



ENTRY PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

The Cambridge School Committee has charged me, as the incoming interim superintendent, with continuing the great work that has been undertaken, ensuring that EVERY scholar's needs are met and preparing the district for continuous improvement in innovation and achievement for our students and community.

During the selection process, the Cambridge School Committee and the overall community communicated its priorities for leadership qualities sought in an interim superintendent. Those qualities included excellent communication and collaboration with stakeholders, holding high expectations for students and staff, and ensuring leadership and continuity of education and services by the Cambridge Public Schools.

Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) is viewed across the Commonwealth and nation as a hub for innovation and education. This reputation and aspiration highlights the opportunity that the district has to be even greater in the coming years.

*“Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.”
-James Baldwin*

PURPOSE OF MY ENTRY PLAN

The purpose of the entry plan is to establish a set of intentional and inclusive activities that will guide the transition of the new interim superintendent into CPS. This process is designed to enable me, as the new Interim Superintendent, to gather information quickly about the evolving community and district; establish a strong community presence early on; to create ideas for sustaining (building on the current work) and strengthening CPS for the future; to identify critical issues; and to create a network of collaborative partners.

This plan outlines the specific strategies that I will take as the Interim Superintendent to develop a deep understanding of what CPS is doing well, what areas CPS can improve and how community stakeholders, including students, educators, staff, families, and partners, can advise me in these areas.

The information and perspectives gathered during this process will inform not only my transition, but the development of budget plans for both federal funds (ESSERIII) and CPS's general budget, as well as the multi-year district plan.

ENTRY PLAN GOALS AND OUTCOMES

This entry plan sets five broad goals that are addressed in both the pre-entry and entry activities outlined further in the document. The five goals are:

Governance

Continue to develop and strengthen the governance team-School Committee and Superintendent relationship.

1

In order to increase our success in meeting the needs of ALL scholars, the Committee and I must establish a trusting, positive, collaborative and team-oriented relationship. I will work collaboratively with the Committee to develop District priorities and discuss issues and matters of governance, management, core values, and beliefs.

Organizational Capacity and Alignment

Increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency and ensure high performance and support to schools.

2

The district leadership team's primary role is to support the key functions of the District. It is my responsibility that we operate as a highly effective, cross-functional team, dedicated to a positive, professional culture focused on service and improving morale, so that the focus remains on meeting the needs of **EVERY** scholar. It is critical that I understand how the organization is currently operating--what's working well and where there are opportunities for improvement.

Student Success

Focus organizational efforts and align resources to ensure that all students are academically, socially and emotionally successful and are ready for college and/or a career.

3

To facilitate optimal learning opportunities for all students, educators must have appropriate curriculum, systems, tools and support. I will ensure that all decisions are made using a five-pronged approach:

- Is it good for ALL scholars?
- Is it available and accessible to ALL scholars?
- Is it researched and/or evidenced based?
- Is it fiscally sound and responsible?
- How will we measure impact?

Engagement & Communications

Build public trust capital and confidence through open, honest communication and positive relationships.

4

It is critical that I understand the culture, history and expectations of the entire community. Working with staff, I will be proactive and deliberate in engaging all stakeholders while ensuring that all voices are heard.

Culture & Climate

Promote and ensure a positive, collaborative, and constructive climate focused on a student-centered culture of positive outcomes and achievement.

5

To reach these goals, I will do the following:



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Spend time with students, teachers, families, principals, school district administrators, other CPS employees, community partners, and other community members to hear about their proudest accomplishments and greatest challenges.



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Analyze and study performance data and other student data. Review existing district policies and implementation of initiatives.



SHARE

Spend time in the community engaging students, parents/families, and community leaders by sharing my leadership story, educational philosophy and core values. I will strive to develop a positive tone and sense of urgency for our schools and students.



BUILD

Establish strong working relationships and build rapport with the School Committee, CPS leadership and staff, and community and local leaders. I will take intentional steps to be present in the community and establish an approachable persona.



PLAN

Review the previous strategic plan with specific action steps to update the plan based on current data and information.

These activities are meant to yield **four** key outcomes:

- 1 A comprehensive summary** of findings, observations and information gained from listening and learning.
- 2 Engagement of the Cambridge community** to support the development of the plans for the ESSER III grant, CPS's general budget, and the multi-year distinct plan.
- 3 An outline of continuous improvement efforts and an action plan** with a timeline to update the district's strategic plan.
- 4 A district and community who are excited and energized** about the direction of CPS and a desire and readiness to work collaboratively.

ENTRY PLAN TIMELINE

“I give you this to take with you: Nothing remains as it was.
If you know this, you can begin again, with pure joy in the uprooting.”
-Judith Minty

The work of an entry process occurs simultaneously with operating the school district.

