

SUPERINTENDENT **ENTRY PLAN**

MS. ELIZABETH KIRBY



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



INTRODUCTION



“A thorough, research-based entry plan is a key component of successfully transitioning into the Superintendent position for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. My entry plan ensures that I have a solid footing in the key areas of the district and will ensure that I am approaching my engagement with key stakeholders with intentionality and purpose tied ultimately to achieving the goals of the district, outlined in the 2015-2020 strategic plan.”

I first drafted the plan using research-based practices and by reviewing historical district documents. After drafting the entry plan, I shared it with the Board for their feedback and a small committee of stakeholders representing different groups in the district. Now I share my entry plan with the wider community. I will keep all informed of where I am in the entry planning process and ultimately prepare and share a final report of my learning to the entire community.

Even before delving into the details of my plan, I developed a communications plan for it with the help of our district’s Supervisor of Communications. I did this by reviewing entry plans from the District’s previous superintendent, Dr. Talisa Dixon, and other superintendents from across the country. My main goal was to identify the best ways to communicate my plan’s purpose and progression with all of our stakeholders. This plan is consistently being reviewed and adjusted as needed.

This entry plan is organized into three phases. Phase one is the pre-entry planning phase. Phase two represents days 1 to 50. Phase three represents days 51 to 100.



My entry plan is designed to ensure that I enter the role able to learn, process and lead the district. Key goals of the plan:

LEARN ABOUT KEY ELEMENTS OF THE DISTRICT

This includes understanding the history, day-to-day operations, strengths, weaknesses and alignment to the district strategic plan for all schools, central office departments and key school partners.

BUILD TRUST

During the entry planning process, I will engage with multiple members of the CH-UH community in a variety of roles in order to understand the norms, develop relationships and start to build trust. This will allow me to understand the perspectives and core values of the community and understand how that connects to the larger district vision

PROCESS INFORMATION TO INFORM EXECUTION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

After reviewing data gathered during my entry planning phase, I will review that in alignment with the strategic plan in order to identify priorities for the district to discuss and share with the community.



CORE VALUES

Underscoring my entry plan are key core values that are a bedrock to my transition and service in the district. I will approach all of my entry planning activities through a lens that honors each of these values.

STUDENT-CENTERED

All decisions are made with the question “Is this best for students?” as a key litmus test.

TRANSPARENCY

I will keep all parties informed before, during and after the entry planning process.

EQUITY

I will view quantitative and qualitative data through an equity lens, seeking to understand how my actions advance our objectives around equity.

COLLABORATION

I will seek opportunities to build collaboration across departments and stakeholder groups while seeking to understand how teams are used to achieve success in the district.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

I will understand how the district is currently organized to execute on continuous improvement in order to elevate student achievement and advance the district’s strategic plan.

PRE-ENTRY PLANNING: LEARNING



“One of the most important things I knew I needed to do on the outset was to learn.”

After receiving feedback from the Board of Education President and Vice President on my plan outline, I held feedback sessions with each Board member, one on one. We also held a board retreat, which helped me begin to understand current norms and protocols, as well as solidify expectations for my first year. The President, Vice President and I have begun a cadence of biweekly meetings.

Data Review

Taking a deep dive into the numbers has helped me gain a better understanding of the trends within the District and the specific goals I need to prioritize moving forward. I have been reviewing reports, the current five-year strategic plan, survey results, contracts, meeting minutes, budgets, financial audits, and many other key pieces of information.

Gaining Context

I had a meeting with area superintendents in Greater Cleveland to understand the work they are doing and the implications of my role and the politics of the state of Ohio. This is also helping me to learn the state's assessment system and its challenges. To expand my network and support system, I joined BASA, connected with the Ohio Board of Education. I also received my Superintendent's License from the State of Ohio.

With the help of former superintendent Dr. Talisa Dixon and Interim Superintendent Dr. Brian Williams, I was able to develop a transition plan to glean the current state of central office staff, needed hires, a history of the district, and their experiences as leaders of the District.

I met with Leadership Team members to review upcoming key requests for Board approvals, reports, and presentations scheduled for their departments. These meetings have helped me prepare for upcoming board meeting items, as well as learn the rhythm of the board calendar and processes.

