

PAUL PERI



@PaulPeri9, @WestonHS1

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Dr. Jim Marini, Mentor/Teachers21, Former Superintendent of Winchester, Newton, North Andover, Former Principal of Newton North HS, and Concord MS—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Nathaniel Icke, Student Leader, WHS Alumni—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Darrell Johnson, Student, Class of 2024—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Elisha Davidoff, Student, Class of 2023—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Dr. Richard Warby, Teacher/Administrative Intern, Franklin and Weston High School—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Mr. James McLaughlin, Teacher/Math Department Head, Weston High School—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Ms. Susan Bairstow, Teacher/History Department Head, Weston High School—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Ms. Marla Schay, Guidance Department Head, Weston High School—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Stephanie Goldstein, Parent—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Keitrice Johnson, Parent—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Gail Palmer, Parent—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

Tricia Liu, Parent—submitted via SchoolSpring, included below

V. James Marini, Ph.D.



February 28, 2023

RECOMMENDATION FOR PAUL PERI

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Paul Peri who is applying for the position of Interim Superintendent of the Weston Public Schools. I first met Paul when he was a middle school principal in Franklin, Massachusetts. As a retired superintendent with experience coaching superintendents and principals, I was asked to serve as Paul's coach and have continued working with him periodically ever since. In the role of coach, I had the opportunity to work closely with him and to see first-hand his strong work ethic and values driven leadership. Paul is a gifted educator with the skills and ability needed to work closely with students and families providing support, guidance, and direction. While clear and secure in his beliefs, he is a naturally collaborative leader who genuinely values the perspective of others and actively seeks feedback and input on important issues. His open and honest communications have earned him the respect and trust of his staff. He is very bright and combines an unassuming personality with a can-do attitude.

Paul is an excellent administrator who has demonstrated considerable skills at both the middle school and high school levels. He is currently completing his third year as principal of Weston High School. In that time, he has established himself as a thoughtful, caring, knowledgeable, and committed leader. Teachers appreciate his ability to listen, reflect, and communicate his thinking and decisions. Similarly, he successfully worked with central office administrators to understand district initiatives, provide feedback on the impact of district decisions, and serve as a productive member of the administrative team. Paul has a deep understanding of how good schools work and has a natural ability to bring people together to address issues in a constructive and purposeful way. When I first met Paul, he was a successful middle school principal fully engaged both in working with students who were dealing with all the issues of early adolescence and in supporting teachers to provide strong academic programs and appropriate emotional supports. Paul's success at the middle school led to his being asked to assume the leadership of Franklin High School, when the sitting principal moved to central office as assistance superintendent. Paul successfully transitioned to high school principal position providing the guidance and direction necessary to help his administrative team carry out their responsibilities in a way that reinforced a culture of support, respect, and accountability. His leadership effectively balances high expectations with empathetic support.

Paul's influence in education goes beyond his school. In recognition of Paul's effectiveness as a practitioner and his engagement in the broader educational community, Paul was asked by the

well-known educational consulting company, Teachers21, to teach their signature course, "The DNA of Leadership." This course takes participants through the major principles of effective leadership and leads to principal licensure. Being asked to teach this high-quality course is testament to the esteem in which Paul is held. Moreover, this year, Paul was asked to facilitate an Assistant Principals Institute designed to support assistant principals in their practice and effectiveness as leaders.

Paul Peri is an outstanding educator dedicated to his profession and is a person of integrity who operates from a clear sense of his own values. He has an upbeat personality, a positive outlook on life and a wonderful sense of humor. Paul is a leader of distinction who has the skills, vision, and personality to inspire others.

Sincerely,

V. James Marini
Education Consultant and Leadership Coach, AthenaK12

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to recommend Mr. Paul Peri for the position of superintendent of Weston Public Schools. Mr. Peri possesses outstanding leadership skills, compassion for others, resilience, professionalism, and problem solving skills. And importantly, Mr. Peri cares deeply about the students of Weston.

