



# SUPERINTENDENT ENTRY PLAN

Dr. Joe Harrington







# | Introduction

## Open letter to the HEB ISD Community from Dr. Harrington

What an incredible honor it is to be selected to lead HEB ISD as the next Superintendent. HEB ISD is the best community for education in Texas. Our School Board has been recognized as the best in the state. State associations celebrate the value we place in our employees. And most importantly, the data consistently shows that students in HEB ISD achieve more academic growth each year than their similar peers at almost any other school in the state.

How does that happen? We set high standards, we monitor the data, and we build reliable systems that make those goals possible. The key to accomplishing that hard work is the strength of the people who make up our HEB ISD community. We can't do it without teachers and staff who put students at the center of every decision. We need parents, family, and community members who believe in the value of education. Our students excel because they are empowered to take responsibility for their own learning.

HEB ISD is a special place. Our graduates want to come back and work in our schools because they want to be the person who enables the next generation to succeed. Families who have taught in our schools for generations are eager to welcome new coworkers and neighbors and weave those new faces into our collective story.

We can celebrate past and present accomplishments because the people who came before us looked to the future – and now it's our turn. As we emerge from the

most challenging years education has faced in decades, some of our goals are obvious. We need to ensure that all HEB ISD students have pathways to their successful adult lives, whether that starts with college, career, military, or other opportunities that may not even exist yet. We need to commit to organization-wide support for teacher and staff wellness, not just because it enables the best outcomes for students, but also because we care about our employees.

To define these and other goals for HEB ISD's future, we need input from all of our stakeholders. Over the upcoming months, I look forward to visiting with as many of you as possible, to listen. I will be visiting every school and district facility to meet with staff and students, and will hold several open meetings across our 44 square miles to listen to parents and community members. And of course, you are always welcome to share your thoughts with me by email at [drjoe@hebisd.edu](mailto:drjoe@hebisd.edu).

Together, we'll build a strong vision for HEB ISD, then work toward making it our reality. I look forward to it!

Joe Harrington, Ed.D.  
Superintendent





# | Overarching Goals

## 1. Student/Staff Connections

These are challenging times in public education and it's important now more than ever before to listen, connect with, and give voice to the most important individuals in our district: our students and staff. Getting out into the schools on a regular basis and prioritizing the needs of classroom teachers, support staff, and students of all ages will be a primary focus in the coming year.

## 2. Parent/Community Engagement

Building trust with key stakeholders is important for any new superintendent. It is vital that the district strategically and creatively find ways to engage parents, residents, elected officials, and business leaders in two-way conversations. Being actively involved in parent/community engagement means HEB ISD stays in touch with support systems necessary for student success.

## 3. Leadership Development

Building capacity in and growing our current leadership team ensures a smooth continuity of services for our students. This means staying current on issues important to public schools at both the state and national level. Finding professional development opportunities and resources as a new superintendent will be important to ensure that support is carried forward to the entire leadership team.

## 4. Administrative Operations

Committing to strong fiscal management and sound financial practices will help ensure that our focus remains on students and staff, as well as classroom needs. Both short and long-term facility maintenance and planning will be key areas of attention in the coming year, along with implementation of an employee wellbeing program and marketing HEB ISD as the district of choice in the area of student/staff recruitment.

## 5. Board Relations

The elected men and women of the HEB ISD School Board are responsible for adopting policies, setting priorities, establishing governance protocols to oversee management of the district, adopting and overseeing the annual budget, and hiring and evaluating the superintendent. Our goal is to be a high-functioning Team of 8 as we guide the district toward its mission, vision, and goals in support of all students.





## | Focus on Wellbeing

One of the fastest growing areas of workplace-related research is the concept of wellbeing and how it relates to other goals we already value. Our wellness as individuals is inextricably intertwined with what we are able to accomplish. HEB ISD already incorporates this knowledge into our work to support students – sometimes we call this educating the “whole child” – and our students benefit every day because of this approach.

Data shows that extending a wellness focus to employees is a requirement for high-achieving organizations. We must commit to organization-wide support for teacher and staff wellness. Our focus on wellbeing is vital as our teachers and support staff continue to respond and recover from the impact of the worldwide pandemic. Creating a strong working environment that emphasizes self-care and social-emotional supports will be essential to organizational success.

Our next steps are to refine what this means for our school district and identify steps we can take to support employee wellness. We must monitor the continuing research in this area, especially as it pertains to people working in education. We must connect with our community as partners in supporting our team. Most importantly, we should engage with our teachers and staff, both to find ways to move forward and to monitor that those processes are achieving results.



The Strategic Plan drives the work of the organization. It will be important that we review the plan and align our work to the established goals and priorities. A strong organization is strengths based, engagement focused, and has a thriving wellbeing culture. Our goal is to build organizational resilience by creating a culture within HEB ISD that overtly prioritizes employee wellbeing. This will be a key to retention and improving a workplace culture that reduces stress and positively impacts the emotional wellbeing of our staff and students.



