



SUPERINTENDENT’S PLAN OF ENTRY—PASSAIC PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2013

INTRODUCTION

I believe the Passaic Public Schools will be one of the best urban school districts in the State of New Jersey. We will work with incredible energy to accomplish this greatness by providing excellent educational experiences and services to prepare our students for college and careers. The Passaic Public Schools will create a path to greatness. We have an incredible and diverse staff and student body. Our focus is on improving student learning and achievement results, while pursuing excellence in athletics and the arts. I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead.

I have spent my entire career in urban education as a teacher and administrator, including over eight years as a Superintendent of Schools. I plan to take a fresh look at everything that touches our district. The Plan of Entry period allows me time to listen and learn from all stakeholders in order to create a great school system.

The activities outlined in this Plan of Entry will take place during a three-month period of my leadership transition. The plan set forth below is designed to approach a myriad of complex issues facing the current Board, staff, stakeholders of the district, and me, the newly appointed Superintendent of Schools. As the three-month period progresses, I reserve the right to make modifications to the plan as conversations with stakeholders progress. This protocol allows flexibility in planning while offering a systematic plan of addressing the district's current challenges.

I strongly suggested that any stakeholder who might have ideas about how to improve upon the components of this plan write to me directly at pmunoz@passaic-city.k12.nj.us.

It should be noted that the Plan of Entry work occurs simultaneously with the responsibility of operation of the school district. The obvious duties of day-to-day operations and problem solving are in full course while entry takes place.

CULMINATION OF THE PLAN

Upon successful completion of the intended actions in this plan, I will report to the members of the Board my proposed agenda.

GOVERNANCE TEAM

Objectives:

1. Establish the Board and Superintendent as a cohesive governance team with a student-centered teaching and learning agenda.
2. Build a positive, productive, and trusting working relationship with individual Board members and the Board as a whole.

Activities:

1. Schedule an individual meeting with each Board Member for one-on-one perspective.
2. Establish a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, expectations, and systems for mutual accountability.
3. Establish a regular communication system with the Board.
4. Review the Board of Education meeting agenda and reports.
5. Discuss current and determine future use of Board committee structure and roles and responsibilities.
6. Review the Board of Education election calendar.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND ALIGNMENT

Objective:

1. Establish a strong teaching- and learning-focused district executive team.

Activities:

1. Schedule one-on-one meetings with key central office staff to determine how each person will be supportive of dramatic improvement to student achievement. Also, ask them, “How effectively do we/you deliver on preparing our students for college and careers?”
2. Develop an action plan for the development of the district’s Strategic Plan.
3. Review current or anticipated vacancies in central office staffing and develop a plan for filling these positions.
 - A. Two Assistant Superintendents
 - B. High School Principal
 - C. Middle School Principal (evaluate and determine renewal or nonrenewal)
4. Establish a cabinet and schedule meetings.
5. Study policies, regulations, job descriptions, and table of organization.
6. Request a briefing paper from all direct reports providing an overview of their current area of responsibility; a list of major initiatives underway with timelines; a list of major accomplishments and awards; a list of significant or potential problems in each area of responsibility and how they are resolving them; and a list of major decisions that need to be made in one month, three months, and six months.

7. Review résumés of staff in top district positions and request a list of their top ten responsibilities.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Objectives:

1. Analyze patterns in student achievement data and the gap in advancement between various student populations in order to determine an appropriate course of action for teaching and learning.
2. Raise expectations for all students.

Activities:

1. Review student assessments for all student populations.
2. Review current or anticipated vacancies in school staffing and develop a plan for filling these positions.
3. Review district curriculum and programs of study.
4. Review after-school and Saturday programs.
5. Review student attendance, promotion/retention, grading, and high school graduation policies.
6. Assess current professional development program, paying particular attention to current capacity and the training needs of principals, teachers, and cabinet. Develop a plan for the development of aspiring leaders and new administrators.
7. Meet with each principal to discuss the performance of students and staff; to review School Improvement Plans and School Performance Reports; to determine how each principal will be supportive of dramatic improvement to student achievement; and to ask them, “How effectively do we/you

deliver on preparing our students for college and careers?
How do you improve teaching and learning?”

8. Review implementation status of teacher, principal, and vice principal evaluation systems.
9. Review status of Student Growth Objectives (SGOs) and administrators' goals.
10. Schedule classroom visits and instructional walk-throughs for the school year; and observe instruction with principals.
11. Listen to teachers in grade level and department meetings.
12. Meet with school leadership teams.

COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Objectives:

1. Establish positive working relationships with civic leadership, community leadership, and other community agencies.
2. Establish the role of each employee union/association as advisor and partner to the Superintendent.
3. Increase opportunities to promote the District programs with the community and enhance advocacy for the District's needs and mission.
4. Ensure ongoing, clear, and consistent communication with all stakeholders.
5. Establish a positive working relationship with representatives of the media.

Activities:

1. Ask each Board Member to suggest three to five names of community organization leaders, and subsequently, to arrange meetings between the Superintendent and these leaders.

2. Meet with local and state elected officials.
 - A. Mayor
 - B. Assemblyman
 - C. City Council members
3. Meet with the Passaic Executive County Superintendent.
4. Meet with the Regional Achievement Center (RAC) director.
5. Plan for roundtable meetings with key constituency groups.
6. Meet with union leaders.
7. Meet with PTA/PTO presidents, and discuss parent meetings.
8. Plan for meetings with foundation, nonprofit, and philanthropic organizations.
9. Establish roundtable meetings with staff and high school students.
10. Review the public information plan.
11. Attend meetings of key organizations, such as chambers of commerce, Rotary, and other suggested organizations throughout the year.
12. Meet with the community of faith leaders.

OPERATIONS AND FINANCE

Objective:

1. Understand the current strategies, strengths, and opportunities for improvement in the District's operations and finance.

Activities:

1. Review the district's Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC) self-assessment and supporting documentation.

2. Review Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) reports and procedures.
3. Review district's information technology system and plan.
4. Meet with the Schools Development Authority (SDA) leaders regarding new construction and grant projects.
5. Review status of construction projects, Long-Range Facilities Plan, maintenance plan, and school facilities checklists.
6. Review district's financial projections, resource allocation, budget, audits (e.g., CAFR), and management letters.
 - A. School
 - B. Central office
 - C. Federal—No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA)
 - D. Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA)
 - E. Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI)
7. Review all district pending legal proceedings.
8. Review the district's safety, security, and emergency plans.
9. Review process and timeline for budget development.
10. Review Curriculum Audit and create a plan to address the findings and recommendations.
11. Review the school year calendar.
12. Create a phone chain list for emergencies and school closings.
13. Review the current procedure for inclement weather school closings.