SUPERINTENDENT ENTRY PLAN

Dr. Jason McKinnon

Listening with curiosity with the intent to understand.

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.

~ John Q. Adams ~
Introduction
The Oxford Public Schools is responsible for providing the best education possible for our students and families. In order to reflect on this mission, I would like to ask, "Where are we now?" This essential question is just the starting place for this entry plan in order to learn how we can improve student achievement for all students and build stronger relationships with our families.

An Entry Plan describes how a leader seeks to understand the culture, strengths, and needs for any organization. I am becoming familiar with the Oxford Public Schools, while also bringing perspectives and ideas from other school districts.

It is quite natural for a new Superintendent wanting to have an immediate impact in his new position. While I understand how to build on the positive work that has occurred here during the past few years, I would rather hit the ground listening in order to fully appreciate the complexities associated with District operations, and to fully understand the political and social issues that influence school and District culture.

While an entry plan needs to identify "where we are now," it will also formulate a comprehensive picture of our short term and long term goals.

The Oxford Public Schools are fortunate to have students who are ready to learn, strong teachers, dedicated administrators, an engaged community and a supportive Board of Education.

For our schools to succeed, we truly need to be focused on the needs of students. When we make decisions thinking about students first, we can allocate key resources and improve experiences for children in the classroom.

However, to succeed completely also requires public engagement and employees who are energized, engaged and feel valued. In addition to the entry plan, I will work with the Board and staff to bolster employee morale, increase trust and strengthen relationships.

Embedded in this work is the belief that all stakeholders will share in the responsibility for determining our school vision and improving achievement for all students. Our first vision meeting has been set for October 1, 2019.

Leaders must “first seek to understand, then to be understood.”

– Stephen Covey
I am pleased to notice that student achievement has been increasing gradually during the past few years. This work needs to continue with a coalition of the willing; the Board shares this sense of urgency as well. Our primary task is to define where we want to be in the future. Then, we need to determine how we will get there and identify the resources we need to meet this target.

**Goals** This Entry Plan has set five preliminary goals which can be adjusted with Board of Education input.

1. To build comradery, trust, and morale with all community members and identify ways in which we can establish a respectful and positive culture focused on teaching and learning.

2. To identify key issues in the (District’s) past and how they were handled so we can help shape norms for addressing future issues.

3. To identify what we are doing well, what we wish to preserve, and ways in which we can support our teachers and administrators so students can thrive.

4. Develop goals that will move us forward.

5. Revise the District vision and core values to determine if the Strategic Operating Plan is fully aligned to core values.
Actions
This Entry Plan will outline preliminary actions, which can be modified in the future with input from Board of Education members and key constituents. The Transition phase is mostly concerned with information gathering and team building. Therefore, the following actions are essential.

Actions during the Transition Phase
1. Develop and distribute a community survey to gain a big picture view of District concerns and bright spots for the future.
2. Hold stakeholder group meetings (small group and large group settings) and individual people. (Please see the last page of this plan for Stakeholder groups and sample questions.)
3. Compare survey data with focus group data in order to organize information by patterns and themes.
4. Assess the quality, quantity and effectiveness of all existing forms of internal and external communication with various stakeholders, including Board of Education members, teachers, administration, families and community members.
5. Build strong working relationships with Board of Education members, along with town and community leaders.

Actions during the Entry Phase
1. Develop team oriented relationships with Board of Education to understand governance, core values, communication preferences, and Board goals.
2. Collaborate on a evaluation format with objectives and indicators of success that can be utilized to measure above core values, goals and Superintendent success.
3. Review all critical documents, employee handbooks, school handbooks, policy and procedure manuals, contracts, and the organization chart to determine focus on student achievement and operational efficiency.
4. Review the District’s financial projections for the coming year and the process for building the annual operating budget.
5. Extensively review our facilities and projects with Directors of Technology and Facilities to ensure that preparations are in place for the opening of schools.
6. Extensively review the District’s special education programs, instructional practices, policies and budget in order to close the achievement gap and improve operational effectiveness.
7. Plan protocols for regular meetings with administrators and teachers; establish routines for communication and goal setting within these organizations.

Actions during the Planning Phase
1. Host regular open forums with all key stakeholders to keep the channels of communication open about critical issues concerning student achievement, morale, special education programming, continuous improvement and communication, with the goal to improve transparency and strengthen relationships.
2. Present a summary of findings from surveys and focus groups to the Board of Education, along with the raw data from vision meetings
3. Review all functions and procedures around finding and hiring highly qualified teachers and talented administrators.
4. Lead with passion and enthusiasm. Research ways we can be innovative, transparent and highly effective.
Listening with curiosity with the intent to understand.

Stakeholder Meetings

Great effort will be expended to ensure that representatives from every constituent group will be invited to meet with me. While some groups will meet in whole, I would also like to schedule personal interviews. To ensure transparency and efficiency, these questions will be published in advance. I have included sample questions, as well as possible stakeholder groups below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Estimated Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Education</td>
<td>Individual Members</td>
<td>Phase 1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Individual Members</td>
<td>Phase 1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Leaders</td>
<td>Individual Members, group</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>Individual Members, group</td>
<td>Phase 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Individual Members, groups</td>
<td>Phase 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Individual Members, groups</td>
<td>Phase 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTO/Booster Club</td>
<td>Individual Members</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretaries, Custodians, Paraprofessionals</td>
<td>Individual Members, groups</td>
<td>Phase 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Organization</td>
<td>Individual Members</td>
<td>Phase 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Office</td>
<td>Individual Members, groups</td>
<td>Phase 2, 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample Stakeholder Questions

1. What is the most satisfying part of your work?
2. What three things should we preserve and build upon in your classroom/school?
3. What three things should we change in your classroom/school/district?
4. What can I do to best support your work?
5. Describe a time when there was conflict in the school/department/District. How did this conflict arise? Could there have been a better way to handle this situation?
6. What should be the top change or improvement priority?
7. What do I need to know that I did not ask?
8. Other