



SUPERINTENDENT TRANSITION PLAN

**TRENTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
MAY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2017**

DR. FREDRICK H. MCDOWELL JR.

TRANSITION PLAN

PURPOSE

To grow and build a stronger Trenton Public Schools, the following questions need to be answered by our school community stakeholders:

- How close is Trenton Public Schools to achieving its vision?
- Will we get there following our current path?
- Are we satisfied with the outcomes we have achieved thus far?
- If not, what changes are needed to succeed?
- How can we make them as quickly and efficiently as possible?
- How do we demonstrate our commitment to put the needs of all students first?

TRANSITION WORK (MAY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2017)

1. ASSEMBLE TRANSITION TEAM

To assist Dr. McDowell as he transitions into Trenton Public Schools (TPS), a transition team of outside education experts and TPS staff members is being formed to conduct a thorough review of the school district. The transition team will review TPS data in several areas and conduct interviews with numerous stakeholders to highlight the strengths of the district and note areas where additional focus is needed. Through structured discussions, data review, and activities, the transition team will work to answer the guiding questions listed above. The transition team will publish a report to help inform the Superintendent's Entry Plan Actions beginning July 1, 2017.

The transition team's focus will be in the following areas:

1. Student Achievement
2. Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness
3. Communications and Culture
4. Operations and Finance

Transition Team Membership

- Superintendent
- President, Board of Education
- Member, Board of Education
- State Monitor
- School Business Administrator
- Assistant Superintendents (2)
- Principals (2-3)
- Parents (2-3)
- Teachers (2-3)
- Current Students/ Alumni (2-3)
- Mayor's Office Representative
- City Government Representative
- TEA Representative (Teachers)
- TASA Representative (School Administrators)
- TESA Representative (Secretaries)
- Custodians Local Representative
- Police Department Representative
- Fire Department Representative
- Faith-Based Community Representatives
- Parent Association Representative
- Special Education Advocacy Representative
- Workforce Development Representative
- City Arts Representative
- Communications Representative
- Family Engagement Representative
- Mercer County Community College
- The College of New Jersey
- Rider University
- Thomas Edison State University
- Non-profit Partner (2-3)
- Business/Trade Partner (2-3)

Dr. McDowell will plan and facilitate a series of (5) stakeholder meetings. Each meeting will include team activities and discussion to review pertinent data and seek input as they relate to the (4) Focus Areas.

1. Topic: Student Achievement - Wednesday, May 10th
2. Topic: Organizational Efficiency and Effectiveness - Wednesday, May 17th
3. Topic: Communications and Culture - Wednesday, May 24th
4. Topic: Operations and Finance - Wednesday, May 31st
5. Topic: Summary Review - Wednesday, June 7th

2. VISIT ALL TRENTON PUBLIC SCHOOL CAMPUSES WITH ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT(S): ACADEMICS, SPECIALIZED SERVICES, AND SCHOOL SUPPORT

- a. Participate in (19) targeted learning walks with the Principals to collect initial data regarding instructional leadership capacity of Assistant Superintendents and School Leaders, observe school culture and climate, inspect the physical plant of each school, and preview instructional environments across the District:
 1. Columbus ES
 2. Franklin ES
 3. Grant ES
 4. Gregory ES
 5. Hill ES/Hill Annex
 6. Jefferson ES
 7. King ES
 8. Mott ES
 9. Parker ES
 10. Robbins ES/Robbins Annex
 11. Wilson ES
 12. Washington ES
 13. Dunn MS
 14. Hedgepeth-Williams MS
 15. Kilmer MS
 16. River MS
 17. TCHS – Main
 18. TCHS – West
 19. Daylight/Twilight
- b. Action items performed at each school site:
 - i. Lead an Instructional Walkthrough Protocol with the School Leadership Team
 1. Observe the quality of instruction and level of rigor in the sampling of classrooms
 2. Observe the dynamics of the schools' culture
 3. Assess instructional strengths and challenges
 - ii. Tour the school to observe the needs of the facility
 - iii. Host focus groups to seek input from students, staff, and parents

