



Guilford
County Schools
STRIVING. ACHIEVING. EXCELLING.

Superintendent's Entry Plan

Maurice O. "Mo" Green

Effective August 2008



Superintendent's Entry Plan

Maurice O. "Mo" Green

Effective August 2008

INTRODUCTION

In order to effectively lead Guilford County Schools (GCS), it is important that I have an effective and successful entry into the school district. The effectiveness and success of that entry will be, in large part, the result of crafting and effectively implementing a superintendent's entry plan.

This is my entry plan. It outlines the goals, objectives, major activities and timetable for my transition to the role of superintendent of GCS.¹ The goals and activities are not listed in order of importance or chronologically.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND TIMETABLE OF THE ENTRY PLAN

The overall goal of this entry plan is to listen, learn and develop a strategic plan for the school district. The entry plan has three phases:

Phase I: Pre-Entry
August 2008– September 7, 2008

Phase II: Entry
September 8, 2008 – December 2008

Phase III: Development of the Strategic Plan
November 2008–January 2009

¹ This entry plan draws extensively from the Superintendent's Entry Plan developed in the Spring of 2006 when Dr. Peter C. Gorman was appointed as the superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), and I was appointed as that school district's Chief Operating Officer (COO). As COO of CMS, I helped shape and implement the plan, and I know, by first-hand experience, the importance of having such a plan and effectively implementing it. Because Guilford County and GCS are different from Mecklenburg County and CMS, however, I know that this plan must also be different. As a result, it incorporates goals and objectives I believe are important for Guilford County. It also incorporates suggestions from cabinet members of GCS, the leadership of the Guilford County Board of Education and others.

Listening and learning sessions will dominate Phase I and Phase II.

These sessions will consist of numerous meetings with board members, internal leadership groups, direct reports, principals, staff, employee groups, students, external leaders, various leadership groups, parent groups, community organizations and community members. Updates/reports will be provided to the Board of Education and the community, as appropriate.

The development of a strategic plan will dominate the second half of Phase II and the final phase of the entry plan. The strategic plan will put into action the Board of Education's vision and goals. It will be an explicit and tactical plan to improve the achievement of all students, complete with goals, objectives, major strategies, timetables for implementation and accountability measures.

The work related to this entry plan will occur simultaneously with operating GCS.

GOAL 1

Develop a framework for increasing student achievement for all students while simultaneously eliminating achievement gaps

Objectives

1. Determine an appropriate course of action for increasing student achievement for all students while simultaneously eliminating achievement gaps.
2. Raise academic achievement expectations for all students, parents and staff.
3. Analyze and evaluate the conditions of chronically under-performing schools, as determined after an analysis of various measures and determine a course of corrective action.

Activities

1. Hire a chief academic officer and consolidate all academic services under this position.
2. Conduct a review of the instructional program, initiatives, practices, curriculum and support materials.
3. Review student achievement and other data for all student populations.
4. Meet with instructional improvement officers to discuss the performance of the schools they supervise and to determine the quality of actions proposed for continuous improvement of schools.
5. Review the work of the Achievement Gap Committee.
6. Review the work of the School Climate Task Force.
7. Review the work related to the achievement of African-American males, presented to the Board of Education in June 2008.

8. Analyze the assessment, monitoring and evaluation systems.
9. Review the new school improvement planning process and determine the alignment between the planning process and expected outcomes of district goals.
10. Engage higher education partnerships in strategies for improvement.

GOAL 2

Develop effective and positive Board-superintendent relations

Objectives

1. Establish the Board and superintendent as a cohesive leadership team focused on improving the achievement levels of all students.
2. Develop and implement appropriate communication protocols between the Board and superintendent.

Activities

1. Schedule a meeting with Board chair (and others, as appropriate) to discuss a format and agenda for Board retreats with the superintendent.
2. Establish clear understandings of roles, responsibilities, expectations and systems for the Board-superintendent team.
3. Establish regular meeting times with the Board chair and vice-chair for reviewing and constructing board meeting agendas and for discussing district matters.
4. Schedule individual meetings with each Board member for one-on-one time.
5. Visit various regions with the individual Board member who represents that particular area of the district to get a better understanding of the Board member's perspective and the constituents he/she represents.
6. Establish regular communication systems with the Board in the form of writing, phone calls and meetings.
7. Establish a performance evaluation format and individual and district goals that can be used by the Board to evaluate the superintendent.

GOAL 3

Establish the overarching themes that will serve as a foundation of the strategic plan and the work of GCS

Objectives

1. Develop the key themes that will serve as the underpinnings for the work of the district and the strategic plan, while ensuring that the themes are consistent with the Board of Education's core values and themes.
2. Communicate the themes to all staff, the Board of Education and the community.
3. Encourage support of the themes by the Board of Education, staff and community.

Activities

1. Develop the following as key themes that will serve as the underpinnings for the work of GCS and the strategic plan:
 - a. Being child-centered in all of our actions;
 - b. Being united in our quest to improve the lives and academic achievement levels for all students; and
 - c. Being excellent and demanding the same of all employees and students.
2. Develop a communication plan for the superintendent and others that focuses on these themes.
3. Be visible in the school facilities and at community activities and communicate these themes at these events, when appropriate.
4. Develop opportunities for various community members to support these themes.

