addressed.
 - Charter schools are not as accessible to information for parents and lack cooperation.
 - School District does not prove helpful in challenges with charter Schools
- Committed to actively engaging with students, parents and community stakeholders:
 - Should not do the same things they have been doing towards informomg and engaging because it hasn't worked.
 - Notes don't cut it! Look at who has been successful in having an active and engaged school community.
- Language about Special Ed not strong enough in criteria
- Item # 3 should read: Clear understanding of the way management decisions affect teaching, training, and leadership development among school principals, parents and school support staff.
- Item #1 should read: A commitment to education and an overall passion to ensure learning for all children for team building.
- Needs stronger tools for SPD or managers to get the most out of teachers
 - Maybe revisit with teachers union
 - Too many teachers not making it.
 - Young high performing teachers are the first ones let go.

What difference it would make if the successful candidate is/is not from Philadelphia, and why:

- From Philly as a plus:
 - Would understand the lay of the land
 - Would understand Philly politics
 - Would understand Philly politics is a full contact sport
 - Would understand Philly is a city of neighborhoods
 - Example: You really have to know the neighborhoods before you decide to merge some of them. The history for some of them is long and deep. The conflicts that exist would make for very difficult mergers.
- From Philly as a minus:
 - Would owe too many favors
 - Might be the same results all over again
- From outside of Philly as a plus:
 - New ideas
 - Can learn about Philly and not let politics play too much in decisions
 - We believe the PSD is top heavy and outsider would be able to handle cuts better.
 - Will create equal opportunities, since they have to listen better

Other important ideas:

- In the end the group decided from Philly or not wasn't as important as some one who can turn things around.
- Historically in PSD, the statement All students, did not include Special Ed !!!

Group 3

Moderators: Ellen Greenberg and Steve Vassor

Moderator's description of the group:

The group was made up of 8 adults and 4 children (one of whom spoke about violence in the schools and wanting a Superintendent who would make schools safer for kids). There were two men (one African American man and one White man who was a retired teacher). The women were all African American. The majority appeared to be over forty although there was one young woman (who left early) who may have been under twenty and one who may have been in her thirties. They were all thoughtful, engaged and respectful of the process and each other.

Note: the items below listed in bold were recurrent themes throughout the session

Hopes and Fears for next leader of the SDP:

- Superintendent whose main priority is the students and the community
- I hope to attend this school when I get older
- Superintendent knows that not all communities know how to help the school/the students and is able to close the gap between the schools so that all schools/students get the same high quality experience
- **Hope the next leader is Apolitical – doesn't let politics get in the way and is aware of what the students, parents and communities' needs are**
- **Listen**
- Hope that the superintendent will be a true voice and listens
- **Collaborative, collegial, experienced teacher and community builder**
- **Ability to manage and raise funds and sustain/maintain the things/ideas that have started and have been successful**
- Tough mind and tender heart
- Change the community and all the violence
- **Experienced with other school districts and schools and is able to ensure that standards are achieved consistently across the board**
- Improve school atmosphere/climate and make it equal across all schools
- Person has a faith orientation ("God called me to the job")
- Maintain stability to lessen the negative effects of instability on students

Parts of the Framework that Make sense to participants, and why:

Criteria 6: A relationship builder who is able to build creative partnerships with numerous external stakeholders to bring resources to individual schools and groups of schools:

- If we have someone that can build relationships, we'll see a difference in schools

- **Relationship building internally is a key to leadership**
- It's important to make sure the money is there
- The new Superintendent needs to be able to heal the internal situation
- **Need to be able to build relationships/genuine support with everyone he/she encounters**

Criteria 1: A commitment to education and an overall passion to ensure learning for all children:

- This is ultimately what we're trying to achieve
- **Commitment isn't enough, need to demonstrate the commitment to education via their past experiences (involvement in school and community)**
- They should "audition" – must have been a teacher and show what difference they made for their students and would make for **all** youth
- Commitment to Philadelphia (preference for someone from this area)
- Someone we can elect or **some how involve the community in making the decision on who to select**

