

Brian G. Osborne, Ed.D.
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Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education
2555 S. State Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
June 13, 2013

Dear Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education members:

Ann Arbor's students deserve a leader who has the experience, capacity and determination to create a system that challenges and supports every single student without exception. I would love to be that leader, and believe that Ann Arbor is an ideal fit for me to lead, learn, and serve with you as your Superintendent.

In many ways, I have prepared my entire life for this assignment. My parents raised me in Oak Park, Illinois, because they valued high quality public education in a diverse community. They gauged their high expectations of me as much by the kind of person I was becoming as by my academic achievement. Teaching in the challenged neighborhoods of Washington Heights and the South Bronx, I developed a passion for teaching and sense of urgency about my students' futures, and decided to dedicate my life's work to creating schools that demanded and supported excellence for every child.

Since then, I have grown my leadership capacity through practice and scholarship, becoming an increasingly effective district leader with an unrelenting focus on teaching and learning. Starting a new school in the South Bronx early in my career allowed me the opportunity to build every aspect of an entire school from scratch, and I learned the importance of creating a school culture that refuses to give up on any student. The Harvard Urban Superintendents Program provided the most intensive theoretical and practical training available, as well as the experience of deep analysis inherent in dissertation writing. Leading in the complex and vast New York City Department of Education during a time of dramatic change gave me an understanding of working at a large scale, and sharpened my leadership, operational, financial, and political skills.

Most importantly, my past six years as Superintendent of School in South Orange-Maplewood School District (SOMSD) has more fully prepared me for Ann Arbor and allowed me to build a track record of demonstrable success. While there is still a tremendous amount that needs to be addressed in SOMSD, we have made substantial improvements across all areas, resulting in a changed culture, one that now more fully challenges and supports every student.

Through sustained and coordinated district and Board leadership, student learning, as measured by state assessments, has increased at the same time as we have strengthened

the community's commitment to programs in non-tested subjects, especially the arts, physical education, and athletics, with creative approaches to expansion through partnership, even during a difficult economic recession.

Student achievement indicators demonstrate a narrowed the racial achievement gap while high end performance has improved substantially, outpacing gains in advanced proficient scores in comparable districts. Suspensions are down dramatically, performance is up significantly, and the percentage of graduates matriculating to college has increased by ten percentage points as a result of our emphasis on college readiness.

Fiscally, we targeted resources more directly to instruction and reduced the year-over-year tax impact while making very real tremendous progress in student learning, minimizing cuts to existing programs, holding the line on class size and honoring our long-standing commitment to the rich array of AP classes, honors classes, arts programs, clubs, activities, and athletics.

All this leads me to apply for the position of Superintendent of Ann Arbor Public Schools. Ann Arbor is exactly the kind of community that I want to live in, support, and lead. The best of America is when people choose proactively to seek out diversity, raise their children to appreciate difference, and work together to meet the challenges that come with such decisions. Ann Arbor's fundamental challenge is to build on its tremendous capacity to create the belief system, culture, and opportunities needed to narrow achievement gaps and ensure excellence for all. With the global economy and job market forever changed by automation and outsourcing, the demands on our children's education have never been greater.

I would be honored to join you in leading Ann Arbor's quest to meet those challenges and become the place that truly prepares all students for the world they will inherit.

Thank you, and best wishes to you in your selection process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian Osborne".

Brian G. Osborne

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, NJ

Superintendent of Schools

May 2007 – present

Leads diverse urban-suburban preK-12 district of 9 schools, 6,800 students, 750 employees and a budget of \$110M+ with an elected Board of Education. Raised student achievement and narrowed achievement gaps on state assessments, higher level course taking, AP, college matriculation. Restructured budget to support instruction. Initiated full day K, core curricula, formative assessments, academic interventions, inclusion, comprehensive teacher and principal evaluations, aligned professional development, administrator merit pay, middle school transformation including IB/MYP, technology overhaul.

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Chief of Staff, Teaching and Learning

Aug 2004 – May 2007

Led central division of 400 employees and a budget of \$200M+, including offices responsible for curriculum and professional development, instructional technology, secondary school reform, assessment and accountability, English language learners, special education, and parent engagement. Advised Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor. Instructional liaison to Mayor, City Hall. Coordinated support for 1500+ schools in ten regions and on citywide special education district. Oversaw central curriculum and professional development. Established citywide academic intervention, including Saturday Prep Academy.

