



# **Transition and Entry Plan**

## **Stonington–United and Rising**

**Mary Anne Butler, Incoming Superintendent**

**March 29, 2022**

**Final Report October 13, 2022**

## **Rationale**

I am honored to begin serving as the Superintendent of Stonington Public Schools and plan to build upon the district's legacy of award winning academic, athletic, and extracurricular programming. During the selection process the Stonington community, families, faculty, staff, and Board of Education members identified their priorities and challenges for the incoming superintendent. Those charges include: leading the district and community through a COVID-19 recovery period; recruiting, developing, supervising, and retaining high quality staff; establishing trust among all community members inside and outside of the schools; developing a sense of true partnership and community across town agencies; improving communication and varying the modalities of communication with families and the community. This plan will help me to meet, listen, and learn from the various stakeholders in the school and town communities. The implementation of this plan is a dynamic process making it necessary to continually review, reflect, and revise the action steps to meet the enumerated goals below. Throughout the process I will learn the best ways to partner with the various stakeholders for the benefit of *all students* in Stonington Public Schools. Stonington – United and Rising!

## **Entry Plan Goals**

1. To foster a collaborative and trusting relationship with the Stonington Board of Education members and build a common vision for student growth, achievement, and stewardship.
2. To establish a positive rapport with town officials and leaders of key organizations in the community and to identify areas of potential collaboration.
3. Plan and facilitate a series of family engagement events to meet with families and listen to their ideas, hopes and dreams for the future of Stonington Public Schools.
4. To increase the Superintendent's visibility at each school building and after school events.
5. Listen to the needs of staff in all buildings and learn more about the challenges they face daily.
6. To identify and plan for professional development, instruction, and assessment as the recovery process from COVID-19 continues.

## Phases

- **Transition (March – June 2022)**

- Share the Transition and Entry Plan with the Board of Education
- Meet with Board of Education members individually
- Meet with Town Officials, the Chief of Police, and Board of Finance Chairman
- Facilitate various meet and greet events and family engagement opportunities
- Attend the Board Retreat in May and establish a vision, mission, and Board goals

### Status update July 2022

This phase has largely been completed with the modifications of specific Meet and Greets via Zoom being moved to August and the Board Retreat focusing not on Vision, Mission and Goals, but rather Board Norms and Board Goals.

- **Entry (July – September 2022)**

- Update Board policies during the summer for approval in the fall
- Discuss information gathered from the implementation of Transition and Entry Plan with the Board of Education and the District Leadership Team
- Identify any action items to address based upon the Transition and Entry Plan to improve operational and instructional effectiveness
- Continue with various meet and greets with families and community members

## Status update July 2022

Significant progress has been made on policy work with the subcommittee meeting three times in July and scheduled for another meeting in August. At the upcoming August Board meeting, ten policies will be moved forward to the full Board for approval, one policy will be considered for reaffirmation and two policies will be brought to be omitted as they have been replaced or are obsolete. The Leadership Team has reviewed the Transition and Entry Plan with me at a spring leadership meeting and continues to partner with me on the implementation of the plan and all four Board goals. As noted in my weekly letters to the Board, I have met with several community leaders and town officials and will continue to do so. With the onboarding of a new Director of Finance several operational efficiencies have been identified. Changes in practices and the implementation of systems will continue over the next several months. The posting for a Human Resource position will happen shortly and lead to even greater efficiency across the District Office. Early academic performance scores indicate good academic recovery, but the leadership team will need to analyze the more detailed performance and growth reports once they become available in mid to late August. This analysis will inform the distribution of instructional resources including interventionists and the development of new and innovative programming.

- **Completion (October 2022)**

- Send summary report to the Board of Education and the Leadership Team
- Publish report and distribute to the students, faculty, staff, and community via the district website

Final report delivered to the Stonington Board of Education on October 13, 2022.

