



Dr. Kimberly Rizzo Saunders ◀◀◀◀◀

Listen, Learn, Lead

90-Day Entry Plan

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Letter to the community <<<<<<

Dear Fellow Community Members,

It is with sincere pleasure and great honor that I join Kennett Consolidated School District (KCSD). Across my 29 years of experience as an educator, I have always been committed to the vision of a transparent, student-centered community that focuses on the core elements of teaching and learning.

I have worked with fellow administrators to operationalize a community's vision and mission by modeling integrity, resilience, and respect in a collaborative culture of operations—Always working to engage all stakeholders through high leverage communications and authentic opportunities for participation in decision-making.

Therefore, in my new role as Superintendent for KCSD, I will implement a phased entry plan during the first year that works toward the following goals:

- Gain a deep understanding about the organizational capacity of the District and its efforts in providing effective and meaningful academic, athletic, co-curricular, and social opportunities for all students.
- Strengthen family and community engagement and develop a plan to expand upon the District's communication outreach.
- Promote and ensure positive and collaborative environments that are focused on student success.
- Identify, analyze, and develop a plan to address critical issues that are impacting student achievement, district goals, and initiatives.
- Establish positive and productive relationships with all members of the KCSD Community.



In an effort to begin this critical work, I have created an entry plan that outlines a sequence of activities that will provide me with opportunities to learn from individuals representing staff, parents, students, and community members of KCSD—including community leaders.

As I meet with individuals, my intent is to listen with great care and attention as my hopes are to (a) further develop my understanding of and appreciation for what is unique and important to the KCSD community, (b) discover, acknowledge, and validate KCSD's strengths and successes, (c) discover and discuss KCSD's challenges and opportunities for improvement and (d) begin to develop a process for how we will learn and work collectively and cooperatively to ensure that the academic, social, and emotional needs of ALL students are met.

Sincerely,
Dr. Kimberly Rizzo Saunders
Superintendent



Executive Summary <<<<<<

The purpose of this entry plan is to collect and analyze key information from a diverse set of individuals and resources in order to (a) assist me in learning about KCSD, (b) assist the District, community, and myself in collectively learning about the organization as a whole, and (c) strengthen the District's ability to make better informed decisions that ensure students' needs are being met within an educational environment that meets the expectations outlined in KCSD's Core Values:

- Integrity
- Resilience
- Student-Centered
- Accountability
- Collaboration

As a result, my initial efforts and actions as Superintendent will focus on:

- Further developing my understanding of and appreciation for what is unique and important to the KCSD community.
- Discovering, acknowledging, and validating the District's strengths and successes.
- Discovering and discussing the District's areas of challenge and opportunity.
- Developing a process for how we will learn and work collectively and cooperatively to ensure that the academic, social, and emotional needs of ALL students are met.



The following sections of this entry plan will detail (a) entry plan goals, (b) initially envisioned entry plan activities and (c) the breakdown of activities during the first 30 days, the first 60 days and the first 90 days.

This entry plan engages four distinct groups, comprised of individuals representing key constituent groups of the KCSD community, including (a) students (b) parents, (c) staff, and (d) community leaders.

As I gain insight from interviews and documents, I will analyze newly collected data by comparing and contrasting it to previously collected data. Throughout my analysis, I will carefully note common themes that emerge, as well as themes unique to each specific group (i.e., students, parents, staff, community leaders). These findings will then become a focal point for further discussion and analysis to be presented at the close of 90 days. As a result of this work, the presentation will include:

- An executive summary of the entry plan's collected data and findings.
- Recommendations stemming from analysis of the collected data and findings.

Finally, an entry plan should be a living document to allow for changes and revisions based upon new and evolving information. All updates to the plan will be posted and communicated to promote transparency, collaboration, and accountability.



Entry Plan Activities: Listen ◀◀◀◀

In order to build a strong foundation for partnering, collaborating, and leading KCSD, a clear understanding of the community must first be developed.

This can be accomplished by engaging the community and members in sharing their lived experiences whether that be as a student, a parent, a staff member, a community member, or a community leader.

Through surveys, focus groups, and individual interviews this can be accomplished. The following are initial planned activities (to be reviewed and refined in discussions with Board members, leadership team members, and community leaders) divided by those to occur in the first 30 days, those to occur in the first 60 days, and those to occur in the first 90 days.



Interviews: Listen ◀◀◀◀

Table 1.1 further clarifies the varied perspectives that will be intentionally sought out for their unique points of view.

The rationale behind engaging diverse perspectives is twofold. First, seeking out different points of view allows for a fuller, richer picture to emerge. Second, the notion of embracing differences can be a powerful source of creativity leading to productive change.

