



Spencer-East Brookfield

Regional School District

Focused upon improving student learning...

Progress. Unity. Knowledge.

Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District

New Superintendent Dr. Paul Haughey's Plan of Entry:

*“**Listen**ing and Learning to Strengthen Relationships for Student Success”*

Last Updated: July 14, 2018

Plan of Entry

Introduction

The superintendent is responsible for fulfilling the mission of our district and schools – *improving student learning*. This role provides essential leadership to obtain and develop quality staff, secure and manage funds and facilities, and encourage and maintain communication between the schools and the public. The purpose of this entry plan is to provide a structure to support Dr. Paul Haughey’s transition as superintendent for Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District as he listens to students, staff, families and the communities of Spencer, Massachusetts and East Brookfield, Massachusetts to:

- Build public trust and strengthen engagement in our schools;
- Update the needs, objectives and work priorities of the school district as outlined in the district’s existing strategic plan to prepare all students for successful futures; and
- Identify the district’s strengths, improvement opportunities and challenges.

The transition activities outlined in this plan are designed to help Dr. Haughey accelerate the changeover by gathering critical information quickly about the needs of the children, staff and the school system and community; establish a strong community presence early; assess the district’s strengths, challenges and opportunities for improvement; identify critical issues; correct weaknesses while honoring the work of the past; and create a community network of contacts and resources that will help advance the regional school district.

Special consideration has been given to include a diversity of stakeholders in this plan and voices that may not be heard through traditional forms of communication.

The stakeholders mentioned in this plan are in no way a comprehensive list of all community organizations. If a district stakeholder group was inadvertently omitted, please contact the Superintendent’s office at 508-885-8500. We want to be inclusive. It should be noted that the work of entry occurs simultaneously with the responsibility of leading and operating the district. This entry plan has three distinct phases:

- Phase I: Pre-Entry
 - Spring 2018
- Phase II: Entry
 - July 1 – December 31, 2018
- Phase III: Development of Summary Report and Strategic Plan Updates
 - Fall 2018 – Winter 2019

Transition Goals

1. Foster a smooth and successful transition of leadership.
2. Enact a structure for the superintendent to get to know all of the people involved in running the district, listen broadly and learn comprehensively about Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District.
3. Ensure multiple perspectives and voices are heard and build strong relationships with stakeholder groups, including a foundation for connection and communication with parents.
4. Structure the transition to focus on building relationships in support of student achievement.
5. Learn the history and norms of the district, and their effect on how the organization functions now and may function in the future.
6. Review organizational structure, climate, and key work priorities to ensure alignment of resources, efficiency, and effectiveness in meeting the educational needs of all students.
7. Determine concerns/issues regarding improving children's performance that need to be clearly examined and addressed.
8. Set clear expectations for the superintendent and others.
9. Use data and feedback gathered to update the district's strategic plan.
10. Formulate priorities and a plan to accomplish them.

Outcomes

The expected results of implementing this entry plan shall include:

- A summary report of observations and key findings shared in 2019; and
- Updates to the district's Target Objectives, Measures of Progress and Work Priorities in the existing District Strategic Plan.

Structure

The superintendent will engage in a purposeful effort to listen to the community and learn about Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District. The following activities will be core components of the entry plan:

- School visits and meetings with school staff.
- Meetings, interviews and Listening Posts.
- Cultivation of a working relationship with the district's five labor associations and their leaders.
- Cultivation of relationships with a diversity of district families, business, and community leaders.
- Cultivation of a working relationship with the School Committee.
- Data analysis and document review.
- Communication with local media for reporting to the public.

A. First Day of School Welcome Activities, School and Classroom Visits

On the first day of school, the superintendent will invite a diverse group of community leaders and elected officials to join in welcoming students at our four schools.

Operating with the belief that spending time in schools and classrooms provides the foundation for learning about the district as well as relationship building, the superintendent will have visited every school by the end of September.

Dr. Haughey will also set a goal to spend one half day or full day in each school prior to winter break in December. The principal and staff will create the agenda for the superintendent's day to allow Dr. Haughey to experience their school as a learner and to provide the opportunity to visit every classroom to get to know staff and students. By December 21, 2018, the superintendent will have visited every classroom in the district.