Criteria 9: Is committed to actively engaging with students, parents, and community stakeholders:

- **Don't throw away what's working** (i.e. Imagine Greatness program – the philosophy and system should be carried forward by the new Superintendent)

Criteria 2: Knowledge and capacity to run a large enterprise or organization:

- Size of the SDP makes this necessary for the sake of consistent standards across all schools

Criteria 7: Ability to rethink the district's service model, moving closer to autonomy for individual schools and decreased centralization:

- Must be able to re-think the way the SDP operates and delivers services to all students and all schools
- Careful monitoring of autonomous schools/governance is necessary as centralization is decreased **AND**
- Individuality so that different schools can do things differently

Parts of the Framework about which participants are concerned, and why:

Criteria 2: Knowledge and capacity to run a large enterprise or organization:

- Is it necessary considering the differences between a corporation and the world of education?
- Is important but it doesn't need to be at the top of the list of the criteria
- Just because a person was able to run a large system elsewhere, doesn't mean they're qualified to run the Philadelphia school district
- Would want to know what school/education related results have they achieved
- The system is flawed, no one is superman (need to recognize this)
- Lots of pressures to be aware of

- Maybe subcommittees can be created/considered to support all of the different things that need to be done by the superintendent
- **The person needs to be a listener (to adults and children)**
- Be willing to seek help when needed

Criteria 8: Ability to influence the public, business community, higher education community, and legislative leaders on the value of public education and the commitments necessary to achieve notable progress:

- **“Influence” is not a good word (there was a strong reaction to the word “influence” and the consensus was that the word has a negative connotation)**
 - advocate
 - rapport with the public
 - relationships
 - building positive, effective relationships
- Someone from within the school district of Philadelphia

Criteria 3: A clear understanding of the way management decisions affect teaching, training and leadership development among school principals

- **Transparency and better communication**

What difference it would make if the successful candidate is/is not from Philadelphia, and why:

From Philadelphia – strong preference from the group (not unanimous)

- More committed
 - He or she would have a connection to the community (care about what happens)
 - Have lived the issues
 - It’s “their kids”
- Have relationships
- Know issues
- More “real” in people’s minds
 - Can find accurate/genuine information about them
- Stability – minimize the negative impact of changes on the students

Not from Philadelphia

- Ability to keep an open mind
- Bring new ideas, fresh/different perspective
- Children can adapt, especially if it raises the bar

Other important ideas (Main Themes/Key Points)

- Need for the new Superintendent to be an internal and external relationship and community builder who listens
- Community involvement in the selection
- Genuine commitment to children and the community

- Both receptive to what the community has to say AND sees schools as an extension of the community
- Someone with the ability to manage, develop and sustain funding

Group 4

Moderators: Shakira Abdul-Ali and Ashley Brindisi

Moderator's description of the group:

We had approximately 18 participants. Two African American H.S. students – one male (vocal), one female (silent, came with mom); one white male community member; two white female community members; remaining participants were African American female community members, including school staffers; parents; civic activists

Hopes and Fears for next leader of the SDP:

- **Hopes:**
 - That all of our input will be used in this process
 - That everything we say will matter
 - That this is the beginning of an on-going conversation, and not just a one-time event
 - That this is a “new day,” and that we will continue to pursue change, and have continued success
 - That CTE (career transition) programs will have greater visibility
 - That our failing schools are turned around
 - That the new superintendent and his team will have a greater level of respect for our community such that they deliver a higher level of accountability to the community
- **Fears:**
 - That the superintendent doesn't follow through on promises made
 - That the school will continue to take away programs (due to limited funding)
 - That the school will continue (on the current trajectory) to impose “Zero Tolerance” policies (that are overly punitive in nature)

Parts of the Framework that Make sense to participants, and why:

