

End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report: Superintendent

Superintendent: Dr. Marguerite Rizzi
 Evaluator: Dr. E. Ural Sylvia Neal Date: 4/17/13

Step 1: Assess Progress Toward Goals (Complete page 3 first; circle one for each set of goal[s].)

Professional Practice Goal(s)	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded
Student Learning Goal(s)	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded
District Improvement Goal(s)	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded

Step 2: Assess Performance on Standards (Complete pages 4-7 first; then check one box for each standard.)

Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
Standard I: Instructional Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard II: Management and Operations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard III: Family and Community Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standard IV: Professional Culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Unsatisfactory = Performance on a standard or overall has not significantly improved following a rating of Needs Improvement, or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard or overall and is considered inadequate, or both.
Needs Improvement/Developing = Performance on a standard or overall is below the requirements of a standard or overall but is not considered to be Unsatisfactory at the time. Improvement is necessary and expected. For new superintendents, performance is on track to achieve proficiency within three years.
Proficient = Proficient practice is understood to be fully satisfactory. This is the rigorous expected level of performance.
Exemplary = A rating of Exemplary indicates that practice significantly exceeds Proficient and could serve as a model of practice regionally or statewide.

See Attached five Pages

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Assessment of Superintendent's progress towards her goals

At the beginning of the evaluation period, the superintendent selected the following two goals:

Goal 1 : To ensure the production of more articles publicizing the activities of the Stoughton Public Schools to demonstrate the quality and variety of educational opportunities that are offered to our students at all levels, and about which the public might not be aware.

Goal 2: To produce a 3 year District Improvement Plan, using the new District Standards and Indicators.

The Department of Education model system for superintendent evaluation requires the superintendent to select at least two goals to propose to the school committee: **one related to improving his or her own professional practice and one related to improving student learning.**

Similarly, the model system promulgated by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees states that **“In addition to evaluating the superintendent on the basis of the standards selected from the Evaluation Matrix for Superintendents, each superintendent must have at least two additional goals: a professional practice goal, a student achievement goal, and two to four district improvement goals.”**

The fact that our superintendent did not choose any of the required goals to improve her professional practice, and to improve student achievement is quite revealing.

Therefore, I must find the superintendent **did not meet her professional practice goal(s)** because she decided not to choose one.

The superintendent also **did not meet her student learning goal(s)** because she decided not to choose one.

To demonstrate her achievement of her Goal #1 stated above, the superintendent wrote: “A portfolio of articles is in the School Committee room for your review, and it includes items that appeared in the press, on the cable station, and were disseminated through electronic means.” The pile of papers she placed in the school committee room was approximately 1-inch thick. The context was not described for most of these loose papers. For example, one loose sheet simply stated the West School motto, West school mission statement, and West school core values. It was not clear if the superintendent was trying to take credit for authoring these statements, or she was simply taking credit for such statements exist. As an another example, I would like to cite

the papers related to fourth grade student exercises to identify minerals. The superintendent included 17 pages in her Goal #1 pile for the mineral exercises. Surprisingly, most, if not all of these pages appeared to have been printed from the Norwood Public Schools web site. Therefore, it is not clear why she included these 17 pages in her pile, and what she is attempting to take credit for.

The pile included a lot of photographs that have not been captioned, lots of emails to the superintendent, and lots of fliers that have been sent home by different Stoughton schools. The pile also included a few Patch and Stoughton Journal articles.

In view of the observations above, I rank the superintendent on her first goal as making “**some progress.**”

I also question the value of superintendent’s second goal. Massachusetts General Law chapter 69, section II already requires the districts to develop and submit District Improvement Plans. So, the superintendent’s second goal is essentially encouraging the superintendent to do the job she is required to do by law. Surprisingly, the superintendent revealed at the last school committee meeting that Stoughton did not have a three year district improvement plan, but instead had a strategic plan. The current strategic plan is not sufficiently detailed and seriously outdated.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, the document submitted by the superintendent is a good start, but requires more work. For example, the document appears to have been prepared only by the administrators. Teams that prepared this document sorely lacked representation from key stakeholders such as teachers, parents, school councils, PTOs and the special education parent advisory council. Therefore, I urge the superintendent to get other stakeholders involved, and I rank the superintendent on her second goal as making “**significant progress.**” This goal might be counted towards superintendent’s district improvement goal.

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT ON MASSACHUSETTS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Standard I: Instructional Leadership (NEEDS IMPROVEMENT)

According to schooldigger.com, ranking of Stoughton school district and have declined in 2012. For example,

Stoughton district ranked #198 out of 325 Massachusetts public school districts.

West School ranked #751 of 890 Massachusetts public elementary schools

Gibbons School ranked #485 of 890 Massachusetts public elementary schools

Stoughton High School ranked #204 of 343 Massachusetts public high schools

The superintendent needs to do much better.

Massachusetts Department of Education keeps track of district's progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps for different student groups. According to DESE website, the 2012 results for Stoughton School district were as follows:

All students	Did Not Meet Target
High needs students	Did Not Meet Target
Low income students	Did Not Meet Target
ELL and Former ELL	Did Not Meet Target
Students w/disabilities	Did Not Meet Target
Afr. Amer./Black students	Did Not Meet Target
Hispanic/Latino students	Did Not Meet Target
White students	Did Not Meet Target

The superintendent must demonstrate marked improvement on all measures.

Standard II: Management and Operations (UNSATISFACTORY)

I used the unsatisfactory ranking here because the incumbent has not significantly improved following my statements on her previous evaluations.

