



Superintendent's Entry Plan Summary January 2025

NTPS Community,

It has been a productive and engaging first six months as your superintendent! Thanks to each of you who have taken time to share your thoughts. It was helpful to hear about strengths, challenges, and priorities from so many in our community, including:

- City and county law enforcement officials
- Family members on the Parent Advisory Council
- Labor partners
- Leaders from the City of Lacey, Thurston County, and the Nisqually Tribe
- Leaders of faith-based organizations
- Leaders of local higher education institutions
- Leaders of local nonprofit and service organizations
- Retired NTPS employees
- Staff at all 24 NTPS schools and each district department
- Student Advisory Council members and individual students

This document captures the key themes I heard in these conversations. At NTPS, we celebrate our successes and continuously seek areas of opportunity for our district. We can be proud of the high-quality education we provide our 15,000 students, and I look forward to building upon our strengths.

I welcome your input any time. Please continue to reach out!

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Celebrating Our Strengths

Some points of pride around the district.

Collaboration

- We enjoy strong teamwork between our operations teams and school leaders.
- We have a strong partnership with local law enforcement through the school resource officers program.
- We have excellent community partnerships with nonprofits and local governments.
- We have effective PLCs (professional learning communities) in many schools and departments.
- Family connection meetings emphasize relationship-building, enhancing community engagement.

Equity & Inclusion

- We have a strong ongoing focus on equity through staff mini-lessons, restorative practices, inclusionary practices, and culturally responsive courses like Ethnic Studies and Tribal Perspectives.
- Programs like One School/One Book and robust professional development contribute to these efforts.

Enhanced Student Opportunities & Supports

- We have expanded our mental health supports and strengthened our focus on social-emotional learning (SEL) to ensure students can focus on learning.
- We offer robust early learning programs, including Future-Ready Kindergarten and NTPS preschool.
- We offer many career and technical education (CTE) pathways, dual language programs, and science field experiences to support a well-rounded education.

Financial Stability & Operational Success

- We have remained steadfast with existing district priorities, not adding new initiatives.
- We have maintained financial stability while continuing successful existing programs and maintaining facilities.
- We foster a positive environment for staff, particularly those new to NTPS.



Opportunities for Growth

By focusing on these growth areas, we can enhance our strong culture of collaboration, equity, and student-centered programs.

Professional Development

- Professional development (PD) offerings are becoming repetitive for experienced staff.
- New teachers and classified staff (including paraeducators) require more tailored support. Further investment in PD specific to these groups would be beneficial.

Staff Engagement & Leadership

- We should seek greater emphasis on staff voice and inclusion of principals and associations in leadership decisions. Finding a balance between autonomy and centralization is needed to ensure staff feel empowered and supported.

Sharing our Equity Successes

- We should share more information with staff and the community about our ongoing equity work.
- We need to invest in additional support for Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) students to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.

Staffing

- There is a need for more support in mental health, counseling, special education, and operational supports. Addressing staffing gaps is a priority to ensure we meet all student needs.

Behavioral Challenges

- We have continued challenges with student behavior. We need to ensure consistent implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) systems and social-emotional learning curricula districtwide.
- Overcrowding at some of our elementary schools must be addressed to improve the student experience.

Transportation Challenges

- We have made significant improvements in transportation timeliness post-pandemic, with no cancelled routes so far in the 2024-25 school year! We need to continue efforts to hire and retain high-quality drivers to ensure routes are on time and buses are available for extracurricular activities.