Mr. Peri's passion for his work was clear from the first time I met him, when he reached out to me personally during the summer of 2020 to discuss how he could best assist me, as the President of the Class of 2021, and the rest of the student leadership team in our upcoming school year. From that moment on, Mr. Peri's commitment to our class was unwavering, as he took time out of his busy schedule almost daily in order to meet with me and make sure things were running smoothly. During a senior year in which COVID-19 made school unpredictable, hard to navigate, and extremely complicated, Mr. Peri worked tirelessly to make sure that the students of Weston High School had the best, most normal year possible. In his first year in a new school system, Mr. Peri was able to jump in, without skipping a beat, and catalyze large amounts of positive change throughout the school, from greeting every student with a smile every morning to continuously advocating for the students to the board of health and superintendent.

Mr. Peri is an approachable, understanding leader who makes the effort to personally get to know every student he meets. Just a few weeks into my senior year, I personally felt that Mr. Peri had my back in difficult class leadership situations, and I quickly grew to trust him as I would a close friend. Mr. Peri is a role model for me in so many ways, and every student who has passed through the halls of Weston High during the last 3 years has been lucky to have him as principal. In the position of superintendent, Mr. Peri could have an even greater impact by sharing his passion for student learning and well-being with every student in the district. I fully believe that Weston would be lucky to have Mr. Peri in the position of superintendent, and I recommend him without hesitation.

Sincerely,
Nathaniel Icke
President, WHS Class of 2021

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To Whom It May Concern:

I believe that Principal Peri will make a fantastic interim superintendent due to his dedication to his job and the care that he has for the people around him. For the time that I have known Principal Peri he has always been a person that would reach out first and check up on people if he noticed anything wrong. In the interactions I have had with him I observe that he is always putting other people's feelings above his own.

Some time in December, I had a conversation with Principal Peri and he wanted to check up on me; this in itself would have been more than most faculty would do but as we continued the conversation I asked how he was and he had been under lots of stress and had lots to do. The courteous act of reaching out on top of having a lot on your plate is something most people wouldn't consider, but Principal Peri did. The dedication he has to each individual student shows me that not only does he excel in any position that he is in but also takes the time to understand that we aren't just Weston high school students but individuals as well. Principal Peri does small things every day; for example he stands by the front door at the end of the day and this seemingly small act has a big effect on the students. Principal Peri has only been in this position for three years, but he has already had a significant impact on the students and faculty in Weston. Principal Peri has altered how my fellow students and I view and interact with principals by showing up to all the meetings and making himself available if ever needed.

I have enjoyed having Principal Peri as my principal for the past three years and selfishly would love to have him as my principal for my final year of high school. However, I believe that the district will benefit more if Principal Peri becomes the superintendent rather than remain the high school principal. Choosing Principal Peri for the position of superintendent will have the greatest impact for the Weston community.

Darrell Johnson, Class of 2024

To Whom It May Concern;

I have known Mr. Paul Peri for three years. During that time, he has been a fantastic principal. When he first joined Weston in my sophomore year, he allowed the GSA to paint a vast mural throughout one of the staircases - something the previous principal didn't allow. Throughout my high school years, I have been able to get to know him more than just a principal but a friend. We would talk about how our days are going, the tv shows and movies we want to or have watched, as well as college.

Mr. Peri brings a lot to the table. He is very communicative, whenever he needs to let the students know some new information, he will either send an email or schedule class meetings in order for us to have all the information we need. He also really cares about students' opinions, he always says that if someone wants to see something change or needs to tell someone something they can go to him. He is a very approachable person so I have seen many students go up to him. He always has the community's best interest when making decisions and cares deeply about everyone.

I think he will bring many opportunities and new ideas wherever he ends up and I wish him the best of luck.