B. Meetings and Interviews

The superintendent will conduct a series of meetings and key informational interviews to hear from members of the community, policymakers and other stakeholders. During these meetings or interviews, Dr. Haughey will listen for information from stakeholders about:

- *What should he know about our communities, i.e. (Town of Spencer, MA & Town of East Brookfield, MA)?*
- *What should he know about Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District?*
- *What is working well and should be sustained?*
- *What needs attention and could be improved?*

Meetings or informational interviews will include, but are not limited to the following:

Educational Stakeholders

1. Organizational Relationships

I will begin to develop working relationships with key people in the district, most obviously with the School Committee Chairperson and individual school committee members, Central Office Administrators and staff, Principals/Administrators/Supervisors, and Spencer-East Brookfield Regional Teacher Association leaders. This will include the establishment and review of procedures for developing School Committee Agendas as well as understandings regarding communication between the School committee and Superintendent. I also would suggest that we consider future School Committee/Superintendent workshop activities to maintain such communication and proactive relationships. Also, by working with Central Office staff, principals, and Spencer-East Brookfield Regional Teacher Association leaders, we will also establish norms, procedures, and processes for communicating and conducting business.

2. Briefing Sessions

I will ask Central Office members to conduct briefing sessions on topics such as goal setting, staff selection, supervision and evaluation, professional staff development, curriculum development, special education, business functions, budget development, transportation, food service, maintenance and septic/roofing/construction projects. The focus will be succinct reports on the status of each area of responsibility:

- what has been accomplished
- what remains to be completed for next year.

I will also learn how tasks are accomplished in each area of responsibility. This process has already begun and will continue as I review School Committee policies, curriculum work, School Report Cards, school budget, news articles, minutes of School Committee meetings and review of printed material or other key written reports. In addition to current documents, I hope to gain a historical perspective by reading past reports.

3. Personal Interviews

An important source of information will be personal interviews with key members of the school district. I will have scheduled discussions with all individual school committee members, Central Office Administration, Principals, Spencer-East Brookfield Regional Teacher Association leaders, selected parents/families, students, and community leaders. General perceptions of the school system - its successes and priorities for the future will be shared with you as the School Committee in January 2019. Specific content related to individuals will be confidential.

4. Community

I look forward to individual and group meetings with parents and Community representatives. The goal will be to gather perceptions of the school from within the community; to deliver a strong, consistent message about the school and my commitment to the community; and to create understanding and enhance the strong community support for future goals. I will rely on the school committee to identify individuals with whom I should include in these meetings.

5. School Committee

Specific Objectives

- To examine the ground rules and procedures which have governed how the School Committee has conducted business in the past.
- To develop with the Committee a set of ground rules and procedures which will govern how we choose to operate in the future.
- To determine the issues on which the Committee believes we should concentrate in the next year and in the future.

Activities

1. A one-hour discussion with each School Committee member.
2. A meeting with the Clerk of the School Committee to develop a chart of predictable tasks.
3. Meetings with the Administrative Assistant of the Superintendent to discuss procedures for information requested from the School Committee and information sharing from administration.

District Office

Specific Objectives

- To determine priorities which Central Office administrators/staff anticipate in their work this year.
- To determine the norms, procedures and processes which govern how each of the tasks of the Central Office is accomplished.
- To clarify the role and responsibilities of each member of Central Office.

Activities

1. Briefing sessions for me conducted by the appropriate Central Office staff member on staffing, Board agendas, labor agreements/contract negotiations, curriculum development, special education, budget development and implementations, transportation, food service, maintenance, purchasing, and finance. Introductions to all secretaries, custodians, maintenance and transportation/bus drivers.

Administrative Team and Principal Leadership

Specific Objectives

- To determine key priorities within each area of responsibility.
- To clarify roles and coordination with Central Office administration.

Activities

1. Discussion with each member of the Administrative Team.
2. Identification issues at each level to be addressed and to assess work plans to accomplish them.

Association Organizations of Bargaining Units

Specific Objectives

- To develop an understanding of the relationship between employee organizations and the District.
- To define initial issues for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020.

Activities

1. Discussions with leadership of leadership associations.
2. Meetings with each association leadership group/unit to discuss District/Association communication and areas to address.

Students

Specific Objectives

- To meet and establish communications with key student leaders.
- To understand issues that students perceive to be important.

Activities

1. Meet with middle and high school student government leaders.
2. Be introduced to each elementary class.

Site-Based Teams

Specific Objectives

- To understand the structure, membership and responsibilities of site-based school improvement teams.
- To review accomplishments of site-based school improvement teams.

Activities

1. Meeting with District “Shared Decision-Making” School Improvement Team.
2. Meetings and Introduction to site-based school improvement teams.

School Related Organizations

Specific Objectives

- To establish a relationship with school related organizations.
- To understand the positive contributions these organizations make to our school district.

Activities

1. Meet with Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) and Spencer-East Brookfield Regional Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) leadership.
2. Meet with other key parent group leadership.

Community Contacts

Specific Objectives

- Gather perceptions of the school district from within the community.
- To provide a strong, consistent message about the schools and my commitment to the District.
- To create understanding and enhance community support for the schools.

