

***Superintendent's Entry Plan
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INTRODUCTION

In order to successfully lead Durham Public Schools, it is important to have an effective and efficient entry into the school district. Therefore, the following entry plan has been developed. This entry plan will outline objectives and significant activities and a timeline for my transition into the role of superintendent of DPS.¹

GOALS

The main goal of my entry plan is to listen, learn, and to develop a strategic plan for the school district. The entry plan includes three phases.

Phase I: Pre-Entry

April 2010 – June 2010

Phase II: Entry

July 2010 – October 2010

Phase III: Development of the Strategic Plan

October 2010- January 2011

¹ This entry plan draws extensively from the Superintendent's Entry Plan developed in August 2008 when Maurice "Mo" Green was appointed as the superintendent of Guilford County Schools (GCS). Serving on the Superintendent's Council during the time of this transition provided me the opportunity to witness the successful entry of the new superintendent. The plan ensured that all stakeholders knew how the superintendent was going to perform his work. The final plan will include input from the executive leadership team, Board of Education and other members of staff as appropriate.

Listening and learning sessions will dominate Phase I and Phase II.

These sessions will consist of numerous meetings with board members, internal leadership groups, direct reports, principals, staff, employee groups, students, external leaders, various leadership groups, parent groups, community organizations and community members. Updates/reports will be provided to the Board of Education and the community, as appropriate.

The development of a strategic plan will dominate the second half of Phase II and the final phase of the entry plan. The strategic plan will put into action the Board of Education's vision and goals. It will be an operational plan to improve the achievement of all students, complete with goals, major strategies, timelines for implementation and accountability measures. The continued operation of DPS will occur during the development of the strategic plan.

GOAL 1: Develop a framework for increasing student achievement for all students

Objectives

1. Determine an accelerated and appropriate course of action for increasing student achievement for all students.
2. Raise academic achievement expectations for all students, parents and staff.
3. Analyze and evaluate the conditions of chronically under-performing schools, as determined after an analysis of various measures and determine the appropriate course of corrective actions as outlined in the Design for Accelerated Progress (DAP).
4. Reduce the academic achievement gap between students of color and white students.
5. Raise academic achievement levels of all students.

Activities

1. Hire a chief of staff with a proven and strong academic record of success in a large school district.
2. Conduct a review of the instructional program, initiatives, practices, curriculum and support materials.
3. Review student achievement and other data for all student populations.
4. Meet with executive leadership team members to discuss the performance of the schools they supervise and to determine the quality of actions proposed for continuous improvement of schools.
5. Review the work related to the achievement of African-American males.
6. Review strategies that are in place in to address the suspension rates of African American students.
7. Review the level of funding provided to schools with large concentrations of students who are eligible to receive free or reduced price lunch.
8. Review the level of funding provided to schools with large concentrations of students who are performing below grade level.
9. Review district level practices that promote family involvement that are aligned to the instructional program.
10. Analyze the assessment, monitoring and evaluation systems.
11. Review the new school improvement planning process and determine the alignment between the planning process and expected outcomes of district goals.
12. Engage community partners in our efforts to improve achievement levels in our schools.

GOAL 2: Develop effective and positive Board-superintendent relations

Objectives

1. Establish the Board and superintendent as a cohesive leadership team focused on improving the achievement levels of all students.
2. Develop and implement appropriate communication protocols between the Board and superintendent.

Activities

1. Schedule a meeting with Board chair (and others, as appropriate) to discuss a format and agenda for Board retreats with the superintendent.
2. Establish clear understandings of roles, responsibilities, expectations and systems for the Board-superintendent team.
3. Establish regular meeting times with the Board chair and vice-chair for reviewing and constructing board meeting agendas and for discussing district matters.
4. Schedule individual meetings with each Board member for one-on-one time.
5. Visit various regions with the individual Board member who represents that particular area of the district to get a better understanding of the Board member's perspective and the constituents he/she represents.
6. Establish regular communication systems with the Board in the form of writing, phone calls and meetings.
7. Establish a performance evaluation format and individual and district goals that can be used by the Board to evaluate the superintendent.

GOAL 3: Develop the guiding framework that will serve as a foundation for the strategic plan and the work of DPS

Objectives

1. Develop the key framework that will serve as the underpinnings for the work of the district and the strategic plan, while ensuring that the framework is consistent with the Board of Education's core values, mission and theory of action.
2. Communicate the framework to all staff, the Board of Education and the community.
3. Encourage support of the framework by the Board of Education, staff and community.