## | School Visits

Being visible on campuses and connecting with the staff and students at each of our HEB schools are top priorities for me as the new superintendent. These visits are not only an opportunity to engage in two-way conversations with students and staff, they are also opportune times to tour classrooms to see firsthand the teaching and learning that is happening in the classroom. The Superintendent, first and foremost, must be a strong instructional leader and an advocate for public educators. Building strong relationships requires time and attention with a focus on truly listening to what our staff and students need.

Over the course of the next few months, I will be participating in a listening tour at schools throughout the district. In addition to classroom walk throughs, visiting with student leaders and talking with teachers and support staff about what they see as key issues facing public education and HEB ISD specifically, I'll be dialoging with school administrators about key focus areas and priorities in their campus improvement plans. We will look at student data, have an honest discussion about the challenges they face, and identify the resources and support they need to help their students be successful. My goal is to be the kind of leader our educators and students feel is approachable and attentive. Creating an environment where everyone feels valued and heard is important to ensure HEB ISD remains the district of choice for many families. We have a reputation for making data-driven decisions to guide district and campus goals and operations. We must continue to be intentional in meeting the needs of all learners.

### DISTRICT PROFILE



**23,707**  
Students



**55%**  
Low Income



**75**  
Languages Spoken



**99.5%**  
Graduation Rate



**21** Elementary Schools  
**5** Junior High Schools  
**2** High Schools  
**3** Non-Traditional  
Campuses



**2,487**  
Employees





# Monitoring and Implementation

It will take some time to visit each school in the district and identify what the most urgent needs and priorities should be in our near future. Conducting a listening tour to truly understand the culture and climate within not only HEB ISD but public education in general is imperative to moving the district forward in a positive direction. The challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and potential learning gaps for students will provide a framework for updates to our strategic plan and our district-wide goals/objectives. As Superintendent, I plan to collect and review data, engage with our teachers, administrators, and support staff on finding workable solutions and bringing forth a State of the District report and action plan by December 2022.

## VISION

Empowering Today to Excel Tomorrow

## MISSION

The mission of the Hurst-Euless-Bedford Independent School District is to continue its proud tradition of excellence as a diverse, high-performing organization committed to ensuring each student is empowered today to excel tomorrow.

## 2019-2024 DISTRICT GOALS

### GOAL #1: STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- Achieve Highest Academic Rating for District
- Reading on Grade Level by End of 2nd Grade
- Meet Federal Accountability
- College, Career, and/or Military Ready Graduates
- Increased Student Attendance
- Increased Completion Rate (Grades 9-12)

### GOAL #2: EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

- Continuous Improvement Approach to Performance Excellence
- Efficient Use of District Resources
- Technology Resources

### GOAL #3: QUALITY TEACHING, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND SUPPORT STAFF

- Quality Employee Performance
- Increased Employee Retention
- Build a Culturally Proficient Organization
- Meaningful and Relevant Professional Development Program

### GOAL #4: SAFE, HEALTHY, AND NURTURING SCHOOLS

- Safe, Orderly, and Healthy Learning Environments
- Focus on the Whole Child

### GOAL #5: ENDURING RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- Stakeholder Satisfaction
- Stakeholder Engagement



## | Stakeholder Voices

Engaging with students, staff, parents, and other key stakeholders can create a greater sense of ownership throughout the district and community and can lead to better informed decisions by the School Board and district leaders. In many ways, a school district's brand is the soul of the district and should be approached from a strategic perspective. A strong, well-articulated brand is critical for connecting with both internal and external audiences. The most effective engagement activities solicit insight that is more solution based from a wide variety of community voices. It is this type of engagement that should inform the feedback process and help the Board and Superintendent make informed decisions. Engagement with real listening at its core brings the greatest value to any district.

### Key Questions:

- What makes HEB ISD special?
- What one word comes to mind when you think of HEB ISD?
- What are the district's primary strengths?
- What are HEB ISD's greatest challenges?
- What support or additional resources do you need to be successful?
- As Superintendent, what should my top priorities be this first year?







## | First 90 Days at HEB

My past nine years with the HEB ISD Family have provided me the opportunity to experience firsthand the day-to-day operations of the school district. As Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Administration and Deputy Superintendent for Educational Operations, I have been privileged to work with most of the amazing Educational Operations personnel.