To effectively ascertain what is working well in the district and where there might be opportunities for growth, transition and entry activities are designed for active listening and authentic engagement.

There are two phases to the entry plan process:

Pre-Entry

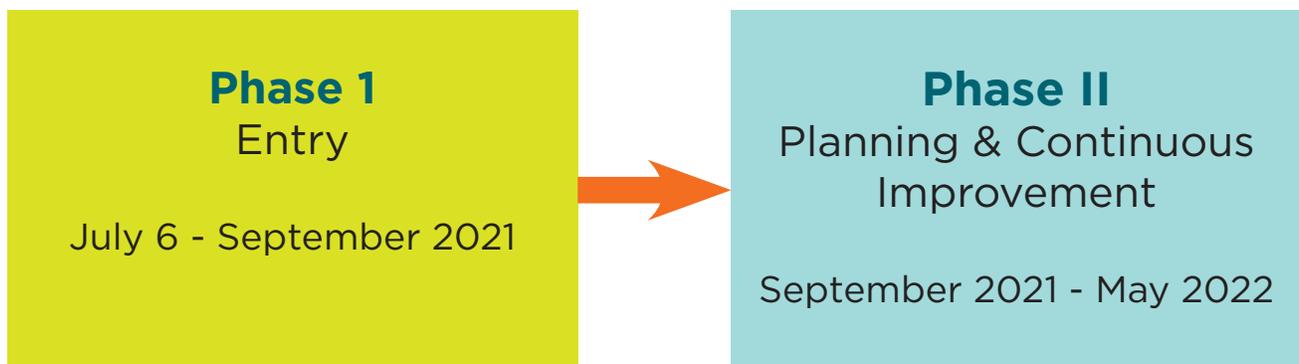
During this phase, I gathered important information from key district employees about the CPS and their work through formal briefing documents and began drafting the entry plan.

Phase I

Listening and learning will dominate Phase I and the early stages of Phase II. This includes numerous one-on-one and group meetings with various constituencies. Several updates will be provided to the School Committee along the way for feedback. A formal report will be given at the end of each phase of the entry process.

Phase II

Leading will dominate the second half of Phase II of the Entry Plan, culminating with the development and presentation to the School Committee and community of an outline focused on continuous improvement. This includes building and sustaining relationships and developing an action plan and timeline to update and develop the district’s strategic plan.



The entry process includes a variety of activities, including:

- School visits
- Meetings (group and one-to-one) and at least one retreat with the School Committee
- Meetings (group and one-to-one) with key stakeholders: principals, assistant principals, district leadership, community leadership, union leadership, elected officials, and other identified stakeholders
- School-based meetings with and between administrators and teachers
- Community meetings with parents, students, educators, community partners and other community members
- Data analysis and document review

These activities are described in more detail in the next section.



ENTRY ACTIVITIES, BY GOAL

In each section, I describe the key activities I will take as part of the pre-entry or entry period. See an update on my progress implementing these activities on our website at www.cpsd.us/greerentry. The status of each activity is described as: not yet initiated, in progress, or completed.

GOAL 1

GOVERNANCE

Continue to develop and strengthen the governance team-School Committee and Superintendent relationship.

1



Pre-Entry (June 17; 21-22, 2021)

- Draft goal areas for entry activities and entry plan
- Begin review of critical documents such as student achievement data, budgets, contracts, School Committee meeting minutes and video, special education documents, curriculum documents, policies/procedures, etc.
- Meet with outgoing superintendent, Dr. Salim to discuss urgent and critical areas pertaining to the school district

Entry (July 6 - October 1)

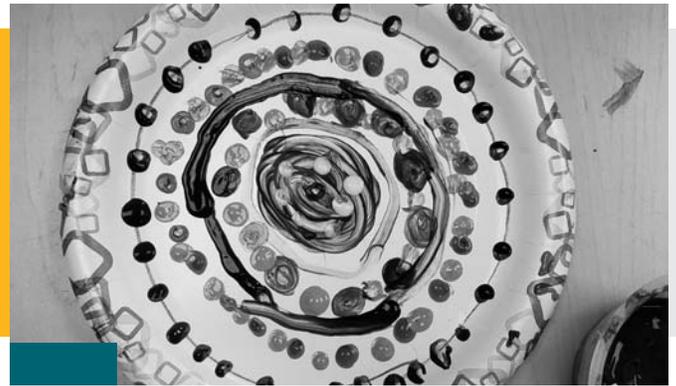
- Hold retreat with the School Committee with the purpose of discussing communication protocols, norms of behavior and interaction, focus and goals for the first year; establish at least two additional dates for retreats throughout the school year
- Conduct one-on-one and small group meetings with all School Committee members to ensure effective communication and engagement and continue to build positive, productive relationships
- Meet with the union leadership to establish positive relationships and broaden perspectives