Table 1:1 Interviewees	Individual Stakeholders
Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. David Kronenberg, President• Dr. Victoria Gehrt, Vice President• Mr. Michael Finnegan, Treasurer• Mr. Mark Bowden• Ms. Lenda Carrillo• Mr. Ethan Cramer• Ms. Lynn Golden-Mirarchi• Dr. Jeffrey McVey• Ms. LaToya Myers

Interviewees: Listen ◀◀◀◀◀

Table 1:1 Interviewees

Individual Stakeholders

Administrative Leadership

- *Dr. Michael Barber, Assistant Superintendent*
- *Mark Tracy, Chief Financial Officer*
- *Dr. Kristy Brady, Director of Business Services*
- *Dr. Heather Collins, Director of Teaching and Learning*
- *Casandra Jones, Director of Pupil Services and Supports Learning*
- *Dan Maguire, Director of Technology*
- *Chris Marsala, Director of Human Resources*
- *Lisa Palmarini, Director of Communications*
- *Dave Brice, Director of Facilities*
- *Brenna Austin, Supervisor of English Language Development*
- *Dr. Jennifer Miller, Supervisor of Elementary Education*
- *Rebecca Vietri, Supervisor of Secondary Education*
- *Kerry Myers, Supervisor of Special Education*
- *Allie Appleman, Supervisor of Special Education*
- *Dean Ivory, Supervisor of Innovation*

Building Leadership

- *April Reynolds, Principal, Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center*
- *Leah McComsey, Principal, Bancroft Elementary School*
- *Dr. Bridgette Miles, Principal, Greenwood Elementary School*
- *Elizabeth Weaver, Principal, New Garden Elementary School*
- *Dr. Jake Moore, Principal, Kennett Middle School*
- *Katie King, Assistant Principal, Kennett Middle School*
- *Erin Miller, Assistant Principal, Kennett Middle School*
- *Dr. Lorenzo G. DeAngelis Jr., Principal, Kennett High School*
- *Duane Kotz, Assistant Principal, Kennett High School*
- *Chanel August Ruffin, Assistant Principal, Kennett High School*
- *Jeffery Thomas, Assistant Principal, Kennett High School*
- *Sean Harvey, Director of Athletics*

Interviews: Listen ◀◀◀◀◀

Table 1:1 Interviewees

Individual Stakeholders

Students

- *Focus group of each grade (4-5)*
- *Individual students as recommended and willing*

Parents

- *PTO Officers/members as recommended (3-5 from each school)*
- *Classroom volunteers as recommended (3-5 from each school)*
- *Additional parents as recommended (3-5 from each school)*

Community Members

- *Community members and leaders as recommended (10-12)*

Note: The numbers in parentheses following the individual stakeholders identifies how many individuals will be interviewed. Also, interviewees will be asked if there are other individuals, who have not been singled out for interviewing, whose perspective would offer additional insight and understanding. If time allows and the individuals are willing, additional interviews will be scheduled.

When I meet with individuals and focus groups, I will begin by introducing myself and explaining the purpose of this entry plan. I will then ask them to respond to a set of questions which I will send to them before the scheduled interview time in both English and Spanish, as well as any other language needed.

Examples, but not a full list of questions, can be found in Table 1.2.

Table 1:2 Entry Plan Sample Interview Questions

For Adults and MS/HS students	From Adult/KMS/KHS Interview (Modified for Parents)	For Students K-5
<i>How would you describe the KCSD?</i>	<i>Share in English and Spanish</i>	<i>What words best describe your school?</i>
<i>What would you most want to preserve within the District?</i>	<i>Share in English and Spanish</i>	<i>If you had to move far away from your school, what would you miss the most?</i>
<i>How would you describe the _____ school?</i>	<i>Share in English and Spanish</i>	
<i>What would you most want to preserve within your (your student's) school?</i>	<i>Share in English and Spanish</i>	<i>If you had to go to a different school, what would you miss the most about your school?</i>
<i>What would you identify to be the biggest challenges facing your (your student's) school?</i>	<i>Share in English and Spanish</i>	<i>What would you hope your new school has or does have that your school does not?</i>

Table 1:2 Entry Plan Sample Interview Questions

For Adults and MS/HS students	From Adult/MS/HS Interview (Modified for Parents)	For Students K-5
<p><i>In your role as _____, what actions have the greatest impact on students' learning?</i></p> <p><i>MS/HS Student what actions have the greatest impact on your learning?</i></p>	<p><i>Share in English and Spanish</i></p> <p><i>Parents: As a parent, what actions do you believe have the greatest impact on your child's learning?</i></p>	<p><i>What is the most important job you have as a student?</i></p>
<p><i>What would help you to be even more effective in your role as _____?</i></p>		
<p><i>KMS/KHS Student: What would have an even better effect?</i></p>	<p><i>Parents: How could the District establish stronger partnerships with parents?</i></p>	<p><i>How could your school or your teacher help you to be a better student?</i></p>
<p><i>What inspires, motivates, or sustains you?</i></p>	<p><i>Parents: What about the school and District inspires or motivates your child?</i></p>	<p><i>When you are working on a challenging assignment, what motivates you to stick with it and keep working?</i></p>