Director of Instructional Technology

Nov 2003 – Aug 2004

Led citywide instructional technology staff with a budget of \$50M+. Implemented wireless tablets used by 1500+ school-based instructional coaches. Initiated 1:1 student laptop programs in 20 middle schools.

PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, NJ

Supervisor of Evaluation, Assessment, and Research

July 2002 – Nov 2003

Directed district-wide accountability system. Led data-driven decision making. Evaluated program outcomes.

Special Assistant to the Superintendent

Aug 2001 – June 2002

Advised superintendent in curriculum and instruction, collective bargaining, budgeting, personnel, school board relations, supervision of principals. Led community planning process for new facilities.

NEW SCHOOL FOR ARTS AND SCIENCES, Bronx, NY

Cofounder of New School for Arts and Sciences

Sept 1994 – Jun 2000

PUBLIC SCHOOL 28M, Washington Heights, Manhattan, NY

Fifth Grade Bilingual (Spanish) Teacher

Aug 1991 – Jun 1994

EDUCATION

Harvard Graduate School of Education:

Ed.D., *Administration, Planning, and Social Policy*. Urban Superintendents Program. May 2011.

M.A., *Urban Superintendents Program*. June 2001. *John E. Stevens Fellow*.

New York University: M.A.T., *Mathematics*. May 2000. *Jonathan Levin Urban Education Fellow*.

Colgate University: A.B., *Philosophy and Religion*, high honors. Magna Cum Laude. Phi Beta Kappa. May 1991.

Latin America Study Group: Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala.

PUBLICATIONS AND SERVICE

Osborne, B. G. (2011). Communicating to Change the Culture. In Peterkin, R.; Jewell-Sherman, D.; Kelly, L.; and Boozer, L. (eds.), *Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day: School Leaders Who Are Making Equity a Reality*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Osborne, B. G. (2011). *A Qualitative Study of One District's Efforts to Improve Mathematics to Scale*. Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Education of Harvard University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education.

Board Service: Minority Student Achievement Network Governing Board. 2007- present.
SUPES Academy Regional Advisory Board. Hartford, CT. 2011 – present.
Achieve Foundation Board of Trustees, South Orange-Maplewood, NJ. 2007 – present.
Morris Union Jointure Commission Board of Education, Morris, NJ. 2008 – present.

Chair: New Jersey Department of Education, Teacher Evaluation Pilot Advisory Committee. 2011- present.

Team Leader: Superintendent Transition Team, Montgomery County, MA, Public Schools. 2011.

Literate in Spanish; member of AASA, NCTM, ASCD.



June 13, 2013



Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education
2555 South State Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Board Members,

The following is a letter of the highest recommendation for Dr. Brian Osborne. I have known Dr. Osborne for more than a decade. During that time I have found him to be a relentless advocate for all children, an extremely hard worker, and one of the most thoughtful and intellectually honest educational leaders I've known. Given the success he has had throughout his career, most recently as Superintendent of South Orange Maplewood, New Jersey, I have no doubt he will provide exemplary service to Ann Arbor Public Schools.

I first got to know Dr. Osborne when I was Director of Accountability in Plainfield, New Jersey. He was Special Assistant to the Superintendent, and then became Director of Testing and Assessment. I immediately found him to be a great thought partner and colleague who brought new ideas to the table and helped me refine the development of a district-wide accountability system. When I became Deputy Senior Instructional Manager, Office of Programs, in the New York City Department of Education (DOE), I immediately reached out to Dr. Osborne to lead our Instructional Technology efforts. Dr. Osborne proved himself to be a very effective leader in a start-up type environment. He successfully worked with the curriculum and operations leaders to implement a city-wide instructional technology vision and plan. Most impressively, Dr. Osborne was able to balance the strengths of his team and integrate their work with other aspects of the DOE in the service of increasing the use of technology in schools and classrooms.

