

SUPERINTENDENT ENTRY PLAN



**DEDHAM
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
Superintendent Nan Murphy

August 2023

From Your Superintendent

I am both honored and excited to join Dedham as the new Superintendent of Schools. Throughout the community there is a strong sense of pride and unwavering support for the schools. I am committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members, to provide the best possible educational experience for every child in our district.

Stepping into this new role, my primary focus will be on meeting, listening and actively familiarizing myself with the district's unique strengths, challenges, and opportunities. This entry plan for my first year will serve as a foundation for my leadership approach and will ensure a smooth and seamless transition as I integrate myself into the Dedham community.

The key components of this Entry Plan will include:

- Listening and Learning
- Building Relationships
- Getting to Know Our Schools
- Community Engagement

After the completion of these first phase of the plan, I will share a formal report to highlight what was learned, outline key findings and identify priorities for future work.

The Dedham Public Schools have always been a source of pride for Dedham. It is my hope that a focused effort on creating opportunities to meet and engage with a wide variety of stakeholders and community members will help gather a wealth of insight and feedback necessary to inform a clear, thoughtful, and focused path forward for our district. With your input, we will identify relevant, impactful focus areas that will enhance our schools and create inclusive, innovative, and supportive learning environments for our students.

Best regards,

Nan Murphy

Superintendent, Dedham Public Schools



Superintendent Entry Plan

Understanding the heart of our community is essential in shaping collective goals and priorities.

Together, we will build a strong and vibrant learning community that nurtures the potential of every student and prepares them for success in the ever-changing world.

Before The Plan Begins...

April - June

Before entering officially as Superintendent of Schools in July, these first few months allow for time to gain an understanding of the Dedham community and the ways in which the Superintendent can support, collaborate and effect positive change within the schools and community at large.

ACTIVITIES

- Meet with Central Office Leadership Team to begin understanding scope of the current work underway.
- Visit each of Dedham's seven schools to begin meeting students and staff.
- Review key data related to student achievement, budget, and operations.
- Attend Dedham School Committee and School Building Rehabilitation Committee meetings.
- Attend Dedham Town Meeting to begin introductions and lay the foundation for future relationships with Town and community leadership.



LISTEN

Phase 1:

Listening & Learning

JULY - OCTOBER

Immediately begin creating opportunities and events that allow for the community - parents, staff and town administrators to meet, discuss and provide feedback on how they would like to see Dedham Public Schools advance over the next few years. The following questions are the essence of the information that I will gather in meetings and conversations throughout this phase. Questions will be carefully formulated depending on the audience and their relationship to the Dedham Public Schools.

What are you worried about in the Dedham Public Schools?

What is working well in the Dedham Public Schools?

What needs to happen?

How do we move forward?



By taking the time to meet a wide variety of stakeholders keeping a focus on these key questions, I can better begin to develop a more comprehensive view of the opportunities, strengths, advantages and ways in which Dedham schools excel, while also gaining insights into where we can improve, grow and ensure that our future students have the best possible school experience.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE COLLABORATION

Members of the school committee are elected by the community to ensure that the schools are successful in meeting the needs and expectations of the Town. Immediately establishing a strong, positive working relationship helps lay a foundation of support and governance critical to the success of the district.

ACTIVITIES

- Meet with each individual school committee member to build strong relationships and open communication.
- Bring School Committee together for a retreat focused on establishing a shared understanding of the roles, responsibilities, communication and the development of Superintendent evaluations goals.
- Establish working calendar to outline priority topics for Superintendent and school leaders to address during public meetings.

LEARN

Phase 1:

Listening & Learning

JULY - OCTOBER

ACADEMICS & STUDENT SUCCESS

As the leader of a school district, students are at the center of everything we do. Understanding what students are learning, where they are struggling, and how we can give them the greatest chance for academic success, personal achievement and future growth is critical in determining any future directions for our schools.

ACTIVITIES

- Review District strategic plans, educational visioning, and current school improvement plans.
- Meet with Assistant Superintendents, central office staff, school principals, directors and department heads to review the latest District and school-based data.
- Review standards based- PK-12 curriculum and assess alignment across all grades.
- Review special education systems and structures and analyze alignment with strategic goals.
- Several visits to each of our schools during the active school day to experience learning in action at all levels.
- Meet with Office of Teaching and Learning to develop an understanding of professional development and focus areas for educator learning.
- Engage educators in conversations to gauge the level of understanding and implementation around multi-tiered systems of support and the positive impacts on student outcomes.
- Meet with student services team to understand the SEL curriculum and emotional support structures in place for students PK-12.



ALIGN

Phase 1:

Listening & Learning

JULY - OCTOBER

OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT

Any plans, priorities and visions for our District must be balanced with fiscal responsibility to the Town. It is essential to understand how we are meeting the operational and practical needs of our schools, and to make sure we are aligned.

ACTIVITIES

- Review all Dedham policies, procedures, reports and foundational documents.
- Review both historical and FY24 budget information to ensure funding aligns with strategic vision and needs of the district.
- Tour all school facilities with principals and asst. Supt of operations to identify critical areas of need, concern and improvement.
- Review employee bargaining contracts and establish relationships and structures to collaborate with all Association Unit groups to lead our work together.
- Assess communications structures, channels and procedures in place at school and district levels.
- Understand effectiveness of operational systems to ensure user-friendly, efficient and accessible processes.
- Collaborate with Dedham Police to assess and prioritize school safety protocols, training and best practices.
- Develop understanding and engage on current elementary building project as a board member on Dedham SBRC.



CONNECT

Phase 1:

Listening & Learning

JULY - OCTOBER

CULTURE & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Understanding how our schools are fostering a sense of pride, inclusion and community spirit. Ensuring that the school learning environment is a safe, supportive, connected and welcoming space for staff, students and families.

ACTIVITIES

- Immediate introduction to all families and staff via email, launching monthly Superintendent Update to formalize a consistent flow of information.
- Host several meet and greet forums both in-person and online. Two sessions offered for parents and community, two sessions offered for DPS educators and one virtual session open to anyone in the school or Town community.
- Attend Neighborhood block parties and PTO summer events.
- Superintendent Coffees hosted in September and October for parents.
- Create staff open forums after school for educators.
- Attend fall PTO meetings.
- Meet other key school partnerships, including the Board of SEPAC (special education parent advisory committee), Dedham HRC, DEF.
- Bring together the 35+ members of the Dedham Public Schools educator Leadership Team to build relationships and develop a strategic, focused approach to the new school year and beyond.
- Meet with DHS and DMS student groups to gain student perspectives and insight.





Phase 2:

Analyzing Outcomes

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

After the first Listening & Learning phase, I will prepare a summary report to share highlights of key insights gathered in the first phase. This summary report will not only provide an overview of what I learned over the last four months, but more importantly, sharing what these lessons, conversations and experiences tell me about where we are as a District and where I believe we need focus and direct our efforts. These findings will then be used to create a more comprehensive Entry Plan Priority Report.

Phase 3:

Strategic Direction & Plan

JANUARY - JUNE

Expand the key findings identified during the Listening & Learning phase to construct a comprehensive plan that aligns and builds upon the current initiatives underway, as well as the foundational goals of our school district.

Collaborate with school leadership to ensure that we can cohesively and clearly articulate core objectives and efforts that will create a strong vision and path forward to meeting the needs of students, staff and the Dedham community in the years ahead.



Listen
Learn
Align
Connect
Inspire