Elisha Davidoff, Class of 2023

To the Weston School Committee:

I, without hesitation, wholeheartedly recommend Paul Peri for the Interim Superintendent Position for Weston Public Schools. Mr. Peri has over 20 years of experience in education spanning the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Additionally, he has considerable experience consulting and teaching education across the State. This deep understanding of education, his inspired career as an instructional leader, and his unmatched skills with people and relationship building are but a few reasons that make him the perfect candidate for this position. Paul always does what is best for students and his care for people and love for his work are undeniable. As such, I cannot more strongly recommend Paul for this position.

I have known Paul as my principal for 8 years and I cannot have asked for a better mentor. Paul has also been my instructor for The Skillful Teacher and in the Leadership Licensure Program through MSAA teaching me DNA of Leadership, and I can honestly say that both experiences have been the among the most valuable learning experiences of my life (this is not hyperbole). Paul has a knack for weaving the art and science of teaching and leadership in such a way that you understand the theory but also have a practical plan to implement. I have no doubt that Paul will bring these leadership skills to bear as Weston's next Superintendent.

From a more practical perspective, Paul's leadership style and his experience in Weston are really the things that set him apart from other candidates. The Weston community can be a challenge to navigate, with myriad opinions and many different strong points of view. Paul ALWAYS comes from a place of curiosity and understanding when facing challenging situations. You always feel heard, and I know Paul believes in gathering all information before making a decision. Paul is also a known and well-respected leader in the Weston Community. Typically, a new superintendent can take a few years to get the "lay of the land". Paul can come in and hit the ground running, so to speak. There is a great deal to be said for institutional knowledge. As such, Paul's leadership style, knowledge of the Weston system, exceptional communication skills, and stellar standing in the Weston community make him a great fit for this specific position.

When all is said and done, I cannot think of someone for whom I would rather work than Paul Peri. Simply stated, he inspires people to do their best and this is certainly true for me. I know Paul's deep care for ALL children, unmatched work ethic (you won't find someone that will work harder for you than Paul), and deft relationship building skills will be on full display as Weston Public School's next leader. Moving forward we need our next leader to be a great communicator and builder of morale across the district, and I do believe not hiring Paul would be a mistake. Should you have any questions or thoughts about my recommendation, please contact me at your convenience.

Very truly yours, Richard Warby



WESTON
HIGH SCHOOL

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JAMES R. McLAUGHLIN
MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT HEAD
mclaughlinj@weston.org

3/10/2023

To Whom It May Concern,

Paul Peri is exactly what the Weston Public Schools need in a superintendent right now. He is a leader with an interpersonal intelligence that is unmatched by anyone that I have worked with. He is smart, has vision, and is a natural builder of consensus. Most importantly, he is someone that has high profile leadership experience in Weston, which will allow him to provide consistency while also moving the district forward in areas that it needs to improve upon.

It is no secret that Weston is having a moment of significant turnover in leadership, and as a result, is losing an incredible amount of institutional knowledge. In addition, Weston is a town that takes several years to understand and adapt to the culture. For these reasons, it is critically important that our new interim superintendent is familiar with the district so that he or she can jump right in and get to work. Paul's experience at Weston High School makes him uniquely qualified to seamlessly step into the superintendent role since he has built relationships with many of the key stakeholders. He has already experienced the amazing resources and support that is available in Weston as well as some of the challenges of being a leader in a community that is so highly invested in its schools. The lessons he has learned will allow him to have a positive impact on the schools from day one.

Another major challenge in Weston right now is the potential lasting impact of a difficult contract negotiation. Our next leader will have to facilitate a good bit of healing while also improving the morale amongst our faculty and staff. Paul has demonstrated strong leadership for Weston High School through the toughest times. He ensured Weston High School remained a sense of community and connection through the pandemic. He has a knack for bringing people together and making them feel listened to, connected to one another, and feel appreciated for what they have done. Despite having had some difficult conversations, I cannot remember a meeting with Paul that I have not left feeling better than when I entered it. Paul will be able to promote healing in our community and restore morale among our faculty.