I have begun reaching out to district stakeholders, including partners and elected officials, to sit down and discuss their thoughts for the future of the district.

Finally, by reviewing the professional development plans for administrative staff and teachers, I began to make connections on how the district is organized to support professional growth.



PHASE I, DAYS 1 - 50: COLLABORATING

...with schools

Visit the buildings

- Understand the culture of each school. Assess the school's instructional practice, relationships with parents and professional development supports for staff.
- Meet with student groups at all campuses. Understand the student experience in the CH-UH school district and how the schools and strategic plan have or have not met the needs that they have experienced or witnessed. Engage with students across demographic and achievement spectrums.
- Meet with groups of teachers, teacher leaders in both one-on-one and focus group settings. Understand the staff experience in the CH-UH school district and how the schools and strategic plan have or have not met the needs that they have experienced or witnessed.
- Meet with all principals individually. Understand the educational path of each leader, successes and challenges they have had in their schools and how I can best support them in achieving their goals. Review individual school improvement plans and school data prior to the meetings.
- Attend school events.

...with families and community

Meet with community stakeholders including elected officials, leaders of community organizations, and union leadership

- Build relationships with stakeholders. Understand how they have partnered and plan to partner with the district to support us in reaching our strategic plan.

Establish advisory groups for each stakeholder - student, principal, teacher, ESP, and parents

- Develop a process to receive ongoing feedback from district stakeholders on the work of the district and our continuous improvement efforts.

Hold community meet-and-greet events around town

- Understand the parent experience in the CH-UH school district and how the schools and strategic plan have or have not met the needs that they have experienced or witnessed.
- Build relationships with key district partners. Deepen my understanding of the district culture.

Hold standing office hours

- Build relationships with key district partners.
- I also plan to provide all stakeholders with a place where they can share their questions, concerns, and feedback for me at any time. This will likely be in the form of a website link on chuh.org for community participation.

...with the Board of Education

Review existing Task Forces and District Committees

- Currents include the Early Childhood Task Force, Family Engagement Task Force, Gifted Education Task Force, Lay Finance Committee, and the Bond Accountability Commission. Gain an understanding of existing committees and task forces and the role of each.
- Learn the composition of each committee. Identify any additional ones that should be created or if any existing ones have served their purpose and should be disbanded.

Identify entry plan transition committee

- This committee will provide guidance and feedback on the information I have gathered during the pre-entry and entry plan process, helping me process the qualitative and quantitative data that I am collecting in order to inform future decision-making.

Share the plan for feedback

- After making adjustments due to feedback from the Board, share the entry plan for feedback from department heads.

...with Central Office

Meet with Central Office personnel

- Understand their current areas of responsibility, the major projects that are happening, timelines, and pending decisions.
- Discuss current goals, achievement data, instructional program alignment to standards, the capacity of short- and long-term professional development plans to meet the training needs of principals, teachers, support staff, and central office staff. Identify priority action areas.



PHASE 2, DAYS 51-100: ASSESSING & ACTING

Steps to Take

Continue to assess the schools' instructional practices, relationships with parents and professional development supports for staff

Continue to assess alignment throughout departments and schools within the framework of the strategic plan

Continue to attend community events

- Develop relationships and learn about important school/city events from a cultural perspective.
- Share information about upcoming events, activities, and highlights to maintain a strong connection between the schools and the community.

Prepare a summary of lessons learned during Phase 1 for stakeholder groups

- Synthesize information into a practical, digestible format aligned to the district strategic plan.
- Share results of entry plan with Board President. Prepare a preliminary report.
 - Share synthesis of entry plan learning to inform next steps.
 - Work with the Board to take findings from the entry plan and the transition committee to refine and adjust the plan as needed.
 - Share results with members of a transition committee to further refine and provide feedback on the next steps.
 - Share results of entry plan with the entire school community by hosting a public meeting in addition to making that information available on the website.
 - Use entry plan findings information to inform next steps on enhancing the current Strategic Plan and beginning the 2025 Strategic Plan process.



**CLEVELAND HEIGHTS-UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

2155 Miramar Boulevard | University Heights, OH 44118
216-371-7171 | @CHUHSchools | www.chuh.org