3. MAKE INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CENTRAL OFFICE REORGANIZATION (PENDING BOARD APPROVAL)

- a. Dissolve Existing Roles:
 - i. Assistant Superintendent, Specialized Services
 - ii. Assistant Superintendent, School Support
 - iii. Supervisor, Specialized Services
- b. Establish New Roles:
 - i. Director, Specialized Services
 - ii. Chief School Support Officer (Assistant Superintendent, Secondary)
 - iii. Chief School Support Officer (Assistant Superintendent, Elementary)
 - iv. Chief Performance Officer (Special Assistant, Performance/Accountability)

- c. Fill Existing Vacancies:
 - i. Chief Academic Officer (Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment)
 - ii. Bus Drivers (Transportation), Facilities Manager (Facilities), Mechanics and Laborers (Facilities), Supervisor of Guidance & Assessment (Academics), Supervisor of Elementary Humanities (Academics), Supervisor of Secondary Humanities (Academics), Supervisor of Elementary STEM (Academics), Supervisor of Secondary STEM (Academics)

4. CONDUCT INITIAL REVIEWS OF KEY DEPARTMENTS DIRECTLY SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION

- a. Curriculum & Instruction (Chief Academic Office)
 - i. Review current Academic, Assessment, and Professional Development Plans
 - ii. Review current plans for Summer Programming (ESY, PD, and Enrichment)
 - iii. Identify potential opportunities to address Curricular Support, Instructional Technology, Extended Learning Time, Personalized Learning, and Advanced Coursework Options
- b. Finance & Operations (Chief Finance/Operations Office)
 - i. Identify potential opportunities to address Communications, External Relations, and Strategic Partnerships
 - ii. Identify potential opportunities to address: IT Infrastructure, Student Information Systems, Performance/Accountability Monitoring Systems, and Special Projects
 - iii. Review the status and planning for the New High School Construction Project(s)
 - iv. Review all existing association contracts and negotiation calendars
- c. Talent Acquisition & Development (Chief Talent Office)
 - i. Review onboarding and recruitment processes alongside school-based vacancy lists
 - ii. Review observational data alongside historical staffing and retention data
 - iii. Identify potential opportunities to address Leadership Development Needs, Pipeline Programming, Recruitment, and Retention

5. PARTICIPATE IN TALENT ACQUISITION LEADERSHIP SEARCHES

- a. Complete interviews and make recommendations for open leadership positions:
 - i. Chief Academic Officer
 - ii. Chief School Support Officer, Elementary
 - iii. Chief School Support Officer, Secondary
 - iv. Chief Performance Officer
 - v. Director, Specialized Services
 - vi. Principals

6. IDENTIFY KEY OPPORTUNITIES TO RE-BRAND AND PROMOTE THE DISTRICT

- a. Review District websites, social media platforms, and media relations plan
- b. Meet with key community stakeholders for feedback about perception of the District and generate a working list of areas to address concerns
- c. Meet with key business leaders for feedback on economic development gaps to fill
- d. Meet with key university leaders for feedback on strategic partnerships to support students

TRANSITION INVESTMENT

- Superintendent per diem May 1, 2017 – June 30, 2017
 - 3 days per week, 9 weeks (27 days), through scheduled payroll direct deposit
- Transition Team Meeting Refreshments
 - Existing Contract: Aramark Food Services (4-6 meetings)
- School Business Administrator to confirm availability of funds

ENTRY PLAN GOALS

The entry plan is designed to lay the groundwork for a school district that distinguishes itself by:

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

- Establish a culture centered on teaching and learning while aligning resources to close achievement gaps and ensure all students are college and career ready

IMPROVING EFFECTIVENESS AND RESPONSIVENESS

- Develop an efficient, service-oriented culture that demonstrates high performance as measured by public standards and benchmarks

SOLIDIFYING DISTRICT PRIORITIES

- Reduce “priority overload” and focus on strategies determined to have the greatest positive impact on student outcomes; to include prioritizing quality schools and creating communities of exemplary professional practice

ORGANIZING DEPARTMENTS AND RESOURCES

- Review spending and resource allocation based on their relationship to school-site need, accelerate increased student outcomes, and support the efforts of our educators by building a positive organizational culture that encourages high staff retention