Finally, our district deserves a leader that has vision for where we need to go, and the communication skills and strategic acumen needed to get us there. Paul has clear vision for the Weston Schools- he wants to see engaged students working with caring teachers in modern facilities. Weston is about to enter a decade when there will be a significant number of retirements while there is a looming national teacher shortage. Paul will be able to build consensus in the community to support our schools, attract and recruit the best teachers from across the region, and provide an educational experience for our students that rivals the best private schools.

Paul Peri is the right Superintendent for the Weston Public Schools in this moment.

Sincerely,

Jim McLaughlin
Math Department Head
Weston Public Schools

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March 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I offer this letter of recommendation for Paul Peri in this interest to serve as Weston Public Schools interim superintendent. As a second year department head for the Social Studies/History department in the district, I have found his support to be consistently helpful and thoughtful. Whether I am seeking assistance with a struggling teacher, looking for creative ways to address professional development, or in search of perspective for new programming ideas, Paul has been both generous and responsive. He has consistently offered good advice and - when needed - proactively jumped in to help me solve problems and improve my programs.

Paul brought the high expectations he had established in Franklin to Weston and hit the ground running. He demanded much from his leadership team while also listening to what leaders at the building-level needed. He trusted his faculty and staff and consistently moved the building forward. With intelligence and charisma, Paul set a course for the high school and continues to see his mission of establishing community, joy in teaching and learning and a positive school culture at Weston High School through.

Paul is an instructional leader. He was a teacher before his decision to turn to administration, and this is evident by the way he leads. He is often found in classrooms, interacting with students and teachers about what and how they are learning. Paul is an evaluator who notices excellent teaching practices and also where teachers can improve. He uses the most current research on what best teaching practices and consistently shares that with the faculty. On a number of occasions he has reached into his bookshelf to encourage me to read new material that will enhance my leadership skills or teaching style. Post observation discussions always leave me with a new perspective.

Paul has built a positive relationship with the faculty and staff over the past two years. Teachers feel seen as professionals by Paul, who welcomes feedback with office hours and his weekly newsletter to the parents, students and faculty. He has also taken time to get to know the community. Students feel they can make an appointment to meet with Mr. Peri to express ideas or concerns. He knows most of the students in the building by name, showing his commitment to the high school.

Paul has my full support as an administrator and an academic professional. He has been a credit to Weston High School and is a strong and passionate leader..

Sincerely,



Susan Bairstow
Weston Public Schools
6-12 Social Studies/History Department Head



MARLA SCHAY, HEAD OF GUIDANCE
schaym@weston.org

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To Whom It May Concern,

RE: Recommendation for Paul Peri

I am writing in support of Paul Peri's candidacy as an administrator in your district, having had the pleasure of working with him since the fall of 2020 in his role of Principal of Weston High School and mine as Head of Guidance. In fact, I first met Paul during our Principal search the prior year and was immediately taken by his ability to make connections with people. Whether with students, parents, faculty, or the leadership team, Paul approaches issues with curiosity rather than judgement which, in turn, yields productive conversation and collaboration. Above all else, he is a seasoned and well-versed educational leader who draws upon his knowledge and experience to help others grow.

With an almost marketing-like sensibility, Paul knows how to build community. Sometimes it's little things like introducing himself as "the *proud* Principal of Weston High School" at a public event, improving the image of the school with wildcats and an updated look, or promoting "Weston Pride" with apparel and swag. But it goes much deeper. As a new Principal, some students and faculty were working remotely while others were in the building on ever-changing schedules. Paul sought to bring people together. He introduced regular communications with both families and faculty at a time of fracture and managed widely divergent opinions about education during a pandemic. Open to hearing ideas, he sought out the opinions of district administrators, building leadership, teachers, staff, students, and parents to make reasoned decisions. While not everyone agreed with the outcomes, they knew that they were heard during sometimes difficult conversations. His productive and trusting relationships with student leaders is especially impressive.

