

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

# Superintendent's Entry Plan



# CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT’S ENTRY PLAN

## *PURPOSE*

The purpose of this entry plan is to establish a set of activities that will guide Peter C. Gorman’s transition to the role of Superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. All executive leadership transition is critical, and this case is no different. These activities are designed to enable the new Superintendent to gather information quickly about the community and the organization; to establish a strong community presence early on; to assess the organization’s strengths and weaknesses; to identify critical issues; to correct weaknesses; to build on strengths; and to create a network of contacts and resources that will assist in the work of improving Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

The set of activities and their primary purpose are as follows:

### **Board of Education**

Purpose: Establish strong team-oriented working relationships with each individual Board member and the Board as a whole.

### **District Executive and Senior Staff**

Purpose: Establish strong professional relationships with key personnel inside the District and begin to assess the strengths and needs of the leadership team.

### **Instructional and Support Staff**

Purpose: Establish strong and collaborative relationships with each of the District’s professional associations and groups of employees.

### **Community Leadership**

Purpose: To meet leaders of community, faith-based, business, and parent organizations to generate good will, build support, and establish communication channels.

### **Political Leadership**

Purpose: To meet local, state, and national political leaders and establish means for regular communication.

### **District Tour and School Visitations**

Purpose: To understand the District’s size, communities, demographics, and to understand differences between the District’s schools.

### **Media**

Purpose: Clearly articulate my goals early so that the public, press, and education community know what to expect. Generate publicity for early “listening and learning” efforts. Demonstrate seriousness of purpose to transform Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Public Schools into a world-class school district.

## ***GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

The overall objective of the entry plan is to listen, learn, and lead. The entry plan has three distinct phases:

**Phase I: Pre-Entry**

May 9 – July 1, 2006

**Phase II: Entry**

July 2 – October 1, 2006

**Phase III: Development of Action Plan**

October 2 – December 1, 2006

Listening and learning sessions will dominate Phase I and the early stages of Phase II. These will consist of numerous meetings with constituent groups, internal leadership groups, direct reports, as well as, external leaders, leadership groups, parent groups, and community organizations. Several updates will be provided to the Board of Education along the way for feedback. A formal report will be given at the conclusion of each phase of the Entry Plan. The reports will include information learned and trends.

Leading will dominate the second half of Phase II and the final phase of the Entry Plan culminating with the development and presentation to the Board and community of an Action Plan. The Action Plan will be an explicit and tactical plan to improve the achievement of all students and to set internal operating, reporting, and accountability systems. The Action Plan will also serve to put into action the Reform Governance Policies and reiterate Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and Commitments, and Theory of Action. The Action Plan will become the Executive Staff's guiding document for our focused efforts at continuous improvement.

A list of specific activities and people the Superintendent is to meet with is being constructed to assist successful completion of each goal stated below. Copies will be made available to the Board.

It should be noted that the work of entry occurs simultaneously with the responsibility of operating the School District. The duties of day-to-day operations and problem solving are in full course while entry takes place.

### **GOAL 1:**

#### **Develop and Ensure Effective District Reform Governance through Effective and Positive Board-Superintendent Relations**

##### **Objective:**

1. Establish the Board and Superintendent as a cohesive leadership team with a singular agenda focused on improving the achievement of all students through

- adoption and implementation of the Theory of Action, Reform Governance, and Reform Governance Policies.
2. Develop and implement appropriate communication protocols between the Board and Superintendent.

## **GOAL 2:**

### **Increase Student Achievement for All Students While Simultaneously Closing the Achievement Gap**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Analyze patterns in student achievement data and the gap in achievement between various student populations in order to determine an appropriate course of action for the improvement of teaching and learning.
2. Raise expectations for all students.
3. Establish internal and external monitoring and qualitative and quantitative evaluation designs for instructional support and intervention systems.
4. Analyze and evaluate the conditions of chronically under-performing schools and determine a course of corrective action aimed at the levels of high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools.
5. Initiate systemic improvement of personnel quality, targeted and intense professional development of staff, and a focused improvement on teaching and learning for all members of the learning community. Improving the systems necessary to provide for an increase in student achievement. Developing the societal and community structures and systems necessary for the improvement of student achievement.