- *I like #1 and #8 because I feel “it takes a village to raise a child.” It's important to have parents engaged in the work of the school; the Superintendent needs to encourage greater parental involvement.*
- I like all nine of the criteria; re #3 – in order for the Superintendent to have a clear understanding of the way management decisions impact the schools is to *NOT sit behind a desk*; he/she needs get into the schools on a regular basis
 - The new superintendent (hereinafter referred to as “Leader”) needs to LISTEN, and to recognize that if it's not broke, don't fix it
 - Leader needs to keep turn-around programs
- Regarding #3 – Leader needs to be someone with classroom AND school administration experience
- Re #1 – Leader needs both passion and commitment to kids' education because this is a hard job, and will get even harder. When the hard times come, the Leader needs to remember why he/she is doing this work; passion will be that reminder.
- Re #8 – We need an advocate; someone who is willing to step up for the children and the community

- Leader needs to be able to answer to many bosses; listening, and without being “bullied” by those bosses into making decisions that undermine the interests of the kids
- #9 is important criteria, but *“Teachers” should be added to the group with which the Leader should be actively engaged*
 - Leader must visit all schools to know what’s going on, and to insure that resources are available to all schools, equally
 - Leader needs to look beyond the school day, to use the school facilities/assets in collaboration with the community to insure that students gain ‘real world’ exposure and employment opportunities with their options for future career possibilities (using the school to facilitate interaction with prospective employers who can introduce career choices to kids)
 - Leader needs to pay attention to students’ career aspirations as well as their employment needs
 - Leader needs to recognize that the school community is a pipeline for future educators
 - Leader needs to work closely with the university community (stakeholder) as a resource for the schools
 - Leader needs to insure that there is a real partnership between charter and district schools, so that schools are working together (and not against each other)
 - Leader needs to be “well-rounded”
- Re #7 – Leader should rely on mentoring programs that require greater accountability from students;
 - mentors should be used to both support students who are on the “right track,” and correct students who seem to be on the “wrong track”;
 - Leader should incorporate Life Skills programs, as well as foundational academics into the school program
 - I hope that the Leader will have experience with using Life Skills programs in the school environment, and that there will be greater transparency in bringing this initiative into the school programming

Parts of the Framework about which participants are concerned, and why:

- Concerned that the selection committee will pick the wrong person; I don’t want this process to be constrained due to allegiance to a “time-table.”
- I want the Leader to be given a “probation period,” so that we can get a new Leader (expeditiously) if this person doesn’t work out.
 - Probation period will hold new Leader accountable to the whole system
 - Probation period might be for two (2) years; one year to allow the Leader to observe the current system to see what is working and what is broken; and a second year to begin make changes
- Need the Leader to exhibit and implement transparency in both financial and programmatic decision-making
- Need the new Leader to assess strengths and weaknesses in the system before making changes

- Leader needs to withstand pressures to make immediate changes
- New Leader should have appropriate credentials AND experience
 - Needs a doctorate in education
 - Needs business management experience
 - Needs teaching experience
 - Leader needs to have a balance in these three areas of experience / preparation
- Concerned that new Leader might lose sight of his/her passion; new Leader needs to stay on task, despite the obstacles
- New Leader needs to invite public engagement and feedback in the budget process – BEFORE major decisions are made; there needs to be open dialogue
- Leader needs to be mindful of both the process of making changes, and the system – it should be made easier for parents and students to work in and with the system
- Leader’s salary should have some sort of “merit” response –
 - There should be a merit increase in response to improvements in the system
 - Merit increase should be based not only on kids’ test scores (quantitative), but also on Quality improvements in the system
 - Forums should be held to determine criteria for measuring what it means for “improvement” in the schools
- Leader should hold town hall meetings in all the schools, in order to hear from the community; don’t rely on input only from the principals
- Leader’s staff should meet same (high standards for) credentials, and commitment to education
 - Leader’s staff should NOT be politically-driven; they should non-partisan / bi-partisan, so that they are not beholden to one political group or another, but rather should be committed to education for the kids
- Selection team should pursue this kind of input / feedback from the Greater Philadelphia community, even if it means conducting a census-like outreach process – going door to door, requesting this kind of feedback on the selection criteria for the new Leader