By the nature of my role, we have worked closely over the years on issues including school policy and protocols, communications, personnel, programs, student issues, and more. No school is without problems, and it's a testament to Paul that he remains true to his character pressure. I have valued his openness, candor, and trust through many a difficult situation. While I cannot speak directly to Paul's supervision of classroom teaching or his work outside of Weston to train educational leaders, I can say is that he is the quintessential teacher. Whether in a formal professional development setting, a meeting, or simply a conversation one-on-one, Paul will draw upon experts' writings and ideas to broaden your thinking. He's a lifelong learner himself and people learn from working with him.

Positive, articulate, and thoughtful, Paul's background in classroom teaching, years of building administration in multiple settings, and a strong foundation in educational leadership positions him well to be a district-level leader. I recommend him to you enthusiastically, even though on a personal level, I will lose a friend, colleague, and mentor. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Marla Schay
Head of Guidance, Weston Middle and High Schools

Dear Weston School Committee,

I am delighted to support Paul Peri's application for Interim Superintendent. Paul recently learned that he was nominated for the MSAA/NASSP 2023/24 Principal of the Year award. I have attached a letter I wrote in support of his nomination, which details why I believe Paul is so deserving of this award. As it turns out, it also speaks to the reasons why I believe Paul would be an outstanding and appropriate choice for the Interim Superintendent role.

As it relates to the Interim Superintendent role, Paul brings a wonderful combination of continuity and a still-fresh perspective to the Weston School District, which I believe is critical to our school community. Paul will be able to jump right into the role. At the same time, I am certain he would play a pivotal role in mentoring and coaching a new Weston High School Principal, so that individual can build off of the new foundation Paul has poured for our children in grades 9-12.

Paul has earned the respect and trust of colleagues, parents, and students at Weston High School, and I would expect the same to be true in the Interim Superintendent and/or Superintendent roles. I share this recommendation with great enthusiasm and without hesitation.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Goldstein

Weston Parent (WHS Classes of 2024 and 2026), [REDACTED], Member,
Bullying Prevention Committee, Member, Communications Committee

PS: I have also pasted below the above-referenced letter

February 27, 2023

To: Massachusetts School Administrators' Association

Re: Nomination of Weston High School Principal Paul Peri for the MSAA/NASSP 2023/24

Principal of the Year Award

Dear MSAA/NASSP 2023/24 Principal of the Year Award Selection Committee Members:

There is no principal more deserving of the MSAA/NASSP 2023/24 Principal of the Year Award, and it is my great honor to write this letter in support of Weston High School Principal Paul Peri as he exemplifies and goes beyond the criteria upon which this recognition is based. I first met Paul when he joined Weston High School as Principal during the 2020-21 academic year. I have worked with him closely since the beginning of his time in Weston through the Weston PTO and as a parent of two Weston High School students.

Paul demonstrates exemplary skills in instructional leadership. Paul prioritized getting to know his faculty and staff from day one. Because of that, through his collaborative leadership style, he has created an environment for teachers where they can excel and lean in to their strengths. As a result, our students experience the benefit of classroom environments rich with a healthy balance of joy and academic excellence and rigor. Paul also provides timely and constructive feedback to his faculty to help bring out the best in them, so that the teachers can ultimately bring out the best in their students.

Since Paul assumed the role of principal at Weston High School, enrollment numbers continue to increase, which is a testament to Paul's leadership and his laser focus on creating an innovative, safe, creative, equitable, and inclusive learning environment that celebrates the diversity of all students, faculty, and staff. Additionally, Paul is viewed as a leader in the academic community as he has taught "The DNA of Leadership" and "Family and Community Engagement" to aspiring administrators. Additionally, he has taught graduate courses in Teaching and Learning and Emotional Intelligence.

Paul supports and promotes a safe learning environment. From the moment a new freshman class enters the high school building on orientation day, Paul encourages students to use their time in high school to try new things and take risks by stretching academically, trying a new sport, or exploring some of the clubs and activities available to high school students. He reminds students of the importance of an “I get to do this” mindset, rather than approaching school with an “I have to do this” mindset. He works closely with students and faculty to create a close-knit and inclusive culture, where the words, “Go Wildcats!” transcends sports teams, and applies to all facets of student life at Weston High School.