Transition Phase March – June 2022	
Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meet with individual Board of Education members</li> <li>● Coordinate with the Board Chairman to design the Board retreat in collaboration with Dr. Osga</li> <li>● Share Transition and Entry Plan with Board members</li> </ul> <p>Completed</p>
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcoming Schools Protocol</li> <li>● Meet and Greet at Pawcatuck Firehouse</li> <li>● Meet and Greet at Mystic Firehouse or Mystic Seaport-</li> <li>● Meet and Greet at individual schools</li> </ul> <p>The Welcoming Schools Protocol is complete and action steps have been taken in each school. Based upon the low attendance at the Pawcatuck Meet and Greet, others will be scheduled this fall. Back to School events including Kindergarten events are on my calendar in August and September.</p>
District and Building Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Weekly Leadership Team meetings</li> <li>● Hire key district and building administrators</li> <li>● Plan and facilitate June Leadership Team retreat</li> <li>● Meet with veteran Cabinet members</li> <li>● Meet with administrator teams at each school</li> </ul> <p>Completed with an additional Leadership Retreat in August and continuing Leadership Team meetings starting in September.</p>
Building Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School visits with scheduled “drop ins” for staff to share concerns and ask questions</li> <li>● Meet with all bargaining unit leaders</li> <li>● Meet with any interested members of various staff groups including custodians/maintenance, nurses, paraeducators, secretaries, food</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>service workers in an informal setting</li> <li>● Meet with District Office non-certified personnel</li> <li>● Meet with Professional Evaluation and Development Committee</li> </ul> <p>Upon the suggestion by the CEA President the school drop-ins will take place in the fall. District Office staff now have monthly meetings with me and the Cabinet. I have met or have scheduled meetings with all union leaders and continue to meet with personnel.</p>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School visits to meet with student groups and representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School leadership representatives at DMS</li> <li>○ School leadership representatives at WVSS</li> <li>○ Student Government at SMS</li> <li>○ Student Government at SHS</li> <li>○ Principal’s Advisory Student Team</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Attend school events including drama productions, athletic events, end of year ceremonies at each school</li> </ul> <p>Secondary school leadership meetings took place, but the elementary meetings need to occur this fall. My attendance at events has been and will continue to be documented in the weekly letters to the Board of Education.</p>
Town Boards/Departments and Community Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introductory phone call and in person meeting with the Board of Finance Chairperson</li> <li>● Meet with the Stonington First Selectman</li> <li>● Meet with newly appointed Chief of Police</li> <li>● Meet with State Senator Somers and State Representative Howard</li> <li>● Meet with leaders from the Mystic Aquarium, COMO, Stonington Human Services, Mystic Seaport, Yellow Farmhouse, Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center, La Grua Center</li> </ul> <p>Meetings with the Senator and State Representative will reconvene with the start of school. I have met with all the above town officials. The Denison</p>

	Nature Center is scheduled for August 10th. I have met with leaders of the other non profits. In addition, I have met with leaders at the YMCA, Ocean State Chamber of Commerce, HBRA, DOL, and several area superintendents.
Instruction and Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Plan and co-facilitate June retreat for the Leadership Team</li> <li>● Generate a professional learning plan and calendar for the first semester</li> <li>● Visit the general education and special education summer school programs weekly</li> </ul> <p>Completed</p>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Video of introduction for families</li> <li>● Establish integrated communication accounts with social media platforms through ParentSquare</li> </ul> <p>Completed</p>

<b>Entry Phase July-September 2022</b>	
Board of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Report progress on the Transition/Entry Plan with the Board</li> <li>● Review and revise policies as needed for Board approval in the fall</li> <li>● Set a calendar for quarterly retreats/check-ins with Dr. Osga</li> <li>● Agree on an evaluation instrument, dates for midyear check in and end of year evaluation, and any related documentation</li> <li>● Revise subcommittee calendar</li> <li>● Introduce new key administrators to individual Board members</li> </ul> <p>Completed</p>

<p>Family Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Restructure existing parent/family committees to improve exchange of information</li> <li>● Back to School Nights</li> <li>● Meet and Greet – outside</li> <li>● District Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Family Advisory Team</li> <li>● Survey families on expectations for 2022-23 school year</li> </ul> <p>Family survey results have been shared with the Board of Education in a weekly newsletter. Dr. Osga is scheduled to return for a Board Retreat on October 5th to review Norms and progress on Board Goals. On August 25th the process for the superintendent’s review and goals is scheduled. The policy subcommittee has ten documents set for the first reading in August with an additional meeting set at the end of the month to continue the work. The District Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Family Advisory Team will be replaced by the Welcoming Schools Teams at all four schools. District leaders will sit on those teams. The district Anti-Bias-Anti-Racist Team will remain in tact, but with new members due to the changes in leadership. I will be attending Back to School and Welcoming Events in the fall and continue to look for additional meet and greet opportunities and venues.</p>
<p>District and Buildings Administrators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide appropriate orientation programming for new key administrators</li> <li>● Reframe Parent Engagement structures at the district and school levels</li> <li>● Review drafts of School Improvement Plans</li> </ul> <p>School improvement plans will be drafted by October 1st and reviewed as part of the administrators’ evaluation process. New administrators have been working closely with their appropriate supervisors and the Leadership Team during and after the spring retreat throughout the summer.</p>