ENTRY PLAN OBJECTIVES

To prepare for these goals, I will:

LISTEN

- Speak with students, parents, teachers, principals, staff, community leaders, elected representatives, business leaders, philanthropists, activists, and media outlets to hear their perspectives on Trenton Public Schools and what it might take to improve all schools

SHARE

- Present my leadership story, educational philosophy, and guiding principles. This will help others understand what drives me to help young people succeed. It also gives others the freedom to bring their passion to this work to raise expectations for all Trenton students

STUDY

- Review the history of the Trenton Public School District and collect data on local schools, student performance, demographic needs, and district levels of service

PARTNER

- Build relationships with our teachers, school leaders, and parents; as well as with community stakeholders to meet the needs of all students

PLAN

- Review the current strategic plan and district initiatives to identify priorities, develop action steps for staff, guide the work of the School Board, and prepare for the budget and legislative agenda.

ENTRY PLAN GOAL ACTIONS

SUPPORTING PEOPLE: Establish a culture centered on teaching and learning while aligning resources to close achievement gaps and ensure all students are college and career ready

- Assess Trenton’s expectations for the academic success of all students and commitment to meeting the needs of its diverse student population
- Review Trenton’s professional development plan and capacity to meet the training needs of teachers, principals, central office staff, and families
- Review current and upcoming work on the teacher and school leader evaluation programs
- Establish organizational norms for open and effective communication
- Connect with educators and staff members in schools and centrally to understand their work
- Visit schools to observe instruction and operational systems

IMPROVING EFFECTIVENESS AND RESPONSIVENESS: Develop an efficient, service-oriented culture that demonstrates high performance as measured by public standards and benchmarks

- Identify areas in which we can better support children and families
- Establish a protocol to review the instructional, operational, and business practices of the District for evidence of effectiveness in meeting the needs of teachers, leaders, and staff
- Evaluate District induction materials, handbooks, budget/financial documents, audits, grants, and student and staff information systems
- Review protocols at School Board Meetings that prioritize the accomplishment of key tasks necessary for moving the work forward more efficiently

SOLIDIFYING DISTRICT PRIORITIES: Reduce “priority overload” and focus on strategies determined to have the greatest positive impact on student outcomes; to include prioritizing quality schools and creating communities of exemplary professional practice

- Engage with instructional teams, school leaders, teachers, and families to discuss our academic priorities and outcomes, as well as the support needed to assist educators
- Strategize with Business and Operational Leadership Teams, as well as external stakeholders to discuss district systems, performance metrics, and key priorities
- Develop a plan to communicate district priorities, create shared district values, and progress monitoring of our strategic plan implementation

ORGANIZING DEPARTMENTS AND RESOURCES: Review spending and resource allocation based on their relationship to school-site need, accelerate increased student outcomes, and support the efforts of our educators by building positive organizational culture

- Identify key staff members to assist with the transition
- Establish regular meetings with executive staff and school leaders to develop clear understanding of responsibilities, standards, and practices
- Review central office structure for operational efficiency and alignment with student and family needs and adjust as necessary

ENTRY PLAN TIMELINE

ENTRY PLAN FOCUS AREA #1: DISTRICT REVIEW & EXPECTATIONS (JULY 1 – JULY 31)

- Review updated District Organizational Charts
 - o Collect historical information needed for improvement
 - o Identify gaps and seek efficiencies
- Meet with Executive Cabinet Members
 - o Begin building rapport and setting up opportunities for ongoing dialogue
 - o Review the expectations for the role of Assistant Superintendents
 - Review organizational chart for each division
 - Review current work plan/priority list for each division
 - Identify list of celebrations for each division
 - o Identify goals for the Central Office
 - Comprehensive review of Strategic District Improvement Plan
 - o Identify priority district challenges & concerns
- Meet with the Executive Leadership Team and key Central Office personnel: (Curriculum & Instruction, Accountability & Research, Human Resources, Technology Services, Strategic Planning, School Improvement, and Family Engagement)
 - o Begin building rapport and setting up ongoing dialogue to gain greater understanding of the local context.
 - o Review team expectations for the role of Assistant Superintendent and how the relationship affects their department(s)
 - o Review roles & responsibilities of the support teams as they relate to the SDIP
 - o Identify priority challenges & concerns that directly affect schools