Paul sets the tone for all students each day by greeting each student as they walk into the building. As a parent, that transfer of guardianship is an important one, particularly within the world we are living. Paul puts all of our kids (and parents) at ease every day, as we know they are well cared for. He is always visible and accessible to students and faculty, and dialed-in to what is happening at the high school at all times. I remember walking into the building one day, and seeing Paul working from a standing desk in the main corridor. It was between blocks, when there was a flurry of students traveling between classrooms. Paul has worked hard to build an inclusive and student-centered community. There is zero doubt in my mind that Paul cares deeply about the wellness of our students. He truly has adopted the Weston High School family as his own.

On a personal note, last year, my son needed guidance from Paul when he was dealing with an unfortunate situation with another student. Paul invited my son into his office and immediately put my son at ease and made him feel safe. He told my son to sit in his chair, because, as Paul said, “You do the talking, and I’ll do the listening.” My son came home that day. He was incredulous that a high school principal could and would talk to him like a human being. Paul made an indelible impact on my son by listening, treating him with respect, kindness, and compassion.

Paul fosters a collaborative culture of shared decision-making among all members of the school community. In an August 22, 2022 interview with Paul in the Weston Owl, Paul says, “I am all about increasing school spirit and listening to the students on how to do that. Not only do we get great input through School Council, the Principal Advisory Group and the Advisory program that meets bi-weekly, but I am always hoping students, staff and faculty will stop me in a hallway and tell me what’s on their minds.” He adds, “Teacher care is really high on my priority list. I want teachers, all of us really, to remember that our jobs and roles are also in the pursuit of happiness. I want teachers to find their joy, or win it back. Part of that is what I call the ‘whys’—‘why am I here? or why is this important to me?’

As one student shared with me, “Mr. Peri understands students and their backgrounds. He has a unique ability to listen and hear what students have to say and honor their wishes, but he also keeps a firm grip on things. He goes the extra mile in making sure the needs and wants of students are met.”

As parents, we appreciate Paul’s regular communication through his weekly memos to parents and guardians, and monthly principal coffees. During that time, he updates parents and guardians about timely happenings. He also shares the spotlight with talented faculty and staff who share information about curriculum, mental health, and other important topics impacting our students. He is a leader who understands the importance of accountability and is well respected among faculty, staff, and students, for always has everyone’s best interest in mind, and to understanding and navigating multiple perspectives.

Paul has accomplished all of the above during arguably one of the most complex times of all our lives. In fact, Paul could teach a master class (one which I hope no one will ever have to teach) on how to jump into a new school district as the high school principal in the middle of a pandemic. In a short and tumultuous time, Paul has established himself as a leader and part of the fabric of the Weston High School community. He is always there for our children – in the hallways, in the auditoriums, on the sidelines, or riding the fan bus to an important playoff game – Paul knows how important these moments are as he immerses himself into our children’s lives in impactful and memorable ways every single day.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Solakian Goldstein

Weston High School Parent (2024, 2026), [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Weston High School PTO Chair/Co-Chair, 2020-2022

Dear WPS School Committee:

It is my honor and privilege to recommend Paul Peri for the position of interim superintendent for Weston Public Schools. I've known Paul since his parent forum introduction during his interview process for the position of WHS principal. For context, I attended the parent forums for each of the three finalists for this position, and immediately knew that he'd be offered the position of WHS principal primarily because he is highly qualified but equally because he is both relatable and approachable.

Although he entered WPS during the most trying time of the pandemic, Mr. Peri rolled up his sleeves and embraced the challenges of getting to know the high school community and larger Weston community despite the mask and hybrid school week protocols. His leadership, collaboration, teachability and innovation resonated from the very beginning of his tenure. As the parent of two high schoolers in 2020, I was most impressed and appreciative of the manner he engaged not just my students but all the high school students. This was not an easy feat when about half of the students were completely remote and the other half were attending hybrid classes two and half days a week for half days. Paul's ability to be flexible and pivot based on the ever-changing protocols solidified that he is indeed a rock star! His attention to the details and ability to come up with ways to increase the morale and school spirit of our students is a gift that I will not soon forget.