Table 1:2 Entry Plan Sample Interview Questions

For Adults and MS/HS students	From Adult/MS/HS Interview (Modified for Parents)	For Students K-5
<p><i>What about your role frustrates you?</i></p> <p><i>What about your school frustrates you?</i></p>	<p><i>Parents: What about school and the District frustrates your child?</i></p>	<p><i>What will make you give up?</i></p>
<p><i>How could I be most helpful in my role as Superintendent?</i></p>	<p><i>Share in English and Spanish</i></p>	
<p><i>Is there anything you would like to share with me that I have not asked you?</i></p>	<p><i>Share in English and Spanish</i></p>	<p><i>Is there anything you would like to share with me that I have not asked you?</i></p>
<p><i>As you think about our discussion, is there anyone you believe I should talk with because they may share a perspective that I will not otherwise hear?</i></p>	<p><i>Share in English and Spanish</i></p>	<p><i>As you think about our discussion, is there anyone else you think I should interview?</i></p>



Entry Plan Activities: Learn ◀◀◀◀

Enhancing the foundation to build a collaborative culture for all stakeholders involves moving past active listening into deep learning about the organization, the environment, and the community that the KCSD serves. In addition to implementing surveys, conducting individual interviews, and facilitating focus groups, it is also necessary to spend significant time in buildings interacting directly with building leadership and staff “designed to improve understanding of the special nature of...[the] facility—what its people are proud of, what they are challenged by and aspire to, and what they want [me] to know”.

I will also have, the building principal, a veteran teacher, the school’s custodian, and the Director of Facilities or Custodian Supervisor, provide a group tour of each building—a tour that focuses on what they are most proud of regarding the buildings and grounds, what they are most concerned about related to building and grounds, as well as specifically on the needs related to caring for and maintaining the buildings.

Entry Plan Activities: Learn <<<<<<

Additionally, I will review an assortment of District and school-based documents that will further develop my understanding of KCSD that align with the goals of the entry plan. Documents would include but are not limited to:

- School Improvement Plans and Balanced Scorecards
- Professional Development Master Plan as well as Individual Plans
- School Goals
- Evaluations and Walk-through Data
- School Schedules
- Present and Previous Budgets
- Student Handbooks
- Staff Handbook
- Safety Plan/Emergency Plan/Navigate 360
- Technology and Equipment Plan Documents
- Achievement Data
- Demographic Data
- School Board Policies
- Procedures and Protocols
- Board and Committee Minutes
- Communication Plan
- PTO Minutes
- Any Past Survey Data
- Social Media Accounts
- Parent, Staff, and Community Communications

Ensuring a comprehensive and deep learning experience in addition to this review, the following are initial envisioned activities (to be reviewed and refined in discussions with Board members, Leadership Team Members, and Community Leaders) indicated by those to occur in the first 30 days, those to occur in the first 60 days, and those to occur in the first 90 days.



Entry Plan Activities: Lead <<<<<<

As listening and learning take place, the pillars of leadership can become more clearly defined and reflection and reporting about success of the entry plan need to take place. There are five district leadership practices that consistently have shown a statistically significant correlation with student achievement and learning. These practices are: a) ensuring collaborative goal setting, b) creating board alignment with and support of district goals, c) monitoring achievement and instructional goals, d) allocating resources to support the goals for achievement and instruction, and e) establishing non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction.

Each of the following activities is designed to progress work toward the entry plan goals and to support the district leadership practices outlined above. The following are initial envisioned activities (to be reviewed and refined in discussions with Board members, Leadership Team members, and Community Leaders) indicated by those to occur in the first 30 days, those to occur in the first 60 days, and those to occur in the first 90 days.



30-Day Activities

Listen <<<<<<

- One-on-one and group meetings with the Board and one (1) retreat:
 - Engage in one-on-one or small group conversations with Board Members to begin developing relationships, understand their aspirations for the District, and develop a clear understanding of the Vision.
- One-on-one and group meetings with key stakeholder groups:
 - These key stakeholder groups include, but are not limited to, building and central office administration, employee leadership, elected officials, first responders, leadership of the townships the district serves, and partners in education.
 - Meet with key community leaders that include, but are not limited to, local units of governments, first responders, various local service organizations and businesses, faith-based organizations.
- Meet with the former superintendent (if amenable) to facilitate a smooth and effective transition for a positive start to the upcoming school year.
- Develop and solicit feedback through surveys of:
 - Parents
 - Students
 - Community Members
- Schedule building and program visitations throughout the school year.