Building staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome new educators to the district at New Teacher Orientation</li> <li>● Greet entire staff at Convocation</li> <li>● School visits on Opening Day</li> </ul> <p>Convocation and school opening day went very well. Several staff members were very appreciative of the in person gathering and the spirit of the keynote address.</p>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School visits to meet with student groups and representatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School leadership representatives at DMS</li> <li>○ School leadership representatives at WVSS</li> <li>○ Student Government at SMS</li> <li>○ Student Government at SHS</li> <li>○ SHS Principal's Advisory Student Team - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Accountability and Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review the status of the curriculum and the revision cycle - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> <li>● Analyze state academic growth and performance data - <a href="#">Completed</a></li> <li>● Administer the social-emotional screener and academic benchmark assessments in September to gauge programming and intervention needs - <a href="#">Moved to December</a></li> <li>● Set priorities for goal setting and design agendas with the Leadership Team - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> </ul>
Town Boards/Departments and Community Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monthly meetings at Town Hall with representatives from across Boards/Departments - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> <li>● Meet with leaders of Mohegan and Pequot Tribes, Westerly Library, Stonington Free Library, Mystic/Noank Library, Ocean State Chamber of Commerce, Mystic Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> <li>● Work meetings with First Selectwomen, Chief of Police or designees on Town/ Board goals and collaboration - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> </ul>
Instruction and Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review District Goals with school staff - <a href="#">Completed</a></li> <li>● Begin classroom drop in visits - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> <li>● Analyze fall benchmark data to inform professional learning - <a href="#">Completed</a></li> </ul>

Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome back letter and video to introduce new administrators and district goals - <a href="#">Convocation</a></li> <li>• District Office “meet and greet” with new District Office and building leaders - <a href="#">Complete</a></li> <li>• Monthly meetings with the Superintendent and the Board Chairperson for community and family engagement (via Zoom or in person) - <a href="#">Ongoing</a></li> </ul>
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<b>Completion Phase</b> <b>October 2022</b>	
Board of Education	<p>Report findings to the Board of Education and publish on the district web page Collaborate and participate in the quarterly Board Retreats and assess progress on the Board goals and set the Superintendent’s goals.</p> <p>Board Retreats occurred on August 29, 2022 and October 5, 2022. The Governance Team assessed its own norms and reviewed evidence of work to date on the four established Board Goals. Two more retreats will occur in the late winter and late spring of 2023. All five school buildings have started to meet with their BOE liaisons and the early reports back are these meetings are helpful to strengthen the relationship between the Board and the district administrative team.</p> <p>Below is the updated status of action items outlined in my Entry and Transition Plan and also a link to my 2022-23 Goals.</p> <p><a href="#">Superintendent Goals 2022-23</a></p>

<p>Family Engagement</p>	<p>I have attended the Welcoming Schools Team meetings at all four schools and plan to attend the November meetings. The in-person “Meet and Greets” have been substituted with monthly Zoom meetings for families to make it more convenient for families to communicate with me and other District Office administrators. These meetings are recorded and posted for families to access the content at their convenience. I will continue to offer these meetings at a variety of times to increase opportunities for more participation and increased communication. Videos of me interacting with students such as the celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month will continue to be published in school newsletters and on our website.</p>
<p>District and Building Administrators</p>	<p>A new Leadership Team meeting format and norms have been created and the team meets weekly. Starting in October teams of two administrators/teacher leaders will begin “trend visits” at each of the buildings and use the EASTCONN student engagement instrument to gather data which will be reviewed and acted upon at the District Data Team. All administrators have been calibrated on the effective use of the instrument to ensure the integrity of the data to the greatest extent possible. Cabinet meetings occur weekly. Goal setting meetings are being scheduled for the building leaders as part of their evaluation process. I look forward to welcoming the newest member of the administrative team, Ms. Bethany Wagner at the end of October.</p>
<p>Building Staff</p>	<p>Drop-in meetings scheduled at each school to touch base with staff and answer questions or address concerns. I meet with union leadership quarterly or more as needed to keep lines of communication open. Teacher contract negotiations have successfully concluded. The District office continues monthly meetings and celebrations and has improved lines of communication. The District Future-Focused School Team has begun to meet and establish formats and opportunities to explore this work. “Shop Talks” will begin in November and provide teachers with the opportunity to meet and explore “Future Focused Education” in an informal and voluntary setting.</p>