## **GOAL 3:**

### **Improve Public Trust, Commitment, and Confidence through Open, Honest Communication and Responsive Corrective Action to Identified Obstacles to Improving Student Achievement and the Conditions of Teaching and Learning**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Increase personal knowledge and understanding of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and community, its culture, traditions, history, and expectations for the District.
2. Understand and participate in the community's faith-based organizations as viable and valuable support and partners to public education.
3. Establish positive and productive working relationships with key leadership and members of business, service, not for profit, philanthropic, and political organizations within the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community and their national representative organizations.
4. Increase opportunities to promote Charlotte-Mecklenburg School's image within the community and to develop advocacy for what is effective and working well.
5. Ensure ongoing, clear, and consistent communication with all stakeholders.

6. Establish a positive and open working relationship with the members of the media.
7. Communicate an understanding and ownership of the District’s Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and Commitments, and Theory of Action as an organization dedicated to providing the best possible education for every child.

**GOAL 4:**

**Increase Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency**

**Objectives:**

1. Determine “where we are and where we need to go” in terms of each division, department, and direct report within the organization to ensure a student achievement focused agenda.
2. Implement a structure, consolidate, and streamline similar functions and positions in order to increase and maximize service and support for schools.

**GOAL 5:**

**Establish a Supportive, Positive, and Effective District Climate and Culture Singularly Focused On the Improvement of Student Achievement, Using a Continuous Improvement Model**

**Objectives:**

1. Establish positive relationships with all direct reports, principals, and key District leadership to meet, evaluate, and establish all as important and critical to the District’s success.
2. Communicate with parents and facilitate active partnerships on behalf of students.
3. Establish a positive, professional, and collaborative relationship with employee associations’ and employee groups’ leadership to ensure all decisions are made in the best interest of students and the improvement of the conditions for teaching and learning.
4. Establish strong collaborative relationships with the political leadership in the Cities, County, and State in order to establish clear lines of communication, advocacy, and support for the District’s students.

***INITIAL ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE A HIGH LEVEL OF DELIVERY FOR STATED GOALS***

**GOAL 1:**

**Develop and Ensure Effective District Reform Governance through Effective and Positive Board-Superintendent Relations**

**Objective:**

1. Establish the Board and Superintendent as a cohesive leadership team with a singular agenda focused on improving the achievement of all students through adoption and implementation of the Theory of Action, Reform Governance, and Reform Governance Policies.
2. Develop and implement appropriate communication protocols between the Board and Superintendent.

**Activities:**

- Schedule meeting with Board Chair to discuss a format and agenda for two Board-Superintendent retreats, one in July and one in Mid-November.
- Work with The Broad Foundation to continue support of regular professional development for the Board and the Superintendent.
- Establish clear understandings of roles, responsibilities, expectations, and systems for reciprocal accountability.
- Establish regular meeting time with the Board Chair for reviewing and constructing agendas.
- Schedule individual meetings with each Board member for one-on-one time.
- Establish regular communication systems with the Board in the form of writing, phone calls, and meetings.
- Establish a performance evaluation format and individual and District goals as indicators of success to be used by the Board to evaluate the Superintendent.

**GOAL 2:**

**Increase Student Achievement for All Students While Simultaneously Closing the Achievement Gap**

**Objective:**

1. Analyze patterns in student achievement data and the gap in achievement between various student populations in order to determine an appropriate course of action for the improvement of teaching and learning.
2. Raise expectations for all students.
3. Establish internal and external monitoring and qualitative and quantitative evaluation designs for instructional support and intervention systems.
4. Analyze and evaluate the conditions of chronically under-performing schools and determine a course of corrective action aimed at the levels of high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools.
5. Initiate systemic improvement of personnel quality, targeted and intense professional development of staff, and a focused improvement on teaching and learning for all members of the learning community. Improving the systems necessary to provide for an increase in student achievement. Developing the societal and community structures and systems necessary for the improvement of student achievement.