Activities

1. Meet with Town, County, and State officials.
2. Meet with community organizations.
3. Meet with state representatives.
4. Meet with contiguous school officials.
5. Meet with other contacts as determined by the School Committee and Superintendent.

Summative Findings - Information Sharing

Specific Objectives

- To share, in general terms, the results of the discussions with the various constituencies.
- To discuss with the School Committee the next steps and goal setting with the Regional School District.

Activities

1. Superintendent will complete activities and discussions and provide a written summary.
2. Superintendent with the School Committee will discuss and share report at a January 2019 meeting.

**Proposed
Schedule of Entry Plan Interviews**

Current District Interim Superintendent	March through June
Student Services	March through June
Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment	March through June
Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent	July
School Committee Meeting	July and August
School Business Manager/Transportation	July and weekly thereafter
Superintendent "Parent/Family Coffee"	July and monthly thereafter
Independent District Auditor & State Overseer	July and monthly thereafter
Administrators and Supervisors	July and bi-weekly thereafter
"Superintendent Pizza" Student Discussions	October and monthly thereafter
Optional Meeting for any department faculty and staff 20-30 minutes	October through December
Regular Meetings with Association Presidents	July and monthly thereafter
Meetings with PTO and SEPAC	September and October
Meeting with appropriate community and business personnel to be identified	August through December
Results of Entry Plan Information Sharing	January 2019 School Committee Meeting

**Guidelines for Discussion
School Committee**

1. Please give me a very brief autobiographical sketch of yourself.
 - Where were you born and raised?
 - Did you attend public or private schools?
 - How long have you lived in the District?
 - Do you have any family members who work or attend school here?
2. When did you first join the School committee?
 - Why did you want to be a SC member?
 - What are your general impressions of the School District?
 - How have your perceptions changed since you joined the SC?
3. What is the greatest strength of our district's administrative staff?
 - What concerns do you have relative to the District's administrative staff?
 - What is the greatest strength of the teaching staff?
 - What concerns do you have relative to the teaching staff?
4. What are the top three (3) issues that the District must face?
 - Why are they important?
 - What is the priority of those issues?
5. What do you want to preserve in our School District? Why?
 - What do you want to change? Why?
6. Describe the kind of leadership the Superintendents have provided in the past.
 - Describe the kind of leadership you wish to see in the future.
7. As you think about how the School Committee functions as a group, what works well?
Frustrates you, or would you like to see changed?

8. Think about a controversial issue in the District.
 - How did the conflict arise?
 - How did the school committee address the issue?
 - How did the staff and community feel about the manner in which it was resolved and the School Committee's role?
 - What would you do differently at this time?
9. What advice do you wish to give me as I assume the responsibilities of Superintendent?
10. How can I help you be a better School Committee member?

Guidelines for Discussion
Administrative Staff

1. Please give me a very brief autobiographical sketch of yourself.
 - Where were you born and raised?
2. How long have you been employed by the School District?
 - Why did you seek a position here?
 - Is there any other information about you or your family that you would like to share?
 - Which administrative tasks are yours alone?
 - What tasks do you share with other District administrators?
 - Are there areas where role responsibilities need clarification?
3. What are the key issues on which you are currently working?
 - Why are they important?
 - Do they need immediate attention?
 - What is your timeline for completion?
4. What are the top three (3) issues that the District must face?
 - Why are they important?
 - What is the priority of those issues?
5. What do you want to preserve in our School District? Why?
 - What do you want to change? Why?
6. Describe the kind of leadership the Superintendents have provided in the past.
 - Describe the kind of leadership you wish to see in the future.
7. As you think about how the Board functions as a group, what works well, frustrates you or would you like to see changed?
8. Think about a controversial issue in the District.
 - How did the conflict arise?
 - How did the Board address the issue?
 - How did the staff and community feel about the manner in which it was resolved and the Board's role?
 - What would you do differently at this time?
9. What advice do you wish to give me as I assume the responsibilities of Superintendent?
10. How can I help you be a better administrator?

**Guidelines for Discussion
Association Presidents**

1. Please give me a very brief autobiographical sketch of yourself.
 - Where were you born and raised?
 - How long have you been employed by the School District?
 - Why did you seek a position here?
 - Is there any other information about you or your family that you would like to share?
2. When and why did you become active in your Association?
3. What are your general impressions of the school system?
4. What are the top three (3) issues that the District must face?
 - Why are they important?
 - What is the priority of those issues?
5. What do you want to preserve in our School District? Why?
 - What do you want to change? Why?
6. What has been the nature of your contact with the Superintendent?
 - How would you like to see it changed?
7. Describe the history of your association's relationship with the Superintendent and School Committee.
 - Why are the relationships the way they are?
 - How would you like to see it changed?
8. Describe the leadership the Superintendent provided in the past.
 - Describe the kind of leadership you wish to see in the future.
9. If you could change one thing about the School District, what would you change?
10. What advice do you wish to give me as I assume the responsibilities of Superintendent?