When the Office of Programs was disbanded due to an internal reorganization, Dr. Osborne and I both began working in the Chancellor's Office. While I worked on accountability issues, Dr. Osborne supported the Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning. While we did not work directly together, I again found Dr. Osborne to be my most valued colleague, confidant and thought partner. Dr. Osborne excelled in his role with the Deputy Chancellor in both leading important design and implementation work, and in developing important relationships among various offices within the DOE. Dr. Osborne always had a clear vision focused on equity and excellence for all children and he was able to bring others into the work with his passion, intelligence and focus.

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850 ♦ 301-279-3381

When I became Superintendent of Schools in Stamford, Connecticut, I found myself regularly consulting with Dr. Osborne. He became a critical thought partner as I wrestled with the typical issues of reforming an urban public school system. Dr. Osborne was always able to provide me with a different way of thinking about problems and practical, interest-based resolutions. When Dr. Osborne became Superintendent of Schools of South-Orange Maplewood, I knew he would excel. I have been extremely impressed with his leadership of a complex and very diverse suburban district. He has once again showed exemplary leadership in his ability to design and implement a vision focused on ensuring that all students receive the best instruction. Most impressive is that he has done so by bringing people together and working with them in an interest-based fashion. While some superintendents choose to use their power to push initiatives through regardless of the opposition, Dr. Osborne has used his to bring people together.

When I became Superintendent of Schools of Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland, Dr. Osborne was the first person I called to help me with my transition. I asked him to lead the analysis of the Curriculum and Instruction area, as I knew that it is a great strength of his and that it was the most sensitive aspect of the district with the most difficult personalities. Once again, Dr. Osborne proved himself extremely adept at identifying the most complex and difficult issues and recommending practical solutions, while balancing multiple perspectives and dysfunctional relationships. He was able to help me see things that I otherwise would have missed, and his incredible knowledge of complex systems and teaching and learning made a major contribution to a transition report that has formed the foundation for my leadership of Montgomery County.

There is no doubt in my mind that Dr. Osborne can serve any community that is seeking to improve its education system. His intelligence, analytic skills, and ability to bring people together around a vision of excellence and equity for all children are rare traits among superintendents. Dr. Osborne also has proven himself to be non-ideological; he has gleaned and culled from all perspectives of education reform and is not beholden to any one approach to reforming systems. Additionally, Dr. Osborne has shown a great ability to balance his family and work life, which is quite difficult for a Superintendent of Schools. I have every confidence that he will provide outstanding leadership for Ann Arbor Public Schools.

Sincerely,



Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

JPS:slh

BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor, City of Baltimore

Neil E. Duke, Esq.
Chair, Baltimore City Board of
School Commissioners

Andrés A. Alonso, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

June 13, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am recommending, without reservation, Brian Osborne as a superintendent.

I have known Dr. Osborne for twelve years, when he was a student at Harvard's Graduate School of Education Urban Superintendents Program. In 2003, when I became Chief of Staff in the Office of Teaching and Learning in New York City, I recruited him to join New York's Children First reform. When a year later I had to take a sabbatical, I recommended him to take my place. When I returned, we served as chiefs of staff together. When I became Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning in New York in 2006, he served as my chief of staff until he left to become a superintendent in New Jersey.

There are few people, if any, whom I trust as much in this work. Since 2007, I have been the Chief Executive Officer in Baltimore schools. When I first took the job, I was the seventh superintendent in ten years. I am now one of the longest tenured urban superintendents in the country. If I had the choice of anybody to work with me, I would choose Brian. If I had to work for someone else, I would work for him without hesitation.

Bottom line, I have worked very closely with Dr. Osborne, and I have enormous respect for him as a colleague and as a person. He has enormous intelligence and tact and common sense, and great resilience. I have seen him take challenges such as preparing New York for the end of social promotion by creating structures and processes to work with students at risk of failing, across a huge system, and watched him be able to manage the creative practical challenges of doing this on the run in a place of great scale and complexity. I have also seen him work with people and show humanity and toughness and understanding all at the same time. I believe he is uniquely principled in how he approaches his job. When I am in a moral or practical quandary, I call him.