<p>Students</p>	<p>I had the opportunity to informally interact with SHS students as they assisted me in hosting the Governor and other dignitaries in celebration of our HBI grant and PACT program. Mrs. Hetu and Mrs. Turgeon both have allowed me to adopt their K classes and I co-teach on a monthly basis with them. Those visits are always the highlight of my week. I was honored to serve as the guest reader for both elementary schools to celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month and the recording is posted on the DEI webpage. Student Government meetings are scheduled at each school. I have started to attend various athletic events at SMS and SHS and will continue to strive to see at least one game/meet during the fall season.</p>
<p>Accountability and Assessment</p>	<p>Student performance data was shared with the Board of Education at the September Board meeting and will be revisited after the fall benchmark results are compiled. The chronic absenteeism data will continue to be a priority within each school and student engagement strategies will be leveraged to improve attendance. The social-emotional screener will be administered in December to students in grades 4-12. This will allow time for teachers to get to know their students better before completing the assessment. Families will be notified and provided the option to opt out if they so choose. A recorded webinar explaining the instrument that is used is posted on the website. School Improvement Plans will be reviewed by myself and the Assistant Superintendent later this month as part of the accountability system as it relates to administrators evaluations and building level improvements.</p>
<p>Town Boards and Community Organizations</p>	<p>Meetings with Senator Somers and State Representative Howard commenced in September. I have invited neighboring Superintendent Hopkins of North Stonington to attend to provide efficiencies for all parties with both time and action items of interest. I attend the monthly meetings at LEARN with all the superintendents in the Southeastern portion of Connecticut and participate on the CCM Legislative Committee, the CAPSS Legislative Committee and the CAPSS Innovation Committee. Collaborations with NESS, the Seaport, and several other non-profits continue. I attend monthly Town Department meetings and also meet routinely with the First Selectwoman and Police Chief. I have</p>

	<p>been invited to be a guest reader at the Stonington Free Library in January to honor stories of Stonington residents and their experiences during the pandemic. Board of Finance members Tim O'Brien and Lynn Young have been generous with their time meeting at different times with me and the Director of Finance to improve communication and the working relationship between our Boards. The COMO is partnering with SMS to plan a STEM day in the spring. We are awaiting the status of our before and after school grant application for WVSS which would invite several partners to work with us in the delivery of supplemental programming to WVSS students. These partners include but are not limited to the LaGrua Center, Mystic Seaport, Mystic YMCA, Mystic Aquarium, the COMO, and the Yellow Farmhouse.</p>
<p>Communication</p>	<p>The Board of Education receives weekly letters from me updating them about the work that directly connects to the Board Goals. I have attended several community events including the LaGrua Gala, the Stonington July 4th Parade, Ocean Commotion, Desmond Way Dedication, and have spoken at the YMCA Men's Breakfast Club to communicate in various forums the good work that is underway in SPS. I will be presenting our achievements specific to student engagement at the ASCD Leadership Summit later this month and have been invited to the Finnish Embassy to speak about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The International Research and Exchange Board has invited me to a brainstorming session at their headquarters during my stay in D.C. to explore strategies to expand Fulbright offerings and opportunities for school administrators. Our district will also be represented in November at the CABE/CAPSS Conference here in Mystic as I co-present with our EASTCONN colleagues. I continue to look for opportunities beyond the traditional ones to communicate with families, community members, legislators, and educators within the state, country and across the globe about our achievements and continual quest to improve our district.</p>