Activities

1. Develop the following as the framework that will serve as the underpinnings for the work of DPS and the strategic plan:
 - a. Being united as we strive to improve the lives and academic achievement levels for all students; and
 - b. Working to provide support and service to schools based upon the population the school serves; and
 - c. Including community members (parents, students, teachers, staff, business, etc.) in the development of major initiatives that promote student achievement and foster relationships.
2. Develop a communication plan for the superintendent and others that focuses on the framework.
3. Be visible in the school facilities and at community activities and communicate the framework at these events, when appropriate.
4. Develop opportunities for various community members to support the framework.

GOAL 4: Build and enhance meaningful and positive relationships with the DPS community, which includes students, parents, staff, community members and leaders

Objectives

1. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with direct reports, principals and key district leadership that are focused on the above-referenced framework.
2. Communicate with parents and facilitate active partnerships on behalf of students.
3. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with leaders of employee associations and groups that are focused on the framework.
4. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with the leadership in the city, county, state and national governmental agencies in order to establish clear lines of communication, advocacy and support for the district's students.
5. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with leaders in the community's faith based organizations. Understand and participate in the community's faith-based organizations as viable and valuable support and partners to public education.
6. Establish positive and productive working relationships with key leadership and members of business, service, civic, non-profit, philanthropic and political organizations within the Durham County community and their national representative organizations.
7. Increase opportunities to promote DPS' image within the community and to develop advocacy for what is effective and working well.
8. Ensure ongoing, clear, and consistent communication with all stakeholders.
9. Establish a positive and open working relationship with the members of the media.
10. Increase personal knowledge and understanding of DPS and the community, its culture, traditions, history and expectations for the district.
11. Recognize accomplishments of students, parents, staff, community members and leaders.
12. Publicly celebrate attainment of strategies, benchmarks and goals.

Activities

1. Identify the community's largest corporations, key businesses, foundations, civic, nonprofit, philanthropic leaders, public safety chiefs, college and university presidents and their professional organizations and affiliations, then meet with each for an initial listening and learning session. Establish a routine communication protocol with these groups.
2. Identify community's churches/synagogues/mosques/congregations, key religious leaders and their professional organizations and affiliations and then meet with each for an initial listening and learning session. Establish a routine communication protocol with these groups.
3. Schedule meetings with other community leaders. Establish a routine communication protocol with these leaders.
4. Attend meetings of key organizations such as various chambers of commerce and service clubs/organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine communication protocols with these groups.
5. Schedule meetings with the parent organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
6. Schedule meetings with the established student leadership organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.

7. Schedule meetings with leaders of each employee association or group for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
8. Schedule times to visits schools. Establish protocol for meeting with school staffs and students.
9. Meet central office staffs. Establish protocol for meeting with these staff members.
10. Establish regularly scheduled meetings with the executive leadership team, principals and senior managers, etc.
11. Meet with Durham County Commissioners, county and city managers and other local elected officials as appropriate and establish regular meetings with these leaders and preferred communication protocols.
12. Establish regular meetings with state education leaders.
13. Meet with the district's legislative delegation to the North Carolina General Assembly. Meet and request a regularly scheduled meeting with the leadership and an acceptable format for ongoing communication.
14. Schedule a meeting with district's Congressional representatives and senators. Discuss an acceptable format for ongoing communication.
15. Attend school and community functions, including co-curricular and extracurricular events.
16. Hold routine media briefings, and establish routine communication protocols and meeting protocols. Offer to meet with the editorial boards of local media.
17. Assure media that they are welcome and encourage communication and reporting that is open and honest. Invite media to all key and significant events.
18. Analyze and evaluate the current working conditions survey of schools and central departments to assess the impact of current working conditions/climate on achievement. Identify any short-term gains and plan accordingly.
19. Assess the quality, quantity and effectiveness of all existing forms of communication with various stakeholders:
 - Board
 - Parents
 - Teachers
 - Support staff
 - Administrative staff
 - Policy makers
 - Student leaders
 - Community leaders
 - Business leaders
 - Faith-based leaders

GOAL 5: Increase Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency

Objectives

1. Determine performance levels of each division, department and direct report within the organization.
2. Evaluate whether to consolidate and streamline similar functions, positions and revenue in order to increase and maximize service and support for schools.

Activities

1. Initiate the construction of the superintendent's briefing documents from each division/department. Documents will include areas of major responsibility, major initiatives underway with projected timelines, significant/potential problems, major decisions that need to be made. Use these documents as a tool for rapid understanding of the district's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to progress.
2. Review critical documents, including, but not limited to: policy and procedures manuals; board meeting minutes for last year (and further back as necessary); student achievement data; financial projections and budget processes; legal proceedings; accountability plans and processes; project management protocols and plans; and safety and emergency plans.
3. Review all studies, reports and audits by outside agencies.
4. Review the operations of departments and divisions and reorganize as necessary to support academic achievement and the strategic plan.
5. Evaluate key programs and major initiatives (program evaluation) and determine its use within the context of the strategic plan.