

KAREN M. BERASI

Karen Berasi is currently the Assistant Superintendent of Special Services for the Ridgefield Public School District where she has focused on the development and implementation of programs, systems and services that result in high expectations for all students. She has emphasized implementation of high quality instruction and services in order to close the achievement gap for special education students and English Language Learners. Her program initiatives include the Ridgefield Intensive Special Education Program, increased social-emotional services to students and providing a series of parent workshops to meet the needs of families. Ms. Berasi has built strong collaborative relationships between home, school and the community establishing a continuum of services and programs for students within the schools and community.

Ms. Berasi has many years of experience in public education from Pre-K through age 21, including twelve years of district leadership work in the Connecticut public schools and three and a half years teaching experience with graduate students at the University of Connecticut. Prior to being hired by the Ridgefield Public Schools, Ms. Berasi was Director of Pupil Personnel Services in the Suffield Public Schools and she is thrilled to be returning to a community she genuinely appreciates and values.

Prior to working in the Suffield Public Schools Ms. Berasi served as Supervisor of Special Education in the Farmington Public Schools where her emphasis was professional development and creation of programming to improve reading and writing performance.

Ms. Berasi moved to Connecticut to serve as clinical faculty at the University of Connecticut in the Department of Communication Sciences where she instructed and supervised graduate students in the discipline of Speech and Language Pathology. Ms. Berasi collaborated with other faculty members to provide students with a curriculum delving into the diagnosis and remediation of reading and writing difficulties.

Ms. Berasi started her teaching career as a speech and language pathologist in the Westlake Public Schools in Westlake, Ohio providing services in the areas of phonology and language development. This is when she first started providing workshops to teachers-centered on understanding the relationship between language development and academic achievement. She then served in the Chino Public Schools in Chino, California in the role of speech and language pathologist and English as a Second Language consultant where she provided training to administrators and teachers in the areas of second language acquisition and acculturation. Before moving to Connecticut, Ms. Berasi provided services in the Edmonds School District in Edmonds, Washington where her expertise in literacy resulted in the training of staff, improved teaching methods and pedagogy and improved student achievement outcomes.

Karen Berasi's formal educational preparation includes earning her Bachelor of Science degree, with a major in speech and hearing sciences and a minor in psychology, from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio in 1972. In 1973, she completed her Master of Arts degree in the areas of speech-language pathology and audiology. In 2004, Karen earned her 6th year certification in Executive Leadership (#092) from the NEAG School of Education, Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Connecticut. In 2011, she earned her Executive Leadership certification (#093) from the NEAG School of Education at the University of Connecticut.

Throughout her career, Ms. Berasi has focused on improving achievement outcomes for students, particularly in the area of literacy, closing the achievement gap and professional development. She is a highly motivated leader who believes that high performing schools are built through a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration and shared expectations that embrace all stakeholders.