**Guidelines for Discussion
Department Heads/Coordinators/Supervisors/Faculty/Staff**

1. How long have you been employed by the School District?
 - Why did you seek a position here?
- 2.. What are your general impressions of the school system?
3. What are the top three (3) issues that the District must face?
 - Why are they important?
 - What is the priority of those issues?
4. What do you want to preserve in our School District? Why?
 - What do you want to change? Why?
5. What has been the nature of your contact with the Superintendent?
 - How would you like to see it changed?
6. Describe the history of your association's relationship with the Superintendent and School Committee.
 - Why are the relationships the way they are?
 - How would you like to see it changed?
7. Describe the leadership the Superintendent provided in the past.
 - Describe the kind of leadership you wish to see in the future.
8. If you could change one thing about the School District, what would you change?
9. What advice do you wish to give me as I assume the responsibilities of Superintendent?

Guidelines for Discussion
Parents, Business, and Community Members

1. Please give me a very brief autobiographical sketch of yourself.
 - Where were you born and raised?
 - How long have you lived in the District?
 - Is there any other information about you or your family that you would like to share?
2. What are your general impressions of the school system?
3. What are the top three (3) issues that the District must face?
 - Why are they important?
 - What is the priority of those issues?
4. What is the greatest strength or asset of the District?
5. What do you want to preserve in our School District? Why?
 - What do you want to change? Why?
6. Describe the kind of leadership the Superintendents have provided in the past.
 - Describe the kind of leadership you wish to see in the future.
7. Do residents believe they receive good value for their tax dollars?
 - If yes, why? If not, where do you think changes should be made?
8. What do you expect from the Superintendent of Schools?

Students

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What you enjoy doing in your free time and what you would rather not do.
3. If you were talking to a visitor to the District, what would you tell that person?
4. What programs have you found particularly helpful or interesting? Why?
5. On a typical day in school, what are the highlights?
6. What are the strengths of the School District?
7. How can the School District be improved?
8. Describe a typical English, science, and/or math class.
9. Describe the type of test and assignments you are most frequently given.
10. Describe your experience with technology.
11. What ideas do you have to improve student's knowledge of technology or in any area?
12. What programs, not currently available to students, would you feel would be helpful for our students?

IMPORTANT - Media Relations: Communicating with and through the media to ensure public understanding of, and involvement in, the mission of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District.

- The superintendent will engage local media to introduce himself and to deepen his understanding of issues important to the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional District.
- The superintendent will seek to better understand both the internal and external communications opportunities in Spencer-East Brookfield Regional District.

**The Spencer-East Brookfield
Regional School District
Mission Statement**

...We believe in the importance of a regional school district where the district is an integral part of the community and that community support is necessary for the district's operation and achievement of excellence. We are confident that through our collaboration, we will build a common purpose for the future of our schools. The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Goals are as follows:

- To engage all students in challenging programs that will meet their individual needs;
- To create and sustain an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation within the entire school community;
- To develop and nurture dynamic partnerships with the greater community;
- To build organizational structures which support effective teaching and learning at all developmental levels while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

**The Spencer-East Brookfield
Regional School District
Vision Statement**

All students can and will learn when supported by a committed community, parents and highly qualified educators. SEBRSD students will develop intellectually, socially, physically, and creatively. They will graduate “college and career-ready” - fully prepared - to become contributing members of the global society.

Conclusion

This Plan of Entry will afford the superintendent the opportunity to listen, observe and learn from a variety of community members while gaining an understanding of the local context of the communities and the regional school district. The entry plan will serve to help the superintendent begin to formulate ideas and frame strategies to improve our school system so that we increase student achievement for all students while simultaneously closing the achievement gap and ensuring success for every child.

The entry plan culminates with the development and presentation of a Summary Report in January 2019, outlining the superintendent’s findings, observations, and next steps.

Many of the ideas from this plan came from others, in particular: “Entry: How to Begin a Leadership Position Successfully,” by Barry Jentz and Joan Wofford; “Entry: The Hiring, Start Up and Supervision of Administrators,” by Barry Jentz, Dan Sheever, Jr., Stephen Fisher, Meredith Howe Jones, Paul Kelleher, and Joan Wofford; “So Now You’re the Superintendent!” by John Eller and Howard Carlson; and Dr. Greg Baker’s Superintendent’s Plan of Entry for Bellingham (WA) Public Schools.