



## **Dr. Alexandra Estella, Superintendent**

Dr. Alexandra Estrella joined Norwalk Public Schools on July 1, 2020 as Superintendent of Schools. A first-generation Latina-American, Dr. Estrella is a visionary, innovative, forward-thinking leader who does not accept the status quo on scholar development and learning opportunities.

Since joining NPS, Dr. Estrella's accomplishments have included the development of a new five-year strategic plan for the district, with input from students, teachers, staff, parents and community members. With the goal of ensuring our students are future ready, the work included reviewing equity and disproportionality, special education, school facilities, and the overall structure of the district. A new mission, vision, values and strategic priorities now guides the district's focus moving forward.

Prior to joining Norwalk, Dr. Estrella spent seven years in the role of superintendent for Community School District Four in East Harlem, New York. Part of the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), District Four comprises twenty-three schools serving approximately 13,500 students grades 3-K through 12. She has been recognized for her relentless commitment to improving the lives of children and families in the East Harlem community.

She started her career as a science teacher in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan, and during her tenure, she designed curricula that supported scholars to develop their observational, critical, and analytical skills. She founded the first STEM fair within the school and challenged middle school students to take advanced science courses that allowed them to earn high school and NYS Regents credit. In 2008, Dr. Estrella founded Esperanza Preparatory Academy, a dual-language middle school in East Harlem, NY. In 2011, she proposed and obtained approval to expand the school to grades 6-12. She acquired a number of bilingual and technology grants that supported the school in the development of its dual-language program. She also started one of the first 6-12 special education inclusion programs in the City of New York.

As a direct reflection of her support to schools and her strategic leadership at NYCDOE District Four, she increased the District's New York State ELA scores by 22% and mathematics by 20%. In partnership with Hunter College, she acquired a multimillion-dollar grant from New York Trust that allowed the district to establish an intensive early childhood literacy intervention program that propelled State scores by 18%. Graduation rates have increased from 70% to 84%. Through the refinement of curricula leveraging Columbia University's Teachers College Readers and Writers Project and Harvard University's Advanced Literacies research, she narrowed the achievement gap for multilingual learners by increasing literacy proficiency by over 20% for the majority of students by the time they transitioned to become former multilingual learners.

Dr. Estrella is passionately committed to educational equity. She believes in the power of schools to change lives, and is resolute that no child should be kept from attaining his or her dream because of obstacles that can be overcome.

Dr. Estrella earned a doctorate of education with honors from Sage College of Albany, a master's degree in Science Education from Pace University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Baruch College. She holds a bachelor of science from Fordham University Marymount, where she double majored in biology and chemistry. Dr. Estrella is certified by the Connecticut State Department of Education as a superintendent of schools and for intermediate administration and supervision.