ENTRY PLAN FOCUS AREA #2: SCHOOL SITE VISITS (JULY 1 – JULY 31)

- Follow up with each building Principal and/or School Leadership Team
 - o Begin building rapport and setting up opportunities for ongoing dialogue and support
 - o Review Principal's expectations for the role of Assistant Superintendent/ Principal Supervisor
 - o Review of Whole School Improvement Plan
 - Facilitate discussions and reflection regarding school data
 - School, District, and State Assessments
 - School Professional Development Plans
 - Facilitate discussions and reflection regarding school financials
 - o Discuss Immediate & long term challenges
 - o Discuss areas in need of additional support
 - o Discuss unexplored opportunities for academic enrichment:
 - Partnerships (Non-profit, CBOs, University)
 - Extra-curricular Activities, Athletics, and Academic Competitions
 - Scholarships, Endowments, and Grants
- Review data from Instructional Walkthroughs of each school with building Principals
 - o Discuss the quality of instruction and level of rigor in the sampling of classrooms
 - o Discuss the dynamics of the schools' culture
 - o Review the organizational structure and operational efficiency
 - o Discuss the needs of the facility
 - o Review input from students, staff, and parents
 - o Provide feedback to the Principal on what was observed
 - o Seek feedback from the Principal regarding opportunities to provide additional support, coaching, and resources based on findings.

ENTRY PLAN FOCUS AREA #3: SCHOOL DATA REVIEW (JULY 1 – AUGUST 31)

- Detailed review of all school data with the Office of Accountability & Research
 - o Strategic District Improvement Plan (Academic Plan 2015-18)
 - o Whole School Improvement Plans
 - o State Assessment and Accountability Data
- Detailed review of school financials with Budget Office
 - o School financials, budget allocations, and budget projections
 - o Grant opportunities
- Detailed review of all instructional staff performance with Talent Acquisition & Development
 - o Ongoing review and understanding of collective bargaining agreements
 - o Teacher evaluation instruments, staff improvement plans, and staff discipline
 - o Accolades of instructional staff (Awards, trainings, presentations, and celebrations)

ENTRY PLAN FOCUS AREA #4: OPERATIONS REVIEW & INTRODUCTIONS (JULY 1 – SEPTEMBER 29)

- Meet with the Department Heads in each division (Facilities, Transportation, Communications, Legal, and Strategic Planning)
 - o Continue building rapport and set up ongoing dialogue
 - o Expectations for the role of School Business Administrator
 - o Review of the impact each department has on schools' ability to meet the goals of the SDIP
 - o Discuss Immediate & long term challenges affecting schools
 - o Discuss areas in need of additional support or discussion
- Meet with Negotiations Team and review all association contracts/ status of negotiation
 - o Identify goals for each organization and discuss implications

ENTRY PLAN FOCUS AREA #5: COMMUNITY REVIEW & INTRODUCTIONS (JULY 1 – SEPTEMBER 29)

- Meet with each Trenton Public Schools Association Leadership Team
 - o Continue building rapport and set up ongoing dialogue
 - o Discuss Immediate & long term challenges
 - o Discuss areas in need of additional support
- Meet with community leaders and representatives to understand the history and local context of the school district and opportunities for additional community engagement
 - o School Board members
 - o Small business owners
 - o Large business leadership
 - o University & Community Colleges
 - o Community-based organizations
 - o City and State government officials and representatives
 - o Local law enforcement & fire department officials
 - o Local parent associations and advocacy groups
 - o Faith-based organizations
 - o Civic organizations

ENTRY PLAN FOCUS AREA #6: REPORT OF FINDINGS (SEPTEMBER 29 – OCTOBER 31)

- Review findings with the Trenton Board of Education
 - o Discuss opportunities and challenges as they relate to the Strategic District Improvement Plan
 - o Review findings with each department/stakeholder/direct report
 - o Seek additional feedback and input from departments/stakeholders
 - o Make additional revisions as necessary
 - o Co-construct a timeline for the implementation of supports needed
 - o Present findings to the community
 - o Implement plan