As an administrator, he is the consummate professional and is always sharing the latest findings and best practices in education. He is passionate about education, and this shines through in all that he does. Whenever I've had an issue or challenge that required Mr. Peri's engagement, he has been responsive, fair, and respectful. I honestly was concerned that it would take time to build a similar rapport with him as we'd built with the former principal, but Mr. Peri quickly put those concerns to rest. I've worked with Mr. Peri as a parent, the chair and vice-chair of BWMPO (Boston Weston METCO Parent Organization), School Committee, SAC, PTO/Principal Coffees, and Friends of Weston METCO. In every circumstance, his energy is contagious and commitment unparalleled. He is the personification of "Everything, Everywhere, All At Once." I know that Paul is an excellent candidate for this position who will hit the ground running day one as he is well versed in the Weston culture and community. Based on his work in the district these past three years, his character, integrity, and dedication, I regard Mr. Peri most highly and recommend him for the position of interim superintendent of WPS without reservation.

I can be reached at either of the contact options below if you require any additional details.

Regards, Keitrice Johnson Mom of graduate, Class of 2022, Mom of junior, Class of 2024,

[REDACTED]

March 3, 2023

To: Weston School Committee

Re: Interim Superintendent Opening

Dear School Committee,

I am writing to express my support for Paul Peri as interim superintendent of our Weston Public School District. As an active member of the Weston community and someone who cares deeply about the education of our children, I believe that Paul would be an excellent choice to lead our district during this transitional period.

I have had the opportunity of working with Paul since he first started here in the district. First as the PTO Chair at the high school, then as PTO Vice President, and currently as PTO President. Through these roles I have had the pleasure of getting to know Paul and have witnessed firsthand his compassion and care for our students, faculty, and staff and his exemplary leadership skills.

Paul possesses excellent communication and interpersonal skills. From his very first week, Paul began sending out his weekly Monday Memos. These communications, particularly during the stressful and uncertain times of COVID, were welcomed by parents and reassuring as together we navigated the challenges of the ever-changing COVID landscape and its impact on education. And while they were an important component of his crisis management skills, these weekly communications continue to be an important way for him to connect and are never without a shout out celebrating the recent success of a student club, team, artist, or other student group.

Paul recognizes the importance of being visible and accessible. Whether it's his open office door, walking through the hallways greeting teachers and students, cheering sidelines at athletic events, or staying behind after a Principal's Coffee so parents can approach him directly with questions, comments, concerns, he embraces every opportunity to build connections with the community. You will find Paul on most mornings standing outside greeting students as they walk in the door, starting their day with a smile, a hello, and a connection. He wants all students to feel "you are welcome here." As a parent dropping off your child, that gesture of kindness and inclusivity he extends to everyone who walks through the door is comforting. You know child is entering a space where their well-being is important.

Compassion, inclusivity, and connection are attributes that define Paul's collaborative leadership style. From the start Paul has prioritized creating an environment where teachers feel valued, where their input and voice is important. Paul meets regularly with his academic leadership team and through these collaborative meetings is able to build trust, share best practices, problem solve, and motivate his staff to perform at their best. And while he supports the academic excellence that Weston High School is so well known for, he has always emphasized the importance of finding the joy in learning and, particularly important in these post COVID days, seeks to inspire teachers and rekindle the joy of teaching. I have participated in many group meetings with Paul and continue to be impressed with his ability to work collaboratively with diverse groups, to listen carefully to all sides, and to mediate with respect and compassion. I believe these skills are essential for an effective interim superintendent in our district.