I care deeply about improving our schools, and do not recommend people to do what I do liberally. A superintendent can change the lives of many daily. Brian will make a board, a district and its schools, and teachers better, so he will change the lives of kids for the better. I know him as a parent and as a family man, and know how much he views the problems of schools through the aspirations he has for his family. Our schools and cities need leaders who know the technical challenges of leadership like he does, who have the ability and toughness he has, and who understand and love schools like he does.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like me to expand on this recommendation.

Sincerely,



Andrés A. Alonso
CEO
Baltimore City Public Schools

GREAT KIDS
GREAT SCHOOLS



HARVARD
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

June 13, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I am pleased to write this letter of recommendation of Brian Osborne's candidacy for superintendent of the Ann Arbor Public Schools. I have known Brian for over twelve years.

Brian is a 2011 doctoral graduate of the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE), with a concentration in the Urban Superintendents Program (USP), of which I served as Director. I was also Brian's academic advisor. Brian came to HGSE after a successful career as a teacher and administrator in the New York City Public Schools.

USP has been rated as one of the premier leadership doctoral programs in the nation. The program requires candidates to complete two years of coursework in one calendar year, a six-month internship with a successful urban superintendent, and a dissertation on a problem of educational practice. I can safely say that Brian's preparation for the superintendency was as rigorous as that of any doctoral student here at HGSE. On the basis of my advice about the demands of the superintendency, Brian took a courseload that exceeded departmental requirements. He took courses in Microeconomics, Policy and Politics, Leadership: Policy and Practice, Adult Development, Negotiations, School Finance, the Professional Seminar (which I teach) and School Leadership. This coursework, combined with an internship that I will describe later, has prepared Brian for the superintendency.

Brian served his mandatory six-month, full-time internship with Dr. Larry Leverett, the then superintendent of Plainfield, New Jersey Public Schools, who later served as superintendent of the Greenwich, Connecticut Public Schools. As an intern, Brian shadowed the superintendent, accepted increasingly complicated leadership responsibilities, and ultimately stood in for the superintendent near the end of the internship. Her major project for Dr. Leverett was the implementation of the community planning process for the ambitious facilities plan of the district. In this effort, Brian worked directly with the School Board, Superintendent, senior leadership team and numerous school, community and business organizations to present this ambitious district-wide initiative of recommending innovative and equitable facilities for an often-divided community. Brian saw this work as an opportunity to support the instructional program so that every child would be prepared for college and the 21st century workforce. During my site visit to Plainfield, I could plainly see the respect that Dr. Leverett and his cabinet had for Brian's work. Dr. Leverett gave Brian his highest marks for leadership and professionalism. In fact, Dr. Leverett hired Brian as Supervisor of Evaluation, Assessment, and Research, leading the district's new accountability process for student

outcomes. Brian then went on to become the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Chancellor of the New York City Public Schools (Department of Education), where he worked with other members of the Deputy's office to work with chronically low performing schools.

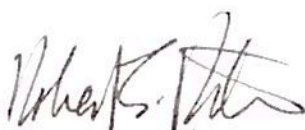
Yet it is as superintendent of the South Orange-Maplewood Public Schools where Brian has done his best work to create equity and excellence for his students. I have been witness to this work as a leader of the New Jersey Network of Superintendents, of which Brian is a charter member. For the past six years, Brian has led his community in an effort to eliminate the achievement gap and ensure that the community's rhetoric of "every child college ready" became a reality by eliminating tracking and opening advanced academic offerings to more students. In the Network, Brian has become expert in instructional rounds and has opened his district up to inspection and analysis by the other member superintendents.

As a former superintendent of schools in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Milwaukee, Wisconsin I can attest to Brian's readiness to serve as superintendent of a complex district such as the Ann Arbor Public Schools. He has already demonstrated his leadership in the senior leader role. He is a bright, committed, and accomplished educational leader who will exert all his energies to insure that all students, regardless of background, will succeed at high academic levels.

Based on the above, I recommend Brian Osborne for superintendent of the Ann Arbor Public Schools.

If you need further information, please call me at (617) 496-4827.

Sincerely,



Robert S. Peterkin
Professor of Practice Emeritus,
Former Director, Urban Superintendents Program
Harvard Graduate School of Education