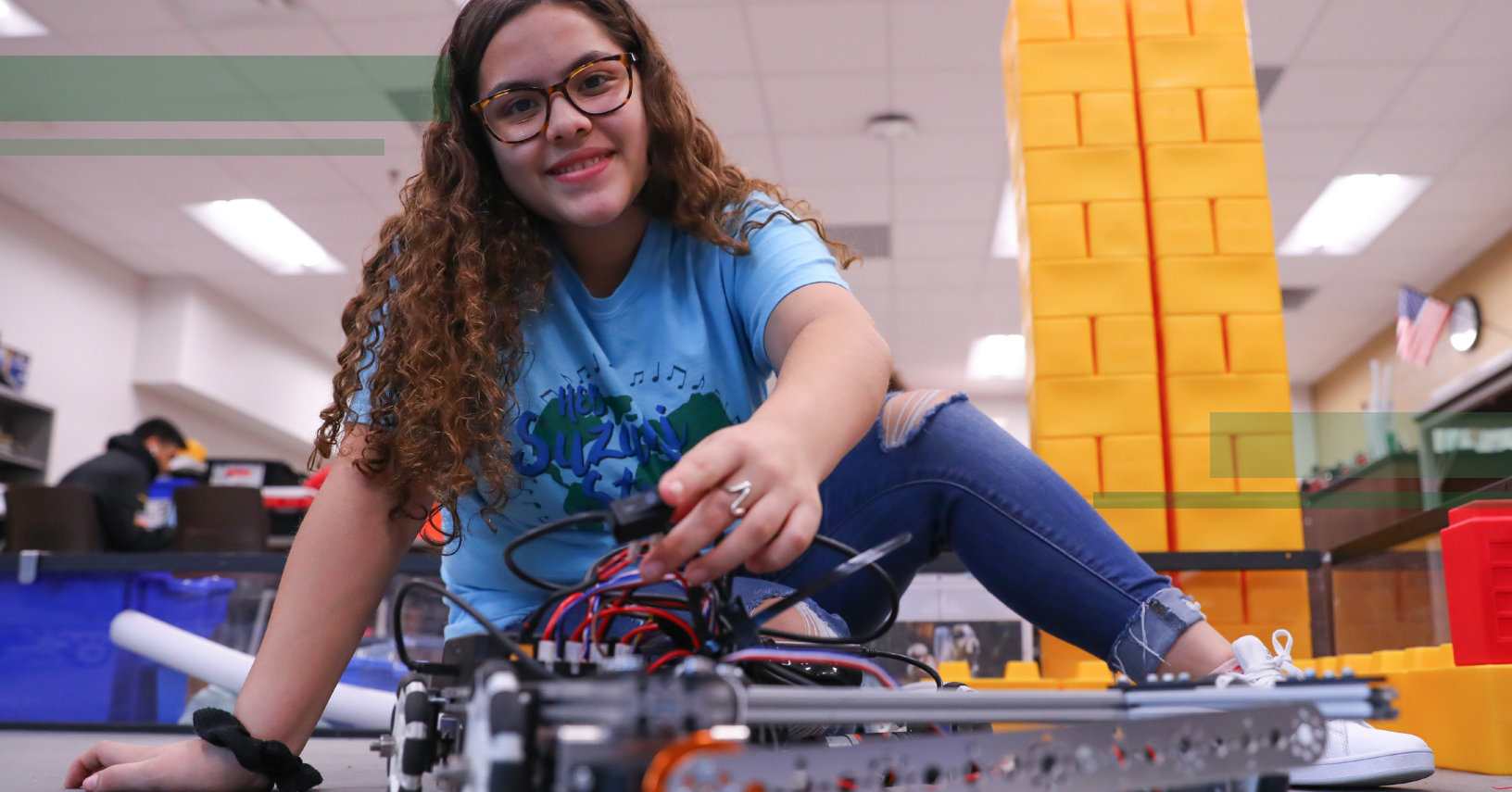
Much of my first day as Superintendent was spent meeting with our leadership team and establishing good day-to-day communication. Having systems and processes in place to ensure a smooth transition of leadership will help us all focus on students and staff more intentionally.



The first week at HEB ISD as Superintendent was kicked off with a district staff meeting, touching base with each School Board member individually, as well as meeting with various campus and district leaders, and preparing for our Executive Leadership Team Strategic Meeting. Reviewing our standard operating procedures and having confidence in the integrity of our operations will help us focus more intentionally on students and staff.

Moving from my current role to the visible position of Superintendent, I desire to stay connected to key leaders and organizations within the greater HEB community. Building strong relationships with business and elected leaders will take time, but the 90 days will be spent being visible in the community and at our campuses. I look forward to continuing the strong tradition of excellence at HEB ISD.





## | Entry Plan Timeline

- April 8 ● Provide Entry Plan to Board of Trustees
- April 11 ● Share Entry Plan Details during Superintendent's Comments at Board Meeting
- April 12 ● Post Entry Plan for Public Review on Website
- April-November ● Schedule School Visits
- April-November ● Conduct Staff Listening Tour
- May-October ● Implement Parent Listening Tour
- July-September ● Create Community Listening Opportunities
- September-November ● Identify Student Listening Opportunities
- Early December ● Discuss State of District Findings with District/Campus Leaders
- Mid-December ● Present State of the District Final Report to School Board/Public