GOAL 4

Build and enhance meaningful and positive relationships with the GCS community, which includes students, parents, staff, community members and leaders

Objectives

1. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with direct reports, principals and key district leadership that are focused on the above-referenced key themes and on improving student achievement.
2. Communicate with parents and facilitate active partnerships on behalf of students.
3. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with leaders of employee associations and groups that are focused on the key themes and on improving student achievement.
4. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with the leadership in the city, county, state and national governmental agencies in order to establish clear lines of communication, advocacy and support for the district's students.
5. Establish positive and collaborative relationships with leaders in the community's faith-based organizations. Understand and participate in the community's faith-based organizations as viable and valuable support and partners to public education.
6. Establish positive and productive working relationships with key leadership and members of business, service, civic, non-profit, philanthropic and political organizations within the Guilford County community and their national representative organizations.
7. Increase opportunities to promote GCS' image within the community and to develop advocacy for what is effective and working well.
8. Ensure ongoing, clear, and consistent communication with all stakeholders.
9. Establish a positive and open working relationship with the members of the media.
10. Increase personal knowledge and understanding of GCS and the community, its culture, traditions, history and expectations for the district.
11. Recognize accomplishments of students, parents, staff, community members and leaders.
12. Publicly celebrate attainment of strategies, benchmarks and goals.

Activities

1. Identify the community's largest corporations, key businesses, foundations, civic, non-profit, philanthropic leaders, public safety chiefs, college and university presidents and their professional organizations and affiliations, then meet with each for an initial listening and learning session. Establish a routine communication protocol with these groups.

2. Identify community's churches/synagogues/mosques/congregations, key religious leaders and their professional organizations and affiliations and then meet with each for an initial listening and learning session. Establish a routine communication protocol with these groups.
3. Schedule meetings with other community leaders. Establish a routine communication protocol with these leaders.
4. Attend meetings of key organizations such as various chambers of commerce and service clubs/organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine communication protocols with these groups.
5. Schedule meetings with the parent organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
6. Schedule meetings with the established student leadership organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
7. Schedule meetings with leaders of each employee association or group for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
8. Schedule times to visit schools. Establish protocol for meeting with school staffs and students.
9. Meet central office staffs. Establish protocol for meeting with these staff members.
10. Establish regularly scheduled meetings with cabinet, senior staff, principals and senior managers, etc.
11. Meet with Guilford County Commissioners, mayors, county and city managers and other local elected officials as appropriate and establish regular meetings with these leaders and preferred communication protocols.
12. Establish regular meetings with state education leaders.
13. Meet with the district's legislative delegation to the North Carolina General Assembly. Meet and request a regularly scheduled meeting with the leadership and an acceptable format for ongoing communication.
14. Schedule a meeting with district's Congressional representatives and senators. Discuss an acceptable format for ongoing communication.
15. Attend school and community functions, including co-curricular and extracurricular events.

16. Hold routine media briefings, and establish routine communication protocols and meeting protocols. Offer to meet with the editorial boards of local media.
17. Assure media that they are welcome and encourage communication and reporting that is open and honest. Invite media to all key and significant events.
18. Analyze and evaluate the current working conditions survey of schools and central departments to assess the impact of current working conditions/climate on achievement. Identify any short-term gains and plan accordingly.
19. Assess the quality, quantity and effectiveness of all existing forms of communication with various stakeholders:
 - o Board
 - o Parents
 - o Teachers
 - o Support staff
 - o Administrative staff
 - o Policy makers
 - o Student leaders
 - o Community leaders
 - o Business leaders
 - o Faith-based leaders

GOAL 5

Increase Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency

Objectives

1. Determine performance levels of each division, department and direct report within the organization.
2. Evaluate whether to consolidate and streamline similar functions, positions and revenue in order to increase and maximize service and support for schools.

Activities

1. Initiate the construction of the superintendent's briefing documents from each division/department. Documents will include areas of major responsibility, major initiatives underway with projected timelines, significant/potential problems, major decisions that need to be made. Use these documents as a tool for rapid understanding of the district's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to progress.
2. Review critical documents, including, but not limited to: policy and procedures manuals; board meeting minutes for last year (and further back as necessary); student achievement data; financial projections and budget processes; legal proceedings; accountability plans and processes; project management protocols and plans; and safety and emergency plans.
3. Review all studies, reports and audits by outside agencies.

4. Establish a schedule to meet with all direct reports and key staff, and, as appropriate, initiate program reviews and personnel quality performance reviews.
5. Identify key staff to assist with my transition into the organization.
6. Identify and hire critical team members to join cabinet and senior staff.
7. Establish standards of protocol for cabinet and senior staff.
8. Build a sense of team internally. Create systems/processes that enable cross-departmental collaboration and expect cross-departmental accountability.
9. Assess budget appropriations in accordance with district priorities for improvement.
10. Establish standards of protocol for communication between administrators (district and school) and the Board of Education.

COMPLETION OF THE ENTRY PLAN

Upon completion of the activities in this plan, I will report to the Board on the results. These results will help with the development and implementation of the strategic plan and with dealing with ongoing district issues.