Learn <<<<<

- School site visits facilitated by building administration and the designated facilities personnel.
- Status of current facility improvements, the Emergency Response Plan, and technology capacity.
- Current and future needs for maintenance, safety, and cleanliness.
- Receive a tour of the District's communities and boundaries.
- Learn the District's current communication outreach efforts and develop a plan to strengthen and/or broaden avenues for stakeholder accessibility.
- Community visits facilitated by the Board president and/or current superintendent.
- Learn the expectations the Board has of their superintendent and move forward in establishing communication protocols, norms, first year expectations, community engagement, and agenda setting.
- Analyze the FY25 and FY26 budget and review grant timelines and their purpose(s).
- Current and historical financial reports with identified areas of concern for expenditures, analysis of revenue patterns, financial projections for the next five (5) years, and current and historical actions taken to balance the budget.
- Transportation costs and resources.
- A list of variables that are of immediate and long-term concern that could impact the budget with an impact assessment provided.
- Review and discuss current or potential litigation against or on behalf of the District.
- Attend pre-existing meeting structures to engage with the community and/or key stakeholders.

Lead <<<<<

- Solidify the entry plan upon receiving feedback and suggestions from the Board.
- Establish communication protocols, professional expectations, and norms for the Superintendent and the Board.
- Have and engage in a public retreat with the Board to set goals for the entry plan and/or for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Establish a protocol for responding to stakeholder questions, concerns, and/or feedback.
- Create a timeline for progressing through the Entry Plan that will include indicators for success for its goals and activities.
- Model and support a culture of honesty and integrity with meaningful and constructive feedback.



60-Day Activities

Listen <<<<<

- Implement the surveys.
- Develop key themes from interviews and use these to develop focus group questions and discussion prompts.
- Meet with the surrounding area superintendents and instructional partners to begin developing professional relationships and learning opportunities for students.

Learn <<<<<

- 1 week to be spent at each elementary school working directly with building leadership and staff.
- 2 weeks to be spent at KMS and KHS working directly with building leadership and staff.
- Data analysis and document and systems review.
- Meet with building administration, district administration, and association leadership to be provided a comprehensive overview to understand programming, support systems, and interscholastic opportunities to further student achievement and staff capacity.
- Role of technology in the classroom.
- Articulate status within the system and with our instructional partners.
- Current state of programming opportunities and local monitoring instruments.
- Status of the district's multi-tiered system of support and identifying current needs of key sub-groups with an assessment of current and historical action plan(s).
- Status of a social-emotional learning strategic plan.
- Understanding the internal capacity to address facility needs.

- Ride the currently planned bus routes.
- Schedule a ride along with the local emergency personnel.
- Review and understand each department's plans for the 2024-2025 school year.

Lead <<<<<<

- Media engagement and assessment.
- Identify local media avenues that are influential in the community and key community events to attend and establish a presence.
- Perform a communications audit and communications survey.
- Create team building opportunities with building and district administration, as well as the Board.
- Develop opportunities for the Superintendent and the Board to engage with its stakeholder groups throughout 2024-2025.
- Join appropriate and applicable civic organizations.



90-Day Activities

Listen <<<<<<

- Focus groups.
- These focus groups will be for students, staff, parents, community leaders and interest groups, and educators.
- Internalize and process the information gathered in the listen category of the entry plan.
- Present findings of themes from interviews, data from surveys, and information from focus groups.

Learn <<<<<<

- Hold one-on-one and group discussions with the Board about the strengths, areas for growth, and opportunities.
- Review the status of professional learning communities, professional development opportunities and focus, as well as grading practices and reporting.
- Build relationships with legislators on key sub-committees, Department of Education, local officials, and community organizations.
- Identify areas of immediate concern and plans for remedy.

Lead <<<<<<

- Develop a system that can properly and effectively display the District's successes with, and about, the students, staff, and community.
- Develop a clear communications plan and share it with the community.
- Review and discuss current or potential legislation that could positively or negatively affect the District.
- Identify real or perceived barriers that are negatively impacting the District's path forward and constructively discuss with stakeholders' meaningful solutions.
- Provide a report to the Board at the conclusion of the entry plan to assess its efficacy.
- Present this information to the Board at the conclusion of the entry plan for feedback.



Conclusion <<<<<

This entry plan provides a starting point for the Board and the Superintendent to begin discussion around how the Board and Superintendent want to prioritize my entry into the KCSD. The document should be shared with community members, should be updated regularly, and the information garnered and steps taken during the course of the entry should be regularly reported on during Board meetings and community information sessions. Finally, a web page should be dedicated to the information and progress related to the entry plan to ensure that the community is apprised of any and all updates in real time.



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