

Superintendent Announcement

Dr. Deborah O'Connell Named Croton-Harmon Superintendent of Schools

The Croton-Harmon Board of Education announced today that it is pleased to welcome Dr. Deborah O'Connell, as the new Superintendent of Schools in Croton-Harmon, effective July 1.

Dr. O'Connell has served as the District's Assistant Superintendent since 2011, responsible for K-12 curriculum, instruction, assessment and data initiatives, professional development, teacher observations, and contract negotiations. She has also worked on the District's Strategic Coherence Plan, and serves as chair of the Culture of Respect Task Force.

She will replace Dr. Edward R. Fuhrman, Jr., who announced his retirement at the end of this school year.

"After a comprehensive and intensive search, Dr. O'Connell emerged as a student-centered, inclusive leader who embraces a supportive community that is committed to educating the whole child in ways that empower and challenge our students rigorously and personally," said Board of Education President Iris Bugliosi. Three finalists met with an extensive community stakeholder committee, whose members identified the strengths of the candidates and developed follow-up questions for the Board to ask during a second and final round of interviews.

"In Croton, community members are essential partners in educating our students, and Dr. O'Connell understands that partnership," said Mrs. Bugliosi. "Her emphasis on the importance of strong relationship building with staff, students, parents and residents and her appreciation for open and transparent communication, set Dr. O'Connell apart."

Before joining Croton-Harmon, Dr. O'Connell worked in the Clarkstown Central School District for 16 years, serving as Deputy Superintendent of Schools for two years, from 2009 to 2011. She also served Clarkstown as Associate Superintendent for Personnel, K-12 Curriculum and Instruction, and as Associate Superintendent for Personnel.

Also at Clarkstown, Dr. O'Connell served as assistant principal at Clarkstown Senior High School South, Advanced Placement and Regents biology teacher at Clarkstown Senior High School South, teacher and District Science Coordinator at Felix V. Festa Middle School and teacher of biology at Albertus Magnus High School.

She earned a bachelor's degree in natural sciences from Saint Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, a master's degree in secondary science education from Long Island University, and a doctorate in Instructional Leadership from St. John's University in Queens. Her work has been published in *The American Biology Teacher*, the *New York ASCD Journal*, and other publications.

"It is an honor and privilege to be chosen as the next superintendent for the Croton-Harmon School District. For the last six years I have worked closely with a creative and dedicated staff who enrich the lives of students daily and a board of education and community that never hesitates to form partnerships to help us move closer to achieving our mission and vision," said Dr. O'Connell. "I am looking forward to continuing our legacy of excellence in education as your superintendent."

Assisted by the Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES search team which sought out community feedback and direction last fall through survey and focus groups, the Board of Education announced in January that a strong slate of finalists had been identified after a five-month nationwide search to replace Dr. Fuhrman.