

Superintendent Entry Plan

Nashoba Regional School District

“A New Day”



Mission: To learn about, and gain an understanding of, the culture, values, and beliefs that help define and underpin the Nashoba Regional School District.

Listen, Review, Observe, Learn, Act

The process to better understand and to smoothly transition into the role of Superintendent of the Nashoba Regional School District has been multi-pronged. It has involved substantial outreach and a lengthy listening tour. There were many individuals from within and outside of the district who brought different perspectives to this phase. All were highly valuable and helped to build a rich contextual framework for understanding the underpinnings, working mechanisms, and culture of the district.

The following phases of an entry process were implemented:

Listened

Met with:

- 1) School Committee Chairman and Members
 - Attended the School Committee meeting on July 7, 2016
 - Attended the Collective Bargaining Workshop on July 7, 2016
 - Attended the Goals Workshop on August 26, 2016
 - Met with individual members
 - Meet with Chair regularly
- 2) Chiefs
 - Met with Police and Fire Chiefs on July 25, 2016 to discuss general security concerns, school safety and emergency school closing protocols
- 3) DPW Town Leads
 - Met with DPW Heads to discuss Emergency School Closing protocol, roles, and responsibilities
- 4) Town Managers
 - Continue to meet weekly with Town Managers to discuss various topics
- 5) Facilities Staff
 - Held several “round table” discussions with Head Custodians
 - Currently meet daily with Director of Facilities, Director of Human Resources, Director of SPED, Director of Technology and Interim Business Manager for updates
- 6) Union Representatives/Leadership
 - Met on several occasions with Kevin Keaveney
- 7) General Staff
 - Held several “round table” and one-on-one discussions with Central Office Staff
 - Attended New Hire Orientation and addressed new hires
 - Attended “First Day” assembly and addressed staff

Convened:

- 1) Administrative Team Retreat
 - Held the annual Administrative Retreat on August 17th and 18th
- 2) NRSB School Committee Retreat
 - Collective Bargaining Workshop on July 7, 2016
 - Goals Workshop on August 26, 2016

Attended:

- 1) FSS Open House
- 2) LBMS Open House
- 3) FSS School Council
- 4) NRHS Open House
- 5) SEPAC Kick Off Meeting
- 6) Center School Building Committee

Reviewed

- 1) Processes (Paper work)
 - a. Fiscal
 - i. Revenues/Expenditures
 - b. Forms
 - i. Human Resources
 - ii. Business Office
 - iii. Student Forms
 - c. Tracking
- 2) Files
 - a. Acknowledgement of Gaps
 - b. Personnel
 - c. Electronic / paper
- 3) Procedures (Operations)
 - a. Ticketing for Tech Center
 - b. Ticketing for Facility Requests
 - c. Use of School Dude
 - d. Safety Exercises/Practices
- 4) Related Documents/Processes
 - a. Forensic Audit
 - b. Contracts
 - c. MASBO Report

Observed

- 1) Present practices/procedures
 - a. Human Resources
 - b. Business Center
 - c. SPED Center
 - d. Food Services Center
 - e. Extended Day Center
 - f. Facilities

- 2) School district walkthroughs
 - a. Prior to school convening
 - b. After First Day Back
 - c. Ongoing School Walkthroughs

Learned

(Key Findings)

Commendations:

- 1) Staff were exceptional throughout the initial transition process
- 2) Staff and administration, in general, are outstanding
- 3) Students are the focus at every level throughout the district
- 4) Strong, skilled, compassionate staff interweave and populate the district
- 5) SC exhibits comprehensive support for the entire district
- 6) SC is actively involved in district operation at appropriate level
- 7) SC regularly engages in professional development
- 8) Strong community support is present in each community
- 9) Town Administrators/Staff are very supportive of education
- 10) Excellent and responsive police and fire department support schools and district
- 11) Parents are supportive and value a strong educational system

Challenges:

- 1) Facilities needed to be a top priority/prepping schools for the first day back
- 2) Facilities require both short term and long term goals and immediate attention
- 3) Past practices were difficult to trace – lack of physical information
- 4) There is a need to create new pathways for information
- 5) Processes/forms/ordering require refinement
- 6) Attention to detail is needed in multiple areas
- 7) General Budget process requires review

Mission: To develop strategies and goals for improvement and sustainability.

Specifics:

1) Focus on Science

We will continue to work at the implementation of the new MA DESE science standards into current Nashoba curriculum. We will continue to provide support and professional development across the district in this area. The Teaching and Learning unit will take the lead on this.

(Standards One and Four)

2) Focus on implementation of new math series k-8 (District)

After a pilot year, the decision was made to purchase and utilize the “enVision” math program district wide effective this school year. The Teaching and Learning Unit will continue to help guide, facilitate, and support a smooth implementation of this program across the district.

(Standards One and Four)

3) MCAS Change Preparation

An ad hoc team has been established to create a plan that will support teachers and students regarding the anticipated change process for a newly minted Next Generation MCAS process at the Grades 4 and 8 levels. Teaching and Learning will support this implementation with the NRSD Director of Technology.

(Standards One and Four)

4) Establish process to review assessments (K-8)

The administrative team recently established an ad hoc team for the purpose of reviewing currently utilized Nashoba assessments beyond that of MCAS. They will bring recommendations forward for the team’s consideration regarding movement forward with assessments that are believed to be absolutely necessary to provide data that truly helps to drive instruction. Those assessments that provide data that is not integral are expected to be reviewed and potentially sunsetted.

(Standards One and Four)

5) Educator Evaluation (Administrative Lens)

We will be looking to streamline this process and build on consistencies across the district. We will review last year's process and look to refine and alter the infrastructure to define clarity for all. We will continue to utilize the current Board in place and its wisdom. As administrators we will also look to collectively refine our process to build upon the current expectation for the administrative evaluation.