GOAL 2

ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT & CAPACITY

Increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency and ensure high performance and support to schools

2



- Meet one-on-one with every principal and central office administrators.
- Strategically attend key meetings (i.e. instructional council, departments, employment interviews, task force and working groups, etc.).
- Send introductory communication to all administrators and staff.
- Review key district financial materials, budgets and most recent audits, grants.
- Review all critical documents: employee handbooks, policy/procedure manuals, alignment of standards-curriculum-assessments and professional development, student achievement data by school, legal proceedings, safety and emergency plans, etc.
- Plan and facilitate multiple leadership retreats with the leadership/administrative teams to develop trust by outlining norms, role clarity, responsibilities, expectations, Theory of Action, and systems for mutual accountability.
- Site visits at all schools and programs: Conduct meetings with each school's instructional leadership team to obtain perspectives on the district's/school's strengths and opportunity for growth.
- Determine how communication and decision making will occur with the executive team establishing meeting protocols and systems designed to focus on increased student achievement and continuous improvement.
- Review processes and systems that guide the distribution of resources and ensure that the allocation of resources aligns with students' needs.
- Review district's enrollment and financial projections, resource allocation and the process for building the annual operating budget; analyze how it is aligned to support the needs of all students.
- Review the district's safety and crisis communication plan.
- Review all School Improvement plans.
- Host school based listening and learning forums/focus groups for all staff to attend.
- Host focus groups for current high school and upper school scholars and former high school scholars.
- Conduct focus groups with all educator groups, including support staff to listen and learn.
- Determine how much autonomy and authority principals have in the current organizational structure and establish how much access and opportunity they have in decision making at the District level.
- Ensure all necessary plans and preparations are in place to ensure an outstanding opening of schools; establish protocols for assessing the effectiveness of the opening of schools.

GOAL 3

STUDENT SUCCESS

Focus organizational efforts and align resources to ensure that all students are academically, socially and emotionally successful and are ready for college and/or a career.



3

- Analyze patterns in student achievement data.
- Assess the district's expectations for all students' academic success and commitment to meeting the needs of all of its diverse learners.
- Review any instructional audits / reports, curriculum review cycle information conducted internally or by any outside group or organization.
- Meet with the CPS instructional leadership team (Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Curriculum Coordinators, Directors, Principals, etc.) to discuss achievement data; instructional program alignment; capacity of short and long-term professional development plans to meet the professional learning needs of principals, teachers, support staff, and central office staff; current goals, and priority action areas for the district.
- Explore how CPS utilizes data to ensure that all scholars are performing at or above grade level and the implementation of the MTSS (Multi-tiered Systems of Support) framework to address the needs of all scholars.
- Meet with the CPS instructional technology team to assess the level of instructional technology integration and its impact on learning outcomes.
- Review and/or evaluate the current curriculum, assessments, and instructional programs with the curriculum and instructional staff.
- Evaluate what processes are in place to provide the following services: Guidance Counseling, Mental Health, and Social Services.
- Review the teacher evaluation system and all other employee evaluation systems.

GOAL 4

ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Build public trust capital and confidence through open, honest communication and positive relationships.



4

- Contact key community leaders to introduce myself and begin establishing a working relationship.
- Send communication to all teachers, staff and families.
- Conduct one-on-one meetings with all district and building administrators.
- Assess the quality, quantity, and effectiveness of all existing forms of communication with various stakeholders: School Committee, Families, Teachers, Support Staff, Administrative Staff, Student Leaders, Community Leaders, Business Leaders, and Faith-based Leaders.
- Identify leaders in the faith-based community and their professional organizations, affiliations, and meet for an initial listening and learning session. Establish a routine communication protocol.
- Hold periodic and ongoing media briefings and establish routine communication protocols and meeting protocols.
- Host open forums/town hall meetings with teachers, students, families, and leaders as a routine activity for personal communication about critical issues facing our organization.
- Attend pre-existing meeting structures to engage the community (School Councils, “Friends of” Meetings, Etc.).
- Review current structures of advisory groups including educators, students, families, partners, and community members, to ensure effective representation of the CPS community and support continuous improvement efforts



GOAL 5

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Promote and ensure a positive, collaborative and constructive climate focused on a student-centered culture of positive outcomes and achievement.



5

- Establish quality relationships with key district leadership and meet with all central administration departments.
- Broadly communicate my personal and professional commitment to: Be a good listener...a very good listener, nurture a culture of feedback and honest communication about goals (what is working, what is not working), affirm and celebrate the strengths and assets of the district.
- Schedule a visit to every school and build relationships with principals, teachers, students, and staff.
- Schedule before and after opportunities to meet with the Superintendent at each school site and other community sites.
- Share Superintendent's weekly community updates in ways that are accessible to all members of our community, provide key information, and highlight positive efforts in CPS.
- Identify and hire critical team members to vacant positions.
- Systemize structures for celebrations of students, staff and community.