What difference it would make if the successful candidate is/is not from Philadelphia, and why:

- It is offensive that the search committee would go outside of Philadelphia for an acceptable candidate – “who knows ‘home’ better than you?”
- Don’t limit the search to the region, or to specific interests
 - We need a candidate with Urban experience
 - Candidate needs to know the Philadelphia system; the Philly political landscape and political pressures; this is CRITICALLY important!
- What’s important is that the candidate is INVESTED in the City for the long-term (not someone who, if what they do doesn’t work will say, “Oh well,” and move on to his/her next opportunity, outside of the Philly region)
 - Candidate’s investment in the City should be given a lot of weight, but it shouldn’t be the “be all and end all”

Top Priorities / Issues for this Group:

- There needs to be 2-way communication with the new Leader
- Building partnerships; working together; sharing resources equally
- New Leader needs experience in local education

Group 5

Moderators: Gwynne Smith Scheffer and Nicole Fuller

Moderator's description of the group:

- Our group consisted of six women (one native Chinese with English challenges, one White, four African American) and four men (one White, four African American)
- Neighborhoods represented included: Olney, South Philly, Logan, Kensington, Tioga, Center City, Overbrook Park, Northeast
- Very participative group with a lot of synergy emerging from the conversations. They bonded quickly and everyone participated in the discussion pretty equally with the exception of the native Chinese speaker who offered some input but mostly listened (she was asked repeatedly without putting her on the spot and she did provide input when she felt she had something to add). One AA woman had just moved back to Philadelphia from DC (she was a graduate of Germantown High School) and another AA man now lives in NJ but was a graduate of Simon Gratz. The youngest in our group was 27 while the oldest looked to be in his early 60s. Five females (one Chinese, four AA) are SDP parents and one was a SDP teacher (White female). Fred Ginyard, Search Committee member/Youth United for Change, sat in our group at two different times during our conversation (early on, then again towards the end). Marty, United Way

Hopes and Fears for next leader of the SDP:

- Hopes:
 - Children will not be heard
 - Mental health should be brought back into the curriculum, it's beyond academics
 - Need to expand ESL
 - Children are treated equally
 - Don't continue to let politicians rule/have the last word
 - School system prepares students for the jobs that are out there now
 - Every young person will be better equipped to be competitive in the workforce
 - Raise expectations
- Fears:
 - Schools are closing...why is this happening
 - Keep sorting and labeling schools, which sorts and labels the children, the school, the neighbor and the community and not doing anything to ensure that needs are addressed equitably
 - We forget what good teaching looks like
 - All schools will become charter school
 - There is no money
 - Daughter won't be prepared for college due to the lack of resources

- As consumers of the system, we are paying for our schools and should hold the school district accountable like we are handing them the money directly
- How bad will it get before it gets better

Parts of the Framework that Make sense to participants, and why:

- #1 – Commitment to Education
 - Experience in an organization that serves children such as family service organization
 - Equality of academic criteria for all children
 - Someone with a history with the City
 - Proven results
 - Local or outside of Philadelphia is not important but track record needs to be more thoroughly vetted
 - From Philadelphia very important because we know them and their history because they are from here
 - Politically savvy regardless of geography
- #2 – Knowledge and capacity to run large enterprise
 - Strong management skills
 - Experience as a manager along with proven track record
 - Needs to have an idea/vision and the ability to articulate a vision
 - Knowledge of education history, e.g., data on the education system, National perspective on what's working and what's not
 - Knows how to surround themselves with a qualified team and hold them accountable
- #3 – Clear understanding of the way management decisions affect teaching, training and leadership development among principals
 - Experience in large school district
 - Ear to the ground so they know what's realistic and makes sense, communication and reflection
- #4 – Team builder – creative partnerships and external stakeholders for resources
 - Related to #2, track record in Change Management
 - Experience engaging a diverse community
 - Experience in handling a diverse model in any type of organization
- #5 – Embraces portfolio of schools and advocates for high quality schools
 - Focus on “public” education
 - Linking quality and equity across all schools in the portfolio
 - Options and access are the same for all children
- #6 – Relationship builder – creative partnerships with external stakeholders for resources
 - Collaborative, group work process to engage stakeholders with transparency in the decision-making process
 - Track record with changing organizations image in the community
- #7 – Rethink the district's service model
 - Diversify programs, e.g., arts and culture