(Standards One and Four)

6) Review of Budget Process

We await the final findings of a forensic audit regarding our district wide fiscal processes, currently being completed by Melanson and Heath. We will tie those findings and recommendations to the recently completed MASBO report. It is our hope to refine certain practices and processes utilized in the Business Office to align with industry standard best practices based on the findings of both reports.

(Standard Two)

7) Updating of Forms

We will complete a review of current Human Resources forms and practices. This will be completed with an eye to best practices and updating current forms.

(Standard Two)

8) Updating of Processes

We have begun the process of updating fiscal approaches towards all processes. This will also extend to the areas of Food Services, Extended Day and Facilities. We will put the Nutri-Kids point of sale system into place in early 2017 to provide a superior means for accounting and reporting in the Food Services center. We will also work to implement a better system for monitoring registration, billing and invoicing in our Extended Day program. In Facilities we will work to provide better Professional Development to support modules that we have access to in School Dude to maximize the current system. This will help to support a better ordering system as well as general ticketing process for district buildings.

(Standard Two)

9) Refine district rental processes/billing

We have contacted the designers of School Dude and are working to better maximize those modules which we currently house within the district in the area of facilities. We have also established an ad hoc group that is reviewing current practices, rental costs and expectations. They will present their findings and recommendations to the administrative team and then to the School Committee later this year.

(Standard Two)

10) Movement of Team Chairs

An Administrative Team decision was made to have our district wide Team Chairs, who help to guide and support members of our SPED population, return to the buildings which house the majority of their case load. This was a unanimous decision. They have recently had their desks located at Central Office. It was felt by the district administrators that having the Team Chairs back in the buildings would allow greater access to the staff, students, and families.

(Standards One and Three)

11) Reconfigure Central Office area

Work was established this summer to do some minimal reconfiguration of the Central Office area. The goal was to develop better use of the overall facilities to maximize the space of each central office unit. Key characteristics were considered including physical location of space, ensuring of privacy for those offices that needed to have it, development of a quieter work space, and maximizing the areas that were available.

(Standard Two)

12) Reconfigure Program of Student Areas (Bolton)

The opportunity was taken to move the Extended Day, OT/PT, and Pre-k programs out of the older Emerson wing and into the newer wing. This allowed peers to be with peers, both staff and students. It has allowed the opportunity, for example, for a greater sense of community amongst all Pre-K teachers and students as they are now all located in the same area of the building. The Extended Day and OT/PT programs now have convenient locations to the gymnasium area where they are able to branch out their programs when the need arises.

(Standard One)

13) Review School Improvement Plan and District Plan Process

The Teaching and Learning unit will look at reviewing this process with Principals. The primary intent is to establish commonalities and a consistent approach across the district with regards to expectations for each of these plans. It is anticipated that this will better support the schools and district as these are reviewed, templates are created, and plans are developed. The Teaching and Learning unit will take the lead on this.

(Standards One, Three and Four)

14) Communications tools

We are in the process of reviewing current practices at both the school and district levels in this area.

(Standards One, Three and Four)

In General:

1) Support and guide

We will continue to build on opportunities for growth where there are natural tie-ins that help to support our ongoing work. Site based Administrators, for example, are on a regular meeting schedule in both small and large group settings monthly, as well as one on one meetings regularly. *(Standards One, Two, Three and Four)*

2) Communication

As schools, and as a district, we will work on our overall levels of communication both within the district and beyond. We will re-establish a twitter account and begin to make changes to our website to further support our direction. *(Standards Two and Three)*

3) Move toward strengthening site-based management

This is a philosophical shift which we will continue to work at. This will require a different set of norms and expectations for administrators and key lead positions in both the schools and at the Central Office level. It is anticipated, for example, that Principals will be site based in terms of building management. The same will hold true for Central Office centers such as Human Resources, SPED, Facilities, Business, Food Services, Extended Day and Teaching and Learning. *(Standard Two)*

4) Strive for Districtwide Consistency

We will continue to work at building the Nashoba “brand”. We are one. Collectively we are stronger as a sum of all parts. We need to continue to work at building on our group and collective strengths. We will continue this work with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction, administration, fiscal responsibility, and facilities oversight. *(Standards One and Two)*

5) Develop local relationships

We have begun to work at developing the important relationships beyond our district with our communities. We need to be continue to be Nashoba oriented while respecting the autonomy of our individual communities. We will continue with regular community/school district meetings at various levels. *(Standards Two and Three)*

6) Build relationships with peer area superintendents

I will continue to do outreach to our immediate area and AVC superintendents to maintain positive relationships beyond our immediate school district.

(Standard Four)

7) Maintain positive relationships with DESE members

I will work to continue to maintain pre-existing, positive relationships with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as they relate to our collective efforts in NRSD.

(Standard Four)

8) Facilities

As a result of a build-up of substantial facility issues across the district, this was the area that consumed the most amount of strategy and action throughout the summer months. Full scale program space needs were reviewed, with solutions created. A sense of urgency throughout the process propelled small and large scale projects to be completed. District staff at both the Central Office and school levels worked in tandem to ensure smooth completion of every detail. Work will continue to be ongoing in this area. A full scale, realistic plan moving forward needs to be developed that is more proactive in nature with a focus on preventative maintenance.

In Conclusion:

It is my pleasure and honor to lead and support the Nashoba Regional School District. This is a school district that is rich in history and perfectly poised for the future. Education is highly respected and valued by its communities, staff and administration. We are at a point to build on our strengths and establish new pathways. It is an exciting time to be part of this incredible district.

Thank you to everyone for your warm welcome!