**Activities:**

- Conduct an academic review and analysis to review the instructional program, practices, curriculum, and support materials for evidence of effectiveness in improving student achievement and closing the gap between all student populations.
- Review student data for all student populations.
- Construct a performance review, developing a “report card” for every school in the District and meet with staff, including principals, to discuss results.
- Meet with each Regional Superintendent to discuss the results of the performance review of the schools in their area, and assess progress and determine the quality of actions proposed for continuous improvement of schools.
- Review District curriculum, instruction, and assessments for high expectations, alignment to standards, and appropriate instructional modifications for students who are not achieving, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities.
- Review and analyze the District’s monitoring and evaluation systems for evaluating effectiveness and accountability in terms of achievement for each program based on student progress.
- Construct a performance review of all schools in the District for participation and success for each technology-based curriculum intervention program.

**GOAL 3:**

**Improve Public Trust, Commitment, and Confidence through Open, Honest Communication and Responsive Corrective Action to Identified Obstacles to Improving Student Achievement and the Conditions of Teaching and Learning**

**Objectives:**

1. Increase personal knowledge and understanding of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and community, its culture, traditions, history, and expectations for the District.
2. Understand and participate in the community’s faith-based organizations as viable and valuable support and partners to public education.
3. Establish positive and productive working relationships with key leadership and members of business, service, not for profit, philanthropic, and political organizations within the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community and their national representative organizations.
4. Increase opportunities to promote Charlotte-Mecklenburg School’s image within the community and to develop advocacy for what is effective and working well.
5. Ensure ongoing, clear, and consistent communication with all stakeholders.
6. Establish a positive and open working relationship with the members of the media.

7. Communicate an understanding and ownership of the District's Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and Commitments, and Theory of Action as an organization dedicated to providing the best possible education for every child.

**Activities:**

- Identify the community's largest corporations, key businesses, foundations, not for profit, philanthropic leaders, public safety chiefs, college and university presidents 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.
- Identify community's churches/synagogues/mosques/congregations, key religious leaders, and their professional organizations and affiliations such as Ministers' Alliances, and then meet with each for an initial listening and learning session. Establish a routine communication protocol with these groups.
- Schedule meetings with other community leaders. Establish a routine communication protocol with these leaders.
- 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.
- Construct a 'kitchen cabinet' and establish routine meetings with this advisory group.
- Hold weekly media briefings, and establish routine communication protocols and meeting protocols. Offer to meet with the editorial boards of local media.
- Assure media that they are welcome and encourage communication and reporting that is open and honest. Invite media to all key significant events.
- Schedule meetings with the established parent organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
- Schedule meetings with the established student leadership organizations for initial listening and learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
- Assess the quality, quantity, and effectiveness of all existing forms of communication with various stakeholders:
  - Board
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  - Support staff
  - Administrative staff
  - Policy makers
  - Student leaders
  - Community leaders
  - Business leaders
  - Faith-based leaders



- Schedule meetings with each employee associations' and employee groups' leadership for initial learning sessions. Establish routine meetings and communications with these organizations.
- Write letters/articles to various stakeholders, using direct and media facilitated communication, expressing my goals, expectations, hopes, and plans for continuous improvement for our schools, students, and community.
- Host open forums with teachers, students, parents, and leaders as a routine activity for personal communication about critical issues facing our organization and those working in and with our district.

#### **GOAL 4:**

#### **Increase Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency**

##### **Objectives:**

1. Determine “where we are and where we need to go” in terms of each division, department, and direct report within the organization to ensure a student achievement focused agenda.
2. Implement a structure, consolidate, and streamline similar functions and positions in order to increase and maximize service and support for schools.

