

*90-DAY ENTRY PLAN FOR:
THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
FOR
MERRILLVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION*



*PRESENTED TO
Merrillville Community School Corporation
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES*

BY

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“STUDENTS FIRST”

Overview of Superintendent's 90-Day Entry Plan

Merrillville Community School Corporation is in the midst of a transition to a new superintendent and with that the challenge of new leadership. The new superintendent has an immediate and moral charge to look, listen, and learn about the entire district.

Rationale for the 90-day Entry Plan

This document serves as the entry plan for Superintendent Nicholas G. Brown's first 90 days, including meetings with key leaders and stakeholders. Over the 90 days, the superintendent will revise the plan based on feedback from a listening tour. As a result, this plan will address the district's current challenges and ensure that our focus is on student achievement.

Organization of District Leadership

The superintendent will always focus on accelerating student achievement and will do the following:

- Ensure a safe and secure learning environment for all students
- Work with Merrillville Community School Corporation Board of Education on an action plan
- Identify and clarify roles of the board, superintendent and key district stakeholders
- In conjunction with the board, review and adjust policy development and oversight
- Increase civic involvement, business and educational partnerships in our schools
- Maintain a sound fiscal management program
- Work to attract, maintain, and develop the best educators in the state for our students



The First 90-Days

The first 90 days on the job will be critical to setting the tone and direction for the school district. The 90-day timeline will give the new superintendent an opportunity to listen to both internal and external stakeholders, evaluate the various programs, and develop relationships. This evaluation period will provide the needed data to establish a new framework for the district. At the conclusion of this evaluation period, the board will receive a formal presentation of the findings from the superintendent.

The following will help determine the strengths and challenges for the school district:

Visibility - I will visit every school and visit as many classrooms as possible in the district. I will have a “Meet and Greet” scheduled at every site to gather input from staff members. This also will allow me to understand the challenges that each building faces and experience the culture across the district.

Interview Key Stakeholders - I will interview key stakeholders in civic clubs, city government, and other key positions in the community. I will ask them the following: What are our strengths? What are our weaknesses? What are the opportunities? What are our challenges?

Listen - I will listen to the stakeholders including: parents, teachers, students, administrators, parent-teacher organizations, booster organizations, teacher and support unions, faith-based groups, chamber of commerce, city government, community members, etc. Talking to students and student groups is often left out of the evaluation process, but I will make sure they have a voice. It is important to listen to understand and not listen to respond through this process.

Review Data - Data will help me understand the current reality of the school district. A review of all student achievement data will be critical in making decisions. Financial records, work flow analysis, and internal controls will also be reviewed to ensure the district is fiscally responsible.

Interview District Administrators - I will ask for a debriefing from all administrators in the district. If not in place, a cabinet will be formed to evaluate the major areas of the school district. I will ask each cabinet member for a detailed report from his/her respective areas.

Board Operational Beliefs - I will want to know the operational beliefs of the Board of Education and how they correlate to the policies that have been created. An internal review will be conducted to see if our employees are following the policies and regulations appropriately. A meeting will be set up with each board member to provide input in all areas of the district.

Review Student Programs - I will review all student programs to understand their functionality and capacity. The internal staff will be the key source of information as to the perceived success of these programs.

My hope is to capitalize on Merrillville Community School Corporation’ incredible strengths and work together to make the district an even better place for children. All decisions we make as board members and superintendent will impact the lives of students today and in the future. Every decision should be carefully assessed to ensure it is in the best interest of students.

The following are goals for the entry plan:

Goal 1: Develop Positive Board/Superintendent Relations

“The quality of your life is the quality of your relationships”.