Paul's care, compassion and collaborative leadership style is also apparent in the way he engages with various student groups, whether it be the Principal's Leadership Council, the Student Council, or Student Government leaders. He encourages all students to share their enthusiasm and ideas and works to nurture their roles as student leaders. If a student presents him with an idea for an activity or event, rather than saying "No, we really can't do that" he instead leads with "Let's find a way to make this work" and then provides the leadership and guidance to help the students figure out how to implement their ideas, helping to build school spirit in a way that is safe, inclusive and fun. These very same skills would be essential as a district leader interacting with faculty and administration across the district.

Paul brings 20+ years in educational leadership, having worked as a teacher, assistant principal and principal. Paul has also taught "The DNA of Leadership" and "Family and Community Engagement" to aspiring administrators and has taught graduate courses in Teaching and Learning and Emotional Intelligence. Paul also participates in a network of regional principals who collaborate on best practices, idea sharing and management challenges. These experiences no doubt add to the value he brings as an exceptional candidate for interim superintendent.

Weston's public schools, including the high school, have received some of its highest rankings in recent years. There are many factors that contribute to these rankings, quality of administrative leadership being one of those factors. Weston high school is a better place today because of Paul's leadership.

I believe that Paul is someone who truly cares about our community and the people who live here. He has demonstrated a strong commitment to building relationships with students, parents, teacher and other stakeholders, and has worked consistently to create an inclusive and support environment for all.

Through my direct interactions with Paul I am confident he possesses the necessary skills and expertise to effectively manage our district during this interim period. His track record of success and leadership is impressive and his commitment to ensuring that all students receive high-quality education is clear.

I urge you to strongly consider Paul Peri for the position of interim superintendent. I believe that he has the experience, leadership skills, and the dedication to make a positive impact on our district and to ensure that our students receive the education they deserve.

Thank you for your consideration,

Gail Palmer

WHS Parent, Class of 2023 & Class of 2026, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr. Paul Peri is a game changer. He has brought about the remarkable improvements to our Weston High School, seen in the areas of academics, students' opportunities to move forward, and staffs' morals and professionalism. Paul, together with his team, has placed Weston High School on the map as one of the best public high schools in the country.

Paul came to this post almost at the onset of the pandemic. He led the school through the crises by being a constant positive force. He is on top of each program and has thoughtful and doable answers to all questions either at the High School Council meeting or the front door curbside in the mornings. It has been likely the toughest four years for any principal in the history. For many students, and likely teachers and staffs, being appreciated and affirmed by Mr. Peri is part of what makes them go through another tough day.

Paul has improved the HS academic achievements tremendously. He opened more advanced courses to high school sophomores and juniors, removing a major roadblock for many students who are seeking the optimum puzzle-piecing of their course selection to reach their own individual potentials. The increase in student's mobility provides the opportunities for each student to design their HS education themselves and move forward. It boosts up students' moral and instills an important self-planning skill for students to seek individual interest and potentials. Paul has the can-do approach.

Paul is not bound by the status quos and does not use them as excuses not to make improvements. HS varsity athletes often train a few hours each day and compete on the weekends on top of their schoolwork. After listening to some students' petitions, Paul facilitated a change, pushed through many meetings and paperwork, to allow varsity athletes to opt-out the state required PE lessons which had no meaningful rigor in comparison to their varsity trainings. This says volumes that Mr. Peri respects and cares about their precious high school time and health. It frees up varsity athletes to focus better on their academics and achieve better on their sports. Paul eradicates barriers for students to thrive.

Before Mr. Peri came, when people called into HS offices, there were rarely anyone picking up the phone. That soon had changed, and people noticed. Later improvements could be seen on how timely an email was responded, how timely the homework was graded, how timely, and how accurately the homework and tests were posted onto the Infinite Campus. The weekly HS update, almost daily communications from Paul's office are often the thread for opening a chat with a stressed student at the dining table. We see and hear all of Paul's work, from the eyes of our children and the voices of the teachers.

None of the above would have been possible if it's not because Mr. Peri is a listener. Upon knowing where help is needed, he uses his knowledge, experience, and personal skills to guide, change and support. We are so grateful for the opportunity have Mr. Peri for these years!

Tricia Liu