- High academic standards across the portfolio, equity in curricula at all, options to access specializations
- Parental involvement – dedicated place and space
- Ensure strong communication to community
- #8 – Influence the public, business community, higher ed, legislative leaders on value and commitments
 - Bring rich culture back to the City
 - Experience handling a diverse model with all types of schools to integrate and provide **equity** to all
- #9 – Actively engaging with students, parents and community stakeholders
 - Mechanism to actively listen to parents and community on an ongoing basis
 - Transparency in decision making process with feedback loop

Parts of the Framework about which participants are concerned, and why:

- #1 – Commitment to Education
 - Should read commitment to “public” education
 - What does it mean? How do you “show” passion
 - Impossible to define/measure passion and commitment
 - Equality of academic criteria for all children
 - Needs to have a proven track records
 - No one from corporation, should be an educator who understands the whole picture with a leadership team who understands academics
 - Philadelphians don’t trust each other, we should go out of state to search
 - Continue Imagine 2014 Roadmap...are you committed to this and similar initiatives already in place and working
- #2 – Knowledge and capacity to run large enterprise
 - Doesn’t matter the size of the organization, proven track record is more important
 - Need fresh blood
 - Knowledge of education history, e.g., data on the education system, National perspective on what’s working and what’s not
 - Leadership and management are not exclusive
- #3 – Clear understanding of the way management decisions affect teaching, training and leadership development among principals
 - Define vision for what good teaching looks like (not just passing the Praxis)
 - Reading (a must to succeed in school) as a priority
 - Ear to the ground so they know what’s realistic and makes sense, communication and reflection
 - Training in support of teacher and principal development, e.g., principal in training programs
- #4 – Team builder – creative partnerships and external stakeholders for resources
 - Diversify and surround with others – superintendent doesn’t have to know or do it all
- #5 – Embraces portfolio of schools and advocates for high quality schools
 - Concerns regarding the impact the privatizing schools

- Linking quality and equity across all schools in the portfolio (makes sense and concern)
 - Options and access are the same for all children (makes sense and concern)
- #6 – Relationship builder – creative partnerships with external stakeholders for resources
 - Accessible resources such as museums
 - Leadership comes to the community to build relationship
 - What are the strings attached to resources
- #7 – Rethink the district’s service model
 - Diversify programs such as arts and culture
 - Parental involvement – dedicated place and space
 - Not liking “decentralization” because feel it’s disconnected from accountability
 - School program for parents – involving parents actively in enrichment, e.g., Parent University is great (will it be maintained)
- #8 – Influence the public, business community, higher ed, legislative leaders on value and commitments
 - N/A
- #9 – Actively engaging with students, parents and community stakeholders
 - Input real not disingenuous

What difference it would make if the successful candidate is/is not from Philadelphia, and why:

- Local or outside of Philadelphia is not important but track record needs to be more thoroughly vetted
- From Philadelphia very important because we know them and their history because they are from here

Other important ideas:

- Key Points: Track Record, Parent and Community Engagement, Transparency

Gratz Mastery High School Closing Plenary: Similarities Noted

- Don't throw away what's working
- Parent and student involvement
- Transparency on decisions
- Candidate from Philadelphia if possible:
 - More likely to be invested in the schools
 - Will know more about the city and how we work
 - Will have more community connections
- Experience:
 - Experience as a teacher
 - Experience in the school district
- Commitment to all children – particularly those with special needs