##### **Activities:**

- Initiate the construction of the Superintendent’s briefing documents from each division. Documents include areas of major responsibility, major initiatives underway with projected timelines, significant/potential problems, major decisions that need to be made in one month, three months, six months, and one year with the proposed plan of action. Use these documents as a tool for rapid understanding of the District’s strengths, weaknesses, and critical analysis of opportunities, and threats to progress. During Pre-Entry and Entry, use these documents to assess the current status of each division’s goals, an analysis of the critical issues and work priorities for the upcoming year, and the proposed plan of action to address each.
- Review all critical documents:
  - Employee handbooks
  - Policy and procedures manuals
  - Alignment of standards, curriculum, assessment, and professional development
  - Student achievement data by school
  - Financial projections and budget processes
  - Legal proceedings
  - Accountability plans and processes
  - Project management protocols and plans
  - Safety and emergency plans
- Review all studies, reports, and audits by outside agencies.
- Establish a schedule to meet with all direct reports and key staff, and initiate program review and personnel quality performance reviews.

- Conduct meetings and organizational analysis:
  - What do we need to do to be the best District in the nation?
  - What assets do we have to build on to accomplish this?
  - What are the barriers we need to overcome to reach this level?
- Determine what should be centralized and what should be decentralized, what should be held tight and what should be let loose.
- Develop a plan to decentralize the organizational structure in order to be more responsive to the needs of principals, schools, and the public.
- Develop organizational models to be used that enhance effectiveness and maximize support for schools.
- Implement a Managed Performance/Empowerment system that balances accountability with empowerment (autonomy) according to the needs and performance of individual schools or particular classrooms.
- Review funding streams supporting each area of District operations and redirect as appropriate to the school site.
- Allocate adequate resources according to the needs of each child.
- Establish accountability measures and determine data to be collected, reviewed, and analyzed at quarter, mid-year, and end of year reviews.

## **GOAL 5:**

### **Establish a Supportive, Positive, and Effective District Climate and Culture Singularly Focused on the Improvement of Student Achievement, Using a Continuous Improvement Model**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Establish positive relationships with all direct reports, principals, and key District leadership to meet, evaluate, and establish all as important and critical to the District's success.
2. Communicate with parents and facilitate active partnerships on behalf of students.
3. Establish a positive, professional, and collaborative relationship with employee associations' and employee groups' leadership to ensure all decisions are made in the best interest of students and the improvement of the conditions for teaching and learning.
4. Establish strong collaborative relationships with the political leadership in the Cities, County, and State in order to establish clear lines of communication, advocacy, and support for the District's students.

#### **Activities:**

- Identify key staff to assist with the transition within the organization.
- Identify and hire critical new team members to join Executive and Senior Staff.
- Establish standards of practice for the Executive and Senior Staff.
- Walk through the Education Center by division/department and meet each individual.

- Establish regularly scheduled meetings with staff: Executive and Senior Staff, principals, etc.
- Meet with employee associations' and employee groups' leaders to discuss common goals and ways of working together and establish regular meetings to facilitate ongoing communication.
- Meet with Executive Staff. Establish clear understandings of roles, responsibilities, expectations, systems for mutual accountability, etc.
- Meet with Mayors, County Commissioners, and the County Manager and establish regular meetings with these leaders and preferred communication protocols.
- Establish regular meetings with State education leaders.
- Request a meeting of the District's legislative delegation to the State. Meet and request a regularly scheduled meeting with the leadership and an acceptable format for ongoing communication regarding District needs, accountability protocols, and establish work plans for mutually agreed upon area of interest.
- Schedule a meeting with District Congressional representatives and Senators. Discuss an acceptable format for ongoing communication.

### ***CULMINATION OF THE PLAN***

Upon successful completion of the activities in this plan, I will report to the Board a summary outlining findings and proposed plans at the second Board-Superintendent retreat in November. This will enable the Board-Superintendent team to create, revise, and/or adjust the direction of the District and modify the individual and District goals in the Superintendent's evaluation.