

Gloucester County Public Schools

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Division Superintendent

Superintendent's Plan of Entry

The First Ninety Days (Updated)

INTRODUCTION

This *Plan of Entry* is developed and designed to ensure that the Superintendent strategically transitions into the key leadership position for Gloucester County Public Schools. The activities outlined in the plan are designed to enable the Superintendent in a systematic, inclusive and transparent manner communicate and learn about Gloucester County Public Schools by engaging all stakeholders; assess the organization's current status to determine strengths and areas for growth and improvement; review and determine areas in need of immediate attention; and set the framework to develop appropriate plans of action. Most importantly, appropriate alignment to the Mission and Goals of Gloucester County Public Schools is essential and will be ongoing to ensure that a world class educational experience is offered to all students which allows them to reach their fullest potential and equips them with the necessary skills to be college and/or career ready and become productive contributing members of society. To this end, the Superintendent must be an active listener and ensure that all decisions focus on doing what's best for all students.

GOALS

The *Plan of Entry* is designed to focus on the following goals:

1. To continue the focus on increased student achievement by setting high expectations, closing achievement gaps and meeting the needs of all students (at-risk, average, disabled, gifted and minority populations). **Ongoing**
2. To develop an outstanding working relationship between the Superintendent and the Gloucester County School Board (*Communication & Operating Protocols*). **Ongoing**
3. To establish opportunities to listen and communicate with a multitude of stakeholders (*churches, civic organizations, community leaders, non-school community members, Board of Supervisors, County Administrator, etc.*) and to establish a thorough understanding of the needs of Gloucester County Public Schools and the community at-large. **Ongoing**

4. To ensure proactively that all voices are heard and are engaged in the process of continuous school improvement (*parents, teachers, students, support staff, etc.*) **Ongoing and in development.**
5. To promote the mission and goals of Gloucester County Public Schools. **A new mission and vision statement was adopted in March of 2015.**

OUTCOMES

Expected results of this *Plan of Entry* include:

- ✓ To share a summary of the findings, observations, and/or key understandings gained from the execution of the plan. **February 2015**
- ✓ To develop a Comprehensive Plan of Action that fosters continuous improvement as agreed upon by the School Board, stakeholders and the Superintendent. **Comprehensive Plan was adopted in March of 2015.**

STRUCTURE

This *Plan of Entry* encompasses ninety days. The plan will outline core areas that are priorities for the Superintendent. **Expanded to encompass up to 120 days.**

The Gloucester County School Board

In order to ensure that the school division has the primary focus on meeting the needs of all students, the Board and the Superintendent must develop a level of trust, positive interaction, cooperation, communication and team building. This collaborative relationship must be established with each Board member and the Board as a collective body so that a united front is always on display.

Entry process:

- ✓ To share the Superintendent's *Plan of Entry* with Board members for feedback and suggestions. **Shared with Board in July of 2014 with some feedback given.**
- ✓ To engage in one-to-one meetings with Board members to increase relationships and deepen perspectives. **Ongoing**
- ✓ To set a time frame for a Board retreat to establish communication protocols, roles and responsibilities and norms for behavior and interaction. **Board retreat occurred in July of 2014 in Charlottesville, VA.**
- ✓ To develop a process, structure, and timeline to review academic data and develop a collaborative vision for Gloucester County Public Schools. **A new vision statement**

was adopted in March of 2015 as a part of the Comprehensive Plan. Academic data review will occur throughout the year at all buildings and during Board work sessions as deemed appropriate.

- ✓ To discuss and improve the structure of the performance evaluation of teachers, administrators and central office staff. **Ongoing**
- ✓ To collaborate on the performance evaluation format with objectives and indicators of success to be used to evaluate the Superintendent. **Instrument developed in August of 2014 and was used for evaluation of the Superintendent for the 2014-15 school year.**

Central Office Organization:

The purpose is to define and refine where and if necessary the basic components of the division support systems. It is essential to provide support and require accountability from a high-performing, results-oriented division leadership team. The primary focus is to ensure that business is conducted by an operational team that is dedicated to a positive, productive, and professional culture which supports all buildings in a collegial manner with keeping an emphasis on doing what's best for all students.

Organizational Expectations:

- ✓ Review the current central office organizational structure to ensure the focus is on improving student achievement (including meeting all state and federal benchmarks) and maximizing operational efficiency, both fiscally and by human capital. **The Central Office has very dedicated and efficient personnel committed to seeing Gloucester County Schools be the best. Support for literacy and special education needs emphasis. The 2015-16 budget includes the addition of instructional specialists in literacy and special education. The 2015-16 budget also includes the reduction of one clerical and two manager (energy, environmental/safety) positions.**
- ✓ Make school issues and needs the driving force of daily operation and effectively utilize the expertise of administrators and teachers along with central office personnel. **Putting a focus on instruction and letting that be our driving force behind what we do.**
- ✓ Invest in on-going professional development for all staff so everyone is a part of a continuous professional learning community that supports teaching and learning. GCPS provides on-going professional development for teachers and administrators through internal and external measures. **In addition, we will look at ways to provide additional support through workforce readiness (WHRO) for the unemployed or under-employed to include support staff and members (parents) of the community.**

- ✓ Minimize interruptions that distract school and central office staff from focusing on instruction and be highly visible in the schools. **Ongoing and will be further developed.**

Student Results

The Mission of Gloucester County Public Schools is to provide a safe environment in which all students have a right to learn and will receive assistance in acquiring knowledge and skills to become literate, contributing citizens in a democracy. Therefore, this must be the responsibility of every employee in the division. In order to ensure that all students are being instructed at the highest level, teachers must provide rigorous instruction and effectively monitor students alongside building and central office administrators. Adequate resources and ongoing professional development which include research-based strategies and best practices must be provided to teachers and administrators to further build and increase capacity.

