



## **Coordination of Special Education Services in Easton, Redding and Region 9 School Districts: Benefits and Challenges**

### **INTRODUCTION**

At the suggestion of Gary Richards, Superintendent of the Wilton School District, an initial introductory meeting was held between Bernard Josefsberg, Superintendent of Easton, Redding and Region 9 School Districts (ER9), and Michael Karp and Deborah Brennan, Regional Director, of the National Executive Service Corps (NESC). Discussion about the potential opportunity of coordinating Special Education Resources ensued and evolved as the NESC consultants met with the three Special Education Directors and the Easton and Redding Board Chairs. As a result, NESC is pleased to submit this proposal.

### **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Last year, Dr. Josefsberg proposed an initiative to integrate the Special Education leadership – a proposal that was not accepted.

However, there remains a belief that there are opportunities to improve services and/or save money by coordinating the management of Special Education Resources across the districts. To identify these opportunities and challenges, as well as begin the process of building support for any change that might occur, input from all the stakeholders should be sought.

The objectives of this project, therefore, are to identify the potential opportunities for coordinating Special Education Resources in ER9; to objectively evaluate the attendant benefits and challenges -- for the students, staff and respective communities; and to make recommendations that will improve services or decrease expenses.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The scope of this project would be limited to the following:

1. Review the Special Education goals, results and challenges as seen by the Board members of each region, including contextual issues like declining enrollment. How might coordination address these challenges?
2. Understand what the parents of Special Education students in each region expect from the

- program and how well these expectations have been met from their point of view. How might coordination correct the major deficiencies or enhance the services?
3. What challenges do the Special Education staff members in each region have now? How might coordination respond to the major challenges?
  4. Comparison of established key metrics among the three regions. Understand the significance of the differences and what effect coordination might have on key metrics.

## **PROPOSED WORK PLAN**

To accomplish the objective of the project NESC will do the following, with the cooperation and support of E/R/9:

1. Interview Superintendent in-depth.
2. Identify and review relevant background documents and information sources.
3. Identify and interview industry experts, e.g., CES.
4. Interview interested Board of Education members in each region.
5. Interview the Principals, Special Education Program Directors and key staff in each region.
6. Interview a sample of parents in each region and expand the input of parents by using a confidential on-line survey to get the input of other parents. Analyze the survey results.
7. Analyze all pertinent data, including financial data, related to Special Education in each region.
8. Prepare a financial impact analysis, including associated costs and other benefits related to the potential coordination. Compare that to the current financial situation.

## **PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

The major project deliverable is a report of findings and recommendations. The NESC consultants will be in ongoing contact throughout the project to brief ER9 leadership on progress.

## **Who We Are**

Founded in 1977, the National Executive Service Corps is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that provides management consulting and business advisory services to the nonprofit and public sectors. Our mission is to make a meaningful contribution to our communities by strengthening the management of America's nonprofit organizations, schools and government agencies through quality, affordable consulting services that are donated by senior-level business people and professionals. Serving the five boroughs of New York City; Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Westchester Counties; Central and Southwestern Connecticut; and Central and Northern New Jersey, NESC belongs to a national network of more than 30 independent Executive Service Corps affiliates across the country. Since its inception, more than 2,000 nonprofit clients have benefited from the services of NESC through the delivery of thousands of technical and management consulting projects.

## **What We Do**

NESC performs consulting and technical services in assisting organizations in the fields of arts and culture, health and human services, public and private education, religion and government. The objective of each engagement is sharply defined and tailored to the specific needs of the client. NESC provides a wide range of management consulting and assistance including:

- Strategic and Business Planning
- Organizational Analysis
- Human Resources
- Board Development
- Budgeting, Financial Systems and Controls
- Marketing, Communications and Public Relations
- Social Enterprise/Earned Income
- Facilities Planning and Management
- Executive Coaching and Mentoring
- Meeting Facilitation
- Executive Search
- Leadership Training/Mentoring

NESC is supported by modest fees for services and philanthropic contributions, which are usually restricted. All clients are asked to have a shared stake in the consulting process to assure their commitment to results.