



2006 FINALIST SUPERINTENDENTS

Thomas W. Payzant, Boston Public Schools, Superintendent, 1995-2006

Dr. Thomas W. Payzant, former 11-year superintendent of Boston Public Schools, retired in June 2006 with 30 years of experience as superintendent of large urban school districts. Before Boston, he served as superintendent of San Diego Unified School District for 11 years, as superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools for three years, and as superintendent of the Eugene Public Schools in Oregon for five years. In addition, between Boston and San Diego, Payzant served as President William J. Clinton's assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education from 1993 to 1995, where he worked closely with the administration to enact passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the Safe Schools Act and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act. Payzant has received numerous awards, including the "Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education" in 1992, "Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year" by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents in 1999, and "Public Official of the Year" by *Governing Magazine* in 2005. Payzant received a bachelor's degree in American history and literature from Williams College and a master's degree in teaching and a doctorate in education from Harvard University. *For more information, please contact Jonathan Palumbo at (617) 635-9494, jpalumbo@boston.k12.ma.us.*

Michael G. Contompasis, Boston Public Schools, Interim Superintendent, Present

Michael G. Contompasis was appointed by the Boston School Committee in June as interim superintendent of Boston Public Schools. Before taking on the role of interim superintendent, Contompasis served for eight years as chief operating officer of Boston Public Schools. From 1977 to 1998, he served as headmaster of Boston Latin High School, the nation's first public school, which he also attended as a student. From 1996 to 1998, Contompasis also oversaw and mentored the principals and headmasters of ten K-12 schools. Contompasis began his career in education in 1966 as a biology teacher at East Boston High School and later taught at Hyde Park High School and Boston Latin School. He earned a bachelor's degree from Boston University and a master's degree in administration, planning and social policy from Harvard University. *For more information, please contact Jonathan Palumbo at (617) 635-9494, jpalumbo@boston.k12.ma.us.*

John J. Ramos, Sr., Bridgeport Public Schools, Conn.

Bridgeport native Dr. John J. Ramos, Sr. has been superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools since 2005. Previously, Ramos was deputy commissioner for educational programs and services for the Connecticut State Department of Education, where he was responsible for working with urban superintendents to improve the eight Connecticut schools that were in their fourth year of “in need of improvement” under the No Child Left Behind law. Prior to that, Ramos held positions in Connecticut districts including superintendent of Watertown Public Schools, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction for Norwalk Public Schools, and principal of Norwalk High School. Ramos also served in Providence, R.I. as the principal/director for the Alternative Learning Project High School, as director of minority student affairs for the University of Rhode Island, and as program director for the Rhode Island Department of Education. Ramos has received numerous awards, including the “Outstanding School District Leadership” award from the Congressional Black Caucus Education Braintrust. Ramos has a bachelor’s degree in English and American literature from Brown University, a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Rhode Island and a doctorate in educational administration from Columbia University. *For more information, please contact Cynthia Fernandes at (203) 332-2832, cfernandes@bridgeportedu.net.*

Charles T. Epps, Jr., Jersey City Public Schools, N.J.

Dr. Charles T. Epps Jr. was appointed state district superintendent of Jersey City Public Schools by the New Jersey State Board of Education in 2000. Also a New Jersey State Assemblyman since Jan. 2006, Epps has had a long career working to improving the Jersey City School District. He first joined the district in 1967 as a sixth and seventh grade teacher at the Whitney M. Young School and then worked his way up through the ranks as a supervisor, principal of adult evening programs and director of funded programs. Before he was named state district superintendent, Epps served as associate superintendent of the Jersey City Public Schools’ community and support services. In addition, Epps served as chairman of the Hudson County Community College Board of Trustees, where he helped establish the Opportunity Knocks scholarship program, allowing graduating Jersey City seniors to attend the community college tuition-free. In 1999, he was recognized with the “Outstanding Educator” award by the NAACP and “A Man for All Men” award from the National Urban League, both for his contributions to Jersey City and its public school system. Epps received a bachelor’s degree in education at Bishop College in Dallas, a master’s degree in education from Seton Hall University and a doctorate in education from Rutgers University. *For more information, please contact Sharon Bartley at (201)915-6227, sbartley@jcboe.org.*

Rudolph F. “Rudy” Crew, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Dr. Rudy Crew, a lifelong educator, became superintendent of Miami-Dade County Public Schools in July 2004. Crew began his career as a teacher and then served as principal of several public schools in California. Crew moved into numerous district executive positions, including assistant superintendent for instruction and personnel for the Duarte Unified School District in California, deputy superintendent for curriculum and instruction for the Boston Public Schools and deputy superintendent and chief operational officer for the Sacramento City Unified School District. In 1989, Crew became superintendent of Sacramento City Unified School District, and then in 1993, he was named superintendent of the Tacoma Public Schools District in Washington. From 1995 to 1999, he served as chancellor of the nation’s largest school district, then called the New York City Board of Education. Before being tapped to lead Miami-Dade, Crew served as executive director of the Institute for K-12 Leadership at the University of Washington and as director of school district reform initiatives at the Stupski Foundation, a private philanthropy. Crew has received many awards, including The Executive Educator’s “Top 100 Educators in North America” in 1993, the NAACP’s “Educational Leadership Award,” the Association of California School Administrators “Administrator of the Year Award” in 1990, and the California State University’s “Teacher of the Year Award” in 1982. Crew earned his bachelor’s degree in management from Babson College in Wellesley, Mass., and his master’s degree in urban education and doctorate in educational administration from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. *For more information, please contact John Schuster at (305) 995-1103, jschuster@dadeschools.net.*

Joel I. Klein, New York City Department of Education

Joel I. Klein has served as chancellor of the newly reorganized New York City Department of Education since his appointment by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2002. Previously, Klein served as chairman and chief executive officer of Bertelsmann, Inc., one of the world’s largest media companies. Klein also served as U.S. assistant attorney general for four years, in charge of the U.S. Department of Justice’s antitrust division where he oversaw some 700 lawyers and landmark cases like Microsoft, WorldCom/Sprint, Visa/Mastercard, and General Electric, prevailing in a large majority of cases. In addition, he served as deputy counsel to President William J. Clinton for two years. Klein entered the Clinton administration after 20 years of public and private legal work in Washington, D.C., including a clerkship at the U.S. Supreme Court, a partnership at the law firm of Rogovin, Stern & Huge, and a partnership at his own firm, Onek, Klein & Farr, where he won 9 out of 11 cases he argued before the U.S. Supreme Court. A native New Yorker, Klein is a product of the New York City public school system. He earned a bachelor’s degree at Columbia University and a juris doctorate from Harvard Law School. During a brief leave of absence from law school, Klein also studied at New York University’s School of Education and taught math to sixth grade students in Queens. Klein has served as a visiting and adjunct professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. *For more information, please contact David Cantor at (212) 374-4341, dcantor@schools.nyc.gov.*