

Superintendent Entry Plan

by Caroline Johns



The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; be kind, but not weak; be bold, but not bully; be thoughtful, but not lazy; be humble, but not timid; be proud, but not arrogant; have humor, but without folly.

—Jim Rohn

Letter to the School Community

Dear Faculty and Staff,

It is an honor to begin my service as your new superintendent. Enclosed you will find a copy of my 100-day entry plan which will guide my activities as I transition into the district. The framework of the plan is focused on three areas: *listening, learning* and *leading*. As I begin my work in the district, my first priority will be getting to know the members of our school community. It is my goal to meet each of you, develop an understanding of your work and hear from you how I can best support your efforts. The second component is focused on learning. I look forward to spending time in the buildings and central office learning about the educational program we provide and the many district functions that support our schools. I will also focus on developing an understanding of the community we serve and the expectations of our parents and residents. As my first 100 days conclude, we will have already begun, as a team, to define a common vision for moving the district into the future.

Throughout my career in education, I have maintained a steadfast focus on doing what is best for children. I believe that in order to do this, I must serve as a support for the faculty and staff who deal directly with our children on a daily basis. Therefore, I will maintain an open door policy for all of our employees. I welcome your input, so please do not hesitate to request a time to meet with me or to stop me in the hallway when I am in your building. I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Sincerely Yours,

Caroline Johns

Listening

The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people - Woodrow Wilson

Learning

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. —John F. Kennedy

Leading

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. —John Quincy Adams

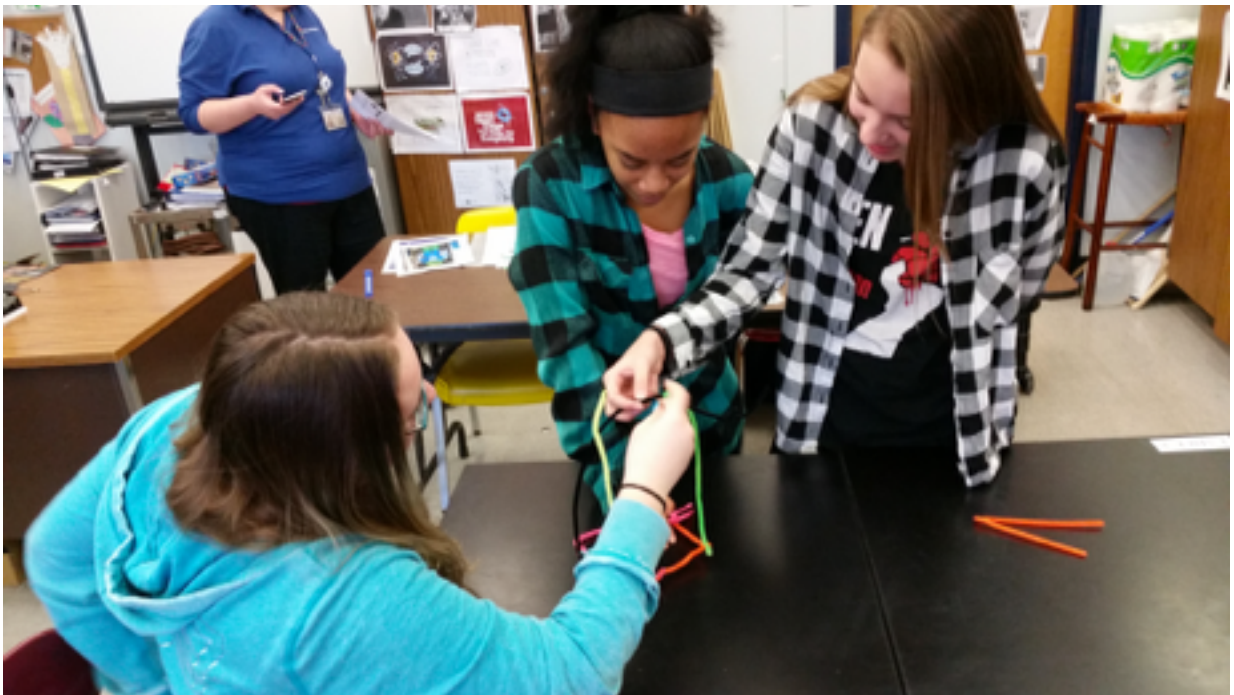
SUPERINTENDENT’S ENTRY MISSION

To establish a collaborative, inclusive and trusting environment for all stakeholders by utilizing a listening, learning and leading framework. This framework will serve as the foundation of my superintendency throughout my tenure in the district.

SUPERINTENDENT’S VISION

Building on an already strong foundation, Northgate School District will provide all students with a solid preparation for future success. Our students will have the opportunity to explore many pathways to their futures. We will achieve our vision by supporting high levels of student performance, offering a rich variety of activities, empowering our teachers and staff by providing the needed resources and training, and ensuring strong leadership at all levels. Decisions will be data-informed and driven by continuous improvement with a clear focus on success for

every student. Central office staff will lend support in the areas of finance, operations and facilities to provide an environment conducive to quality education. The superintendent will work cooperatively with the Board of Directors to engage the community as an integral part of the district's vision. Working as a team, all of our stakeholders will strive to ensure that each child in the Northgate School District receives a first rate education.



