

LISTEN AND LEARN ENTRY PLAN

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As the Superintendent, it is critical to establish trust with the community. Trust is an important link to organizational success. My Entry Plan was designed to “hit the ground listening and learning” in order to gather information from stakeholders of this community. There is no doubt that this entire community seeks to have local control returned, and to have a Board of Education formed from the Little Rock community.

The activities in this Entry Plan helped support and guide my actions throughout my transition into the Little Rock community. Below is a self-assessment of meeting the targets I established for myself.

Listen to the Community

Grade: B

I. Meet with Community Leaders to establish collaborative relationships

I have conducted several meetings with community leaders, with goals to continue this effort.

II. Establish “10-a-Day” phone communication to students, teachers, parents and community leaders

These calls began on June 13 and ended on July 21. The time frame for the calls was designed to utilize the Appreciative Inquiry approach, which provided information for the Leadership Retreat, held July 26-28. The process included:

- a. 112 phone calls to staff members; connected with 32
- b. 99 phone calls to parents; connected with 33

Challenges: identifying solution for outreach to students; ability to communicate with Spanish-speaking parents; in some instances, children served as translators. Additionally, a surgical procedure caused a temporary postponement of calls.

III. Conduct Town hall meetings, Twitter Town Halls, and Kitchen Table conversations

- a. We have yet to hold the Twitter Town Hall meeting; now scheduled for September 14, 6-7 p.m.
- b. I completed one kitchen table conversation via a lunch meeting at the First Methodist Church.
- c. I have had several Town Hall type meetings:
 - The Clinton Center
 - Children’s Hospital
 - Multiple churches
 - The Chamber of Commerce
 - The Homebuilders Association
 - Various Rotary Clubs

IV. Meet with members of the press

- a. Accessible to members of the media daily
 - Have participated in a news-sponsored televised Facebook Town Hall
- b. Will appear on AETN for two special educational programs

V. Send letters to all parents

This was accomplished. In addition, a letter was sent to all kindergarten parents.

VI. Create a Community Call to Action

a. Community Reading Program

Plans are under development – through this effort, all K-5 students, their parents, LRSD staff, and the Superintendent would all simultaneously read the same book. The goal is to announce the name of the book and the subsequent delivery late in the first semester.

b. Bright Futures Program - a concept to proactively support students with issues they are having away from the school that potentially impact their focus in the classroom. A Think Tank to work on this issue is set up for Sept. 9.

c. Graduate Retention Program- yet to be worked on

d. World Class Career Development Centers - a Think Tank was held on Aug. 19 to determine which career strands need to be developed or enhanced to support the Little Rock region, as well as support LRSD students. Next steps will include bringing businesses, higher education experts, and LRSD staff together to create focus, curriculum and support for each career strand.

e. Design Team for New High School - this team will be organized in the month of September. The Design Team will include students, staff, parents, and community leaders.

Listen to School leaders

Division Heads

Grade: A

- **Arrange a 3-Day Conference**

Description - Over 160 staff met July 26-28 to complete training using Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective Leaders, as well as to create core values to meet the expectations of the LRSD staff and community. These expectations were derived from targets established through the Superintendent's Appreciative Inquiry approach.

- **Meet with Division Leaders**

Grade: A

Description - The opportunity to transition into the school district starting in late April and continuing through the end of June really supported this target. Meetings are ongoing with division heads, individually and collectively, to receive a "State Of The Division" report. This report will include three-year-trend data pertinent to the department, assessment and evaluation of key personnel within each division, and discussions to gain greater understanding of weaknesses and strengths in each division.

- **Establish Protocols**

Grade: A

Description- Templates for meetings and standards for customer service have all been addressed.

- **Create a Proactive Visibility Plan for all administrators**

Grade: B

Description - We have had a good first month of school; however, key to this process will be to continue visibility efforts all year.

Principals

- **Meet with Principals Individually**

Grade: B+

Description - This took a little longer than anticipated and did not get accomplished until after school started.

- **Review all Evaluations from past year**

Grade: Incomplete

Description- I have only seen a limited set of evaluations.

Employee Groups

- **Meet with Employee Group Leaders**

Grade: A

Description - Multiple meetings have occurred with employee leaders.

- Send Letters to Staff

Grade: A

Description- Multiple letters have been sent to staff.

- Participate in New Teacher Orientation

Grade: A

Description - Delivered approximately an hour-long training on leadership and effective practices to all new staff; also implemented video series, "Minute with Mike," which highlighted a variety of new staff members.

- Start Classroom Walk-throughs

Grade: A

Description- This is a part of my weekly calendar.

- Prepare and Deliver a Back-to-School Celebration

Grade: A

Description- We hosted a successful back-to-school Convocation, which included student voices; inspirational speaker and *Eight Habits of the Heart* author, Clifton Taulbert; and the grand prize donation of an SUV to an employee, compliments of Everett Buick GMC.

Support to Regain Local Control

- Review Previous Plans

Grade: B+

Description - I have done my best to review plans that the District has had in place.

- Spend Time with Baker Kurrus

Grade: B

Description - I am not sure you can ever get enough transition time as leadership changes. I was most fortunate to get to spend time with Mr. Kurrus, and am appreciative that he is willing to continue to support the District in the future.

- Create an Achieve Team Model

Grade: B

Description - We are well on our way to accomplishing this strategy. We have received great support from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). We will begin *Achieve Team* meetings for schools in September.

- Community Advisory Retreat

Grade: A

Description - With the support of ADE and the School Board Association, several support retreat meetings have been delivered and a schedule for training has been established.

- Utilize Multiple Communication Platforms

Grade: B+

Description - We have used multiple media options as well as public speaking engagements to share where LRSD stands.