

# Governor Wentworth Regional School District

*Serving the communities of Brookfield, Effingham,  
New Durham, Ossipee, Tuftonboro, & Wolfeboro*



## Superintendent Entry Plan Listening & Learning

GWRSD School Board Meeting  
Carpenter School  
April 3rd, 2023

## Entry Plan Process Goals

- To better understand the SAU and School District and the people as fully as possible in a brief period of time, outside the daily context of crisis and problem solving.
- To examine key issues in the District's past, in order to make sense of how such issues are handled and to identify the norms which affect how the organization may function in the future.
- To identify the tasks which need to be done and to rank them in order of priority.
- To establish how these tasks should be accomplished.

## Key Entry Plan Process Objectives

- To determine the issues where Board members believe we should focus our efforts in the next year.
- To determine the issues which SAU and School Leadership face in their work over the next year.
- To determine what the key issues are for other stakeholders.
- To work with the School Board to prioritize these potential initiatives.

## Entry Plan Process

- Interviews with Board Members, SAU Administrators, Principals, Students, and Community Partners
- Visitations to each School for visibility and learning
- Listening sessions with Staff Members, Parents, and Students
- Document Review

## Document Review

- Policy Manuals
- Board Meeting Minutes and Agendas
- Budget Documents
- Federal Grants
- Technology Plans
- Emergency Response Data
- Administrator Job Descriptions, Contracts, and Evaluations
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Employee Handbooks
- School Calendars
- Educator Evaluation Plan
- Professional Development Plan
- School Handbooks
- Annual Reports
- NEASC Accreditation Report
- Special Education Data

## Strategic Planning

Finding: The School Board and District have not engaged in strategic planning efforts focused on what we are trying to achieve for our graduates (both at the PK-6 and 7-12 levels) in at least the recent past.

Recommendation: The SAU should initiate a strategic planning effort on the heels of the Portrait of a Learner work to define the system's mission and goals, streamline initiatives, and develop a focus for the schools, administration, School Board, teaching staff, and communities.

Recommendation: The SAU and District should develop a formal process for conducting ongoing surveys of high school graduates.

## Competency Based Education

Finding: While competency based education planning and implementation efforts have made great progress in grades K-8, there is a need for continuing education efforts for staff, parents, and school board members regarding key components of this important initiative.

Recommendation: Our competency based planning and implementation efforts must include the development of a comprehensive, clear, and flexible three (3) year plan, which includes communication and stakeholder outreach efforts, as well as key decision points regarding important areas like grading and reporting at the high school level.

## Technology Supports

Finding: The district implemented an enhanced 1:1 initiative as a response to the pandemic almost exactly three years ago. However, the shift to support such an increase in technology has not kept up with the hardware and software adoption. As a result, there is a need for support for teachers and staff in order to fully realize the technology resources available.

Recommendation: The District should work with technology staff and library media specialists to create a plan for technology support for teachers and integration into the curriculum. The IT department is an incredible resource albeit modest in numbers for this size District.

## Support Staff

Finding: Paraprofessionals are clearly dedicated to their work and their students at GWRSD. However, there is consistently an average of thirty (30) unfilled support staff positions at any point during the school year. Further, there seems to be a widespread misunderstanding of the GWSSA CBA among support staff.

Recommendation: Our support staff deserve to have a comprehensive understanding of their position and contract. The union and the SAU should have a year-long schedule for meetings and plan to support these valuable employees. The district should have a plan to recruit and retain all support staff positions.

## Student Behavior & Mental Health

Finding: Student dysregulation and even acts of violence are on the uprise according to staff. Students (37%, KRHS 2021 Final YRBS) report feeling depressed and anxious “most of the time.” Quality resources exist in schools, homes, and community however the need far exceeds the support available.

Recommendation: The district must bolster supports and services for students according to an organized plan across schools. It is clear that the need is a widespread issue that spans across schools and homes. Parents need tools that are clearly communicated as students lack a sense of belonging in and out of school. The district should develop an equity plan and policy that affirms the identity of each student and celebrates differences to create a sense of connection and belonging for each and every student in our schools.

## Student Safety & Security

Finding: Upon my arrival at GWRSD, there was a clear desire from the community and school leaders to improve safety and security in schools. Hardening buildings, implementing safety training, and coordinating with first responders in all towns was a consistent ask from all parties.

Recommendation: There is a direct link between a lack of feeling of belonging and connection and an increased risk of harming self or others. The district should implement a behavior intervention team and process lead by a trained safety professional in order to recognize signs when students are behaving differently than usual in order to take action sooner and thereby preventing dangerous events.

## Initiatives Already Underway!

- NH SBA Board Training
- Professional Development Planning
- Educator Evaluation
- Safety & Security Taskforce
- Emergency Preparedness
- Portrait of a Learner
- Curriculum Taskforce(s)
- Comprehensive Policy & Procedure Review
- Job Descriptions

## Closing & Summary

- The nine (9) GWRSD schools and SAU are very good places for students, families, and employees.
- This report represents a starting point for the formulation of long-term School Board and District goals, the development of Superintendent goals and, most importantly, a strategic planning effort for our public schools.
- My goal over the coming months will be to work with the SAU team and building level leaders to develop action plans for those areas identified as priorities by the SAU and School Board.