Focus Areas:

School Community

Develop an understanding of the beliefs, aspirations and needs of the school community through daily school visits and semi-structured discussions.

Board Relations

Establish a positive working relationship through on-going discussions about the board's beliefs, vision for the district and areas of concern.

Student Achievement

Gain an understanding of the strengths and areas of concern in the academic program through in-depth analysis of achievement data, classroom visits, input from stakeholders, and curriculum review.

Organizational Structure

Review the district's current financial status and 5 year predictions. Analyze allocation of resources to ensure effective and efficient use. Review operational procedures, determine areas of need and develop a prioritized plan to address them.

Community and Public Relations

Work with the school board to identify key leaders in the community. Engage leaders in discussions focused on how to best support a positive relationship based on active engagement with the community.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Develop an understanding of the beliefs, aspirations and needs of the school community through daily school visits and semi-structured discussions.

- Engage in one-on-one semi-structured discussions with teachers and support staff to gain an understanding of their beliefs, perceptions, aspirations, strengths and challenges.
- Meet with each principal and central office administrator individually in order to develop a positive working relationship.
- Meet with the administrative team to identify strengths and challenges to begin to develop a vision for the future.
- Meet with parent and student leadership organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these groups.
- Engage in classroom walk-throughs on a regular basis with building principals. Have follow-up discussions with principals about the observed instruction.
- Review the teacher evaluation process with the administrative team.
- Attend extracurricular events.
- Provide the school board feedback on underlying belief systems that have resulted in low morale. Identify faculty and staff concerns and begin discussions on how to address them.



BOARD RELATIONS

Establish a positive working relationship through on-going discussions about the board's beliefs, vision for the district and areas of concern.

- Meet with board members individually to learn about each person's experiences in the district and community, and to gain an understanding of concerns and hopes for the future.
- Share the entry plan for feedback and suggestions.
- Develop a clear plan for communication between the superintendent and board members to ensure that everyone is kept fully informed on pertinent issues.
- Review the schedule for board and committee meetings. Gain an understanding of protocol for establishing agendas.
- Plan a board retreat for the purposes of establishing a strong relationship between the board and superintendent, analyzing the state of the district and goal setting.
- Conduct school and community visits with board members.
- Review board policy and develop an understanding of the district process for adopting policies.
- Begin a process of continuous reflection and evaluation utilizing the Pennsylvania School Board Association's Standards for Effective School Governance.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Gain an understanding of the strengths and areas of concern in the academic program through in-depth analysis of achievement data, classroom visits, input from stakeholders, and curriculum review.

- Work collaboratively with the administrative team to conduct a thorough analysis of student achievement data. Results from PSSAs, Keystone exams, district benchmarks, Advanced Placement exams, and Industry Standards-Based assessments will be analyzed to determine areas of strength and concern. Other areas including graduation, attendance and discipline rates will also be evaluated. A set of thoughtful questions will be developed to guide further analysis and understanding of the instructional program.
- Review building level practices for using data to inform instruction. A framework of analyzing data at the district, teacher and student levels will be adapted as needed and included in future data meetings.
- Complete review of system-wide interventions for at-risk, gifted and special education students.
- Review the K-12 curriculum and materials to determine alignment of instructional practices with PA Core Standards and expected level of rigor.
- Visit the career center to develop an understanding of program offerings, career counseling and placement and participation rates of Northgate students.
- Meet with guidance counselors to gain an understanding of the needs of the students and current guidance program. Complete a time use analysis.
- Review use of technology focusing on areas of equity and instructional practices.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Review the district's current financial status and 5 year predictions. Analyze allocation of resources to ensure effective and efficient use. Review operational procedures, determine areas of need and develop a prioritized plan to address them.

- Gain an understanding of the central office structure by meeting with all central office personnel to discuss each person's role and responsibilities. Feedback will be solicited on current strengths and areas of suggested change.
- Review all staff contracts.
- Meet with union leadership to establish a positive working relationship. Create a calendar of regularly scheduled meetings to ensure open lines of communication. Develop an understanding of any issues with current contracts.
- Review the district budget with the Director of Finance and Operations to develop an understanding of current finances as well as five year predictions. Review historical data.
- Tour school buildings with the Director of Finance and Operations and custodial staff to discuss current and future needs for the physical plant.
- Review the current safety and crisis communication plan. Make recommendations for future training and updates.
- Review all human resource procedures with a focus on hiring.



COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Work with the school board to identify key leaders in the community. Engage leaders in discussions focused on how to best support a positive relationship based on active engagement with the community.

- Meet with local law enforcement to discuss the district's safety and crisis communication plan. Gather feedback on what they view as the plan's strengths and weaknesses, and develop a plan for working together in the future.
- Work with the Board and administrative team to identify key leaders in the community. Schedule meetings with these individuals and groups for the purpose of introducing myself, seeking their feedback on issues they view as important and communicating our commitment to maintaining positive and open relationships with them.
- With guidance from the Board and administrative team, identify important community events to attend.