To Improve Student Results:

- ✓ Complete an academic audit to ensure an alignment of the written, taught and tested curriculum. **Curriculum is aligned.**
- ✓ Analyze patterns in student achievement data to evaluate the teaching and learning process and develop appropriate corrective action plans where necessary. **Ongoing; we have one or more areas that have seen academic decline as it relates to the Standards of Learning Assessments over the last three years. However, the 2014-15 school year data indicate that academic improvements were made in 28 of 31 reporting categories and that seven of eight schools will earned full state accreditation status in addition to seven of eight schools meeting all federal benchmarks and the Division as a whole meeting all federal benchmarks.**
- ✓ Assess division expectations and indicators of successes or failures of the academic needs of the diverse learners. **Continuously working to create a sense of ownership and urgency for all students to be successful.**
- ✓ Evaluate historical professional development which has improved student academic achievement and make recommendations for continuous professional development. **Math resource support has had a definite positive impact on student achievement at the elementary level. We need to provide additional support regarding literacy (elementary & middle) and specialized instruction for students with disabilities. Literacy and special education support positions are included in the 2015-16 budget.**
- ✓ Establish protocols for monitoring the instructional program and providing constructive and timely feedback. **Increased emphasis has been placed on instructional observations, feedback and lesson planning. Building schedules for instructional monitoring (calendars) are created on a monthly basis.**

Communication & Community Relations

During the first 90 days and beyond, the Superintendent will focus on establishing an open and transparent communication system with all stakeholders. Also, the Superintendent will be proactive in reaching out to stakeholders traditionally under-represented in public education to make certain their voices are also heard and valued.

Key questions to stakeholder include:

- ✓ What are the strengths of Gloucester County Public Schools? **Its people to include students, staff, parents and the community at-large.**
- ✓ What needs to be improved? **Parental involvement, ongoing communication, full accreditation at all schools, relationship between the School Board and BOS.**
- ✓ What do you see as major priorities? **Funding for schools, full accreditation at all schools, stakeholder input and transparency.**
- ✓ What is your vision for Gloucester County Public Schools? **To see that all schools have the necessary resources that allow GCPS to help all students reach their fullest potential and be college and or career ready. Development of a Comprehensive Plan that drives the direction of the Division over the next several years. The Comprehensive Plan (2014-2020) was adopted in March of 2015.**

Actions to improve community relations include:

- ✓ Meet with the County Board of Supervisors and County Administrator. **Ongoing; topics discussed include sound fiscal practices, relationship development, new Page, metrics for outstanding performance and justification of needs, funding for teachers, development of programs based on community employment opportunities and monitoring student's success after high school.**
- ✓ Contact the various forms of media (radio, television, newspaper) for introductions and establish protocols for communication. **Ongoing**
- ✓ Reach out to General Assembly officials. **Met with Delegate Hodges and Senator**

- Norment during the month of January 2015 and will be ongoing annually. Will look to establish an annual meeting with Congressman Wittman in the fall of 2016.**
- ✓ Meet the leaders of parent and teacher organizations. **Met with GEA three times during the 2014-15 school year and will meet quarterly in 2015-16 as well as meet quarterly with the Gloucester Retired Educators Association. Parent advisory was developed in June of 2015 and will meet quarterly in the 2015-16 school year.**
 - ✓ Contact college and university officials for introductions. **Ongoing**
 - ✓ Establish networks with peer superintendents and professional organizations. **Ongoing and I serve on the VASS Professional Development Committee for Region III and Co-Chair of the SOQ Revision Committee for the Commonwealth.**
 - ✓ Meet with area religious leaders and community leaders; be available to speak to churches/civic organizations, community groups, etc. **Ongoing and I have spoken at various churches and civic organizations (Ruritan, Rotary, Retired Educators Association, Gloucester Resource Council, etc.).**
 - ✓ Establish evening hours and weekend times for all stakeholders to meet the Superintendent in the effort to initiate and build relationships and promote an open door policy. **Will be established in the summer of 2016.**
 - ✓ Visit each school regularly to engage principals, teachers and support staff about where we are as a division and where we need to be to meet the needs of all children. **Ongoing monthly with building administrators to include visiting classrooms and providing feedback. Some instances have allowed for direct feedback to teachers. Teacher advisory was developed in June of 2015 and will meet monthly throughout the 2015-16 school year.**

- ✓ Meet and dialogue with students at the various schools to understand their experiences at school and attain suggestions on how we can improve their educational experiences. **Will schedule in the fall of 2016 in addition to the development of student advisories.**
- ✓ Attend school functions, athletic events and community events. **Ongoing**

Plan of Entry Update

At the end of the “*Plan of Entry*” period (**November 2014**), the Superintendent will announce the findings, propose plans, and collaborate with the School Board and other stakeholders to drive the direction for continuous growth and improvement in all facets of Gloucester County Public Schools with keeping a “Students First” philosophy.” **Findings were shared in February of 2015 which encompassed a longer time frame than originally indicated above. In addition, updates have been added to the plan in the 2015-16 school year.**