- Anthony Robbins

- 1.1 To know the operational beliefs of the Board of Education and how they correlate with the policies that have been created for the district.
- 1.2 Establish a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, expectations, and systems of mutual accountability. I will expect to be held accountable through Board goals.
- 1.3 Develop consistent forms of communication with the board such as weekly emails, newsletters, and calls.
- 1.4 Schedule individual meetings with each Board member to begin developing relationships and trust with the board.
- 1.5 The Board of Education will be asked to commit time for bonding activities that will build relationships and trust with the superintendent. A retreat will be scheduled to prioritize and set goals

Goal 2: Interview Key Stakeholders

“You must maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, AND at the same time, have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be “

-Jim Collins

- 2.1 Identify key stakeholders: teachers, site principals, parents, students, parent-teacher organizations, central office staff, civic clubs, chamber of commerce, city council, mayor and faith-based groups.
- 2.2 Survey the faculty and staff to find out the current reality of the organization. This process will be the first step in moving the organization forward.
- 2.3 Talk to teachers and the local education association leadership. Listening to these groups will give me insight into the pressing issues that need to be addressed immediately.
- 2.4 Talk to students and student groups. This is often left out of the evaluation process, but I will make sure that students are heard.
- 2.5 Identify the key leaders in the community and set up meetings to hear their concerns and recommendations.
- 2.6 Develop the public trust and confidence in the superintendent through open, honest communication and positive relationships.

Goal 3: Review Current Data and Evaluate Programs

“True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information”

-Winston Churchill

- 3.1 Utilize financial and personnel data in order to understand the current reality of the district.
- 3.2 Seek a detailed evaluation by the administrative leadership team members in the business and finance areas. This includes the Assistant Superintendent of Business and the Director of Food Services.
- 3.3 Review all financial records and financial procedures. Review the ending fund balance to determine stability.
- 3.4 Ensure the district is following state law and board policy in the areas of hiring, purchasing, and competitive bidding. Review all bond funds to ensure that funds are being spent on the projects advertised in the previous bond issues.
- 3.5 Review the internal controls to ensure the district is being fiscally responsible.
- 3.6 Review all critical documents such as organizational charts, employee handbooks, employee negotiated agreements, etc.

Goal 4: Review of Student Achievement and Programs

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results”

-Milton Friedman

- 4.1 Review the district strategic plan and the process of its development.
- 4.2 Review the corporation mission and vision and all student achievement data. This will include all instructional data such as curriculum guides, benchmark assessments, and state achievement data.
- 4.3 Review the site improvement plans to ensure these are consistent with the corporation mission and vision.
- 4.4 Identify those schools/programs that may not be performing to expectations and review to understand the reasons for performance levels.
- 4.5 Request the administrative leadership team provide an analysis of programs in their respective areas. This includes the Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instruction and all principals.
- 4.6 Review all student programs and grant-funded projects to understand their functionality, capacity, and the current philosophy of title programs.

- 4.7 Review with internal staff and other key stakeholders the perceived successes and challenges of the current student programs.

Goal 5: Review of Technology, Operations and Support Functions

“The most serious mistakes are not being made as a result of wrong answers. The truly dangerous thing is asking the wrong question”

-Peter Drucker

- 5.1 Review the support functions: technology services, transportation services, child nutrition, custodial, and maintenance services.
- 5.2 Request the leadership team members in the support division provide an analysis of programs in their respective areas. This includes the Director of Health Services, Director of Diversity and Student Support, Director of Technology, Director of Media Services and Director of Food Services.
- 5.3 Review the infrastructure of the technology services. Analyze the number of computers-to-student ratios and where the computers are being used.
- 5.4 Review if there is a focused effort for using technology as a tool in the classroom. Do teachers receive appropriate professional development for technology? Do teachers receive the proper hardware and software for the classroom?
- 5.5 Review the process of technology deployment at all levels of the district. Analyze the outcomes from these efforts.
- 5.6 Review transportation services to ensure safety and student needs are being met. Analyze how child nutrition is being delivered to students, making sure all federal school lunch regulations are being followed. Identify how maintenance and custodial services are delivered across the district.

Goal 6: Balance Family and Work Activities

“Happiness depends more on the inward disposition of mind than on outward circumstances.”

~ Benjamin Franklin

- 6.1 Eat a healthy diet every day and set aside time daily for exercise to maintain a healthy body.
- 6.2 Make time for my family.
- 6.3 Have a weekly date night with Mary Beth to keep connected as a couple.
- 6.4 Take time to enjoy my hobbies to refresh myself each week.

It Is Always About the Students!