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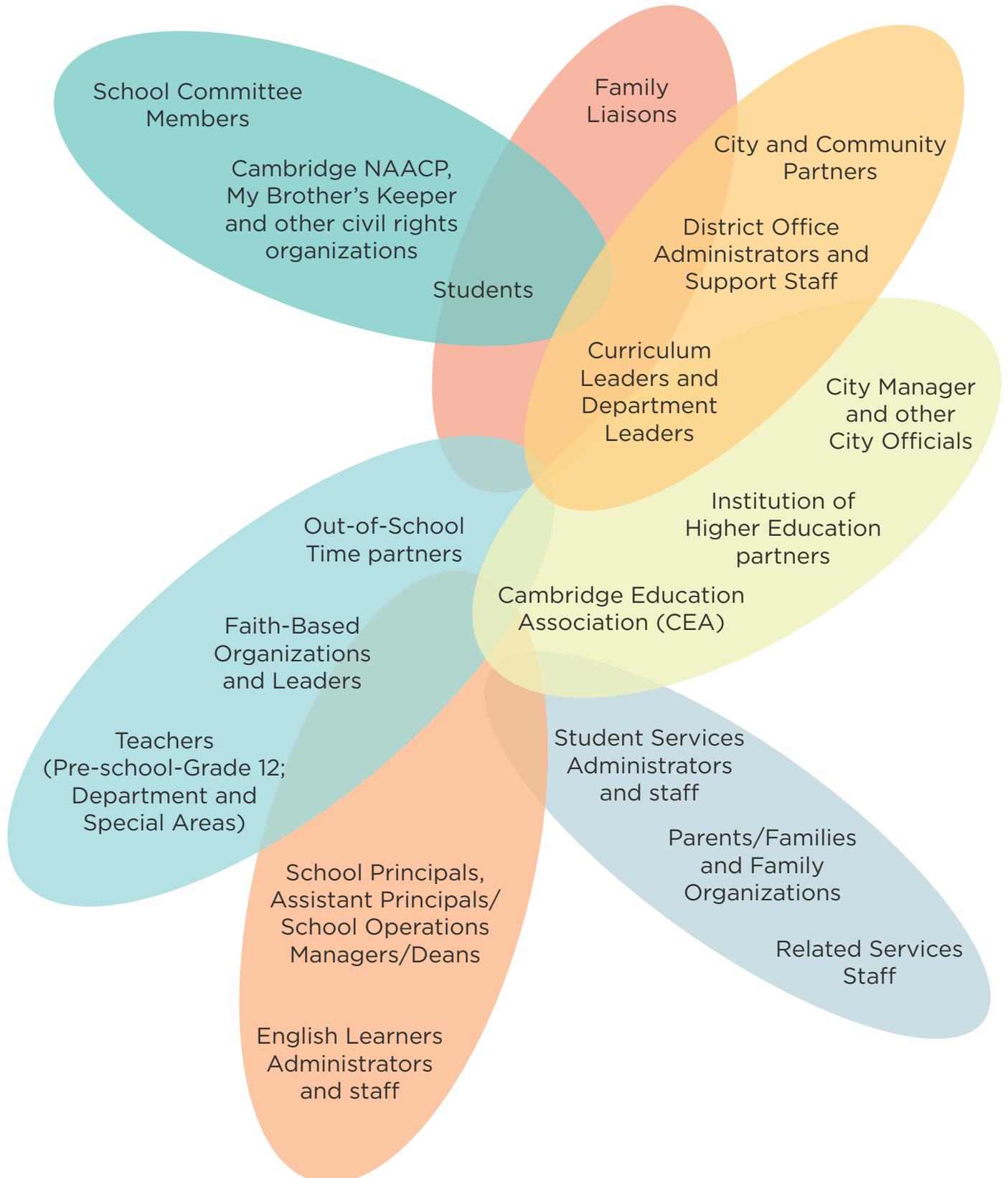
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INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

During the entry activities, I will conduct one-on-one and focus group interviews with various community stakeholders to listen and learn about the Cambridge Public Schools. The following individuals and groups will be engaged during the entry process.

This is not an exhaustive list.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to have supportive colleagues who guided the development of my entry plan, including Dr. Peter Goreman and the National Superintendents Academy.

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REFERENCE

Jentz, B. with Wofford, J. (2012), *The entry plan approach*. Newton, MA: Leadership and Learning, Inc.