Standard II.A.3. Student Safety, Health, Social and Emotional Needs

Dr. Rizzi seems to have a cavalier attitude towards safety in and around schools. In the past, I requested notice when police/fire/ambulance is called to the schools, which she generally ignored. Recently, a sibling of a Stoughton student was killed crossing the busy street in front of the school during dismissal time. It is unfortunate that Dr. Rizzi failed to identify and eliminate the hazard before this tragedy occurred. Even more perplexing, Dr. Rizzi still refuses to place a crossing guard in that extremely dangerous location.

In recent incidences of bb guns or student violence in schools, Dr Rizzi failed to provide school committee members police reports, even after being asked.

Standard II.D. Laws, Ethics and Policies

I believe, Dr. Rizzi cannot be entrusted to provide the school committee members the full and complete disclosure of the issues. In my opinion, she tends to provide a one-sided and barely enough information for the school committee members to think the way she wants. Things have gotten a lot worse with the new School Committee Chair this year. I am already on the record for complaining to the superintendent for providing school committee members meeting packets that are too "skimpy." As an expert educational leader of the District, the Superintendent's role is to provide ample information so that the school committee members can weigh pros and cons, and make informed decisions, rather than blindly rubber-stamping the superintendent's recommendations.

Dr. Rizzi currently lives and used to work in Hull, Massachusetts. Allegations have been circulating among the teachers and parents that Stoughton Public Schools has hired many employees for key positions from Hull. I urge Dr. Rizzi to either dispel or confirm the rumors by disclosing how many employees we have hired from Hull, for what positions they were hired, and, if requested, their qualifications.

Recently, superintendent issued a list of expenses entitled Stoughton Public Schools - Legal Expenses Due to School Committee Member's Complaints, which was purported to account for

how much money the district spent to defend (and lose) against my complaints. When it was pointed out that this list was falsified because it included other expenses such as unsuccessful defense against teachers union complaints, superintendent Rizzi did not correct the record, but instead chose to remain silent. The superintendent must be honest to set a good role model for school children. A good superintendent would also spread this important value to the rest of the administration and staff.

In a recent example, a child brought a toy BB handgun into the school on January 9th. Subject pistol shoots 6 mm BB's at a muzzle velocity of 85 to 200 ft/s (depending on where you look). The incident was reported to Stoughton Police (SPD) by a parent on January 10th. SPD recovered the gun the same day from the child's home, and discussed the matter with both the school principal and assistant principal. The child reported that she brought the gun to school to get back at a boy who threw her an ice ball on the 8th. Concerned parents made me aware of the situation over the weekend. They were understandably upset because they heard a child was suspended because of the incident, yet the principal was still denying the incident. Five hours after I inquired with the Superintendent's office, the school principal issued a reverse 911 call and broadcast the following email message: "It has come to our attention that parents have been concerned that a BB gun was brought into our school this past week. Please be assured that no such incident occurred. You would certainly have been informed had such an incident taken place. Thank you and have a great evening." A lawyer or the Superintendent may argue that the elementary school principal's answer is technically not a lie. However, in my opinion, it was clearly not truthful.

Standard II.E. Fiscal Systems

Incumbent superintendent is incapable of providing the school committee members fiscal information they may need. For example, during the last budget cycle, I asked the superintendent repeatedly to provide me with information on how much of the current budget was spent to date. In return, she repeatedly ignored my requests. As a result, I was unable to vote on the district budget proposal in good conscience.

Another recent example of superintendent's failure occurred by tardy filing of the 2011-2012 End of Year Financial Report. She apparently received a warning letter from DESE stating "We have not received your 2011-2012 End of Year Financial Report. While you may have been granted an extension, that extension has expired. If your completed report is not electronically submitted to us by December 17, 2012, we will be withholding 50% of your scheduled December Chapter 70 distribution, as well as your December Circuit Breaker Payment. We have tried to be sympathetic to local issues, but can no longer wait for this information." She failed to share this letter with the school committee members.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement (NEEDS IMPROVEMENT)

When a parent contacts me, I always advise him/her to try to resolve the issue with the teacher, principal, and the Superintendent. I received a number of complaints that the Superintendent does not respond to phone calls or emails. While I agree that the superintendent personally

should not be responding to every single inquiry, her office MUST. Therefore, I urge Dr. Rizzi to delegate some of this work to her staff and make sure every inquiry gets a response from her office.

Standard IV: Professional Culture (UNSATISFACTORY)

I used the unsatisfactory ranking here because the incumbent has not significantly improved following my statements on her previous evaluations.

IV.F. Managing Conflict

I regret to see that Dr. Rizzi has developed into a confrontational and sometimes disrespectful style. She likes to assert herself to the employees as a strong Superintendent. As a result, we have experienced a number of grievances and incurred substantial legal expenses. She seems to enjoy working with the School Committee lawyers and does not hesitate to solicit input from them. In the future, I encourage Dr. Rizzi to take a more humble and common sense approach to the issues and try to resolve them before they blow out of proportion. She should also weigh lawyer's advice against her and the School Committee's common sense before she acts upon it. She needs to keep in mind that lawyers are people too, and their advice might be influenced by their desire to increase their billable hours. She created conflicts with the Teachers Union, Stoughton Police Department, Procurement Manager, Town Manager, and even with the Town Charter.

Dr. Rizzi needs to develop a collegial relationship with unions by demonstrating she is respectful, transparent, honest and trustworthy.