

SUPERINTENDENT KEN MURRAY



MOVING FORWARD PLAN



***“We are unified in bridging
KIDS and their LEARNING.”***

CHARTING THE PATH...

“Leadership transitions are pivotal for any organization, blending the need to respect established culture with the responsibility to inspire confidence, reduce uncertainty, while navigating towards necessary change. As a long-time administrator and Ephrata resident, I have a deep connection to this community... I bleed ORANGE and BLACK. I’m known by our staff, students, and families, and I am committed to transparency... I am here to serve openly, genuinely, and with humility.

With nearly 25 years in education, including roles as teacher, coach, principal, assistant superintendent and superintendent, I am grounded in Ephrata’s values and have built my leadership on Radical Candor: caring personally while challenging directly. My approach has evolved, shaped by experiences, mentors, and my growth mindset. Success isn’t about “me”, it’s about “us,” thus I will continue to seek diverse perspectives to guide our path forward.

As we move forward, I aim to continue to address immediate priorities and establish a clear, forward-thinking vision and strategic plan. This work will involve purposeful conversations, team building, and especially listening. Together, we will create clarity and alignment, strengthening partnerships with staff and the community to serve and prepare our students for their futures.

I look forward to continuing to collaborate with the entire TIGER community. We’ll refine our shared commitments and set clear goals to ensure that, as TIGERS, we offer an unparalleled education, ensuring that our KIDS have the support they need to cross the bridge to their LEARNING successfully. We have much to accomplish together, and I am honored to lead this journey.”



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EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PLATFORM...

"I have a deep belief that education is about "KIDS and their LEARNING"! I also believe that instruction, assessment and active student engagement are the bridge to "HIGH levels of learning" being possible. What does this mean?

KIDS come first! Educators must do all they can to meet the physical, social - emotional and academic needs of students.

The "adult in the room" matters more than anything! Thus, educators must also provide high quality instruction that is aligned with these needs and effectively assess whether or not instruction is meeting the needs of students.

With that said, educators doing their part is not all that is necessary, students must do their part as well. They must take advantage of the opportunities that are provided and cross the bridge that is being built for them.

If educators and students do what is necessary, students are capable of HIGH levels of learning. Students can cross the bridge!

I sincerely believe that KIDS are extraordinary and will ultimately change the world for the better and I believe it is the responsibility of educators to make sure that the necessary LEARNING occurs to make this possible."



Rooted in tradition and driven by a commitment to excellence, the Ephrata School District unites a cherished legacy, recognized through the Tiger Head, the E, and the Paw logos, and a relentless pursuit of unparalleled learning...

- The logos and colors of orange and black have and continue to reflect a sense of belonging and pride, and serve as a bridge to the past while propelling the district forward.*
- The power of tradition intertwines with modern educational ideals, fostering a culture of BELONGING with CARE, HONESTY, HUMILITY and TRUST expected.*
- As stewards of Ephrata School District's rich heritage, staff honor history and shape a future where academic excellence and tradition harmonize and ensure that students are well equipped for success.*
- The Ephrata School District is a testament to the fusion of tradition, instruction, learning and the ignition of being able to embrace what is possible.*

COMMITMENTS...

Commitment to Transparency and Open Communication

"I commit to transparent communication with our staff, students, and community. Sharing updates, addressing challenges openly, and keeping stakeholders informed is essential to building trust and ensuring everyone feels included in this journey."

Commitment to Collaboration and Relationship-Building

"I am dedicated to fostering a collaborative culture, where input from all voices is valued. By engaging with staff, students, families, and the community, we can build on our shared strengths and reinforce the teamwork that defines the TIGER community."

Commitment to Maintaining and Enhancing Instruction, Assessment and Active Student Engagement

"Instruction, assessment and active student engagement are key to bridging KIDS and their LEARNING. My focus will be on elevating instructional quality and student engagement and using effective assessment practices to drive exceptional student outcomes."

Commitment to Student-Centered Decision Making

"Every decision we make will keep students' needs front and center. Our mission is to ensure each action taken advances the growth, well-being, and readiness of our students."

Commitment to Accountability and Continuous Improvement

"Accountability and continuous improvement go hand-in-hand. I will establish clear expectations, follow through on our goals, and adjust strategies as needed to keep moving forward, ensuring we're consistently evolving to meet our students' needs."

Commitment to the TIGER Community's Values and Legacy

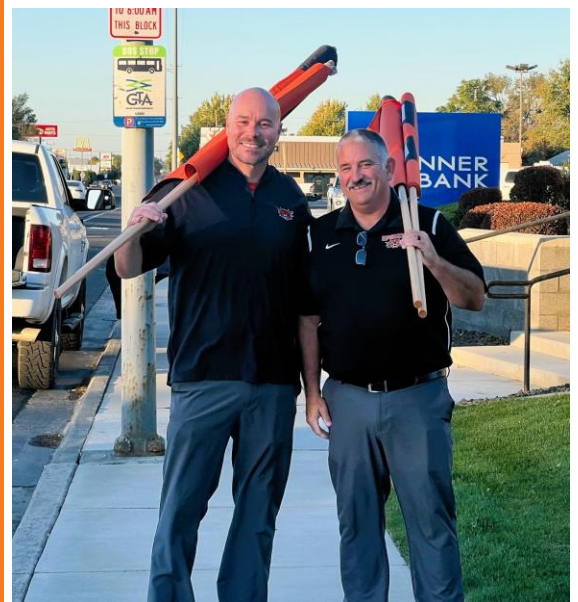
"My commitment to the TIGER Community is deep and enduring. I am here to uphold the traditions that make this community unique, while continuously refining what it means to be a TIGER to better serve our students and community."

Commitment to Belonging

"Considering the uniqueness of each student will be integral to our actions and decision-making. I am committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for every student, honoring diverse backgrounds and perspectives to foster a true sense of belonging."

Commitment to Future-Readiness for All Students

"Preparing our students for their futures is at the heart of our work. I am committed to ensuring that every student receives an education that provides them the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to thrive beyond graduation."





KEY THEMES...

- *Radical Candor: Fostering a culture of open communication and feedback.*
- *Collaboration: Intentionally seeking diverse perspectives and building strong partnerships.*
- *Accountability: Ensuring accountability for both successes and challenges.*
- *Student Success: Prioritizing instruction, assessment, active engagement and student well-being.*
- *Community Engagement: Building strong relationships with the TIGER community.*

MONITORING STRUCTURES...

- *Frequent school building walk-throughs / visits.*
- *Frequent one-on-one meetings with community leaders.*
- *Frequent one-on-one meetings with Board Directors.*
- *Biweekly leadership meetings.*
- *Monthly "Student Voice" luncheons.*
- *Monthly one-on-one meetings with principals, directors and assistant superintendent.*
- *Monthly labor management meetings with Ephrata Education Association (EEA) and Ephrata Public School Employees (PSE) leadership.*
- *Monthly "Ephrata Forward" meetings.*
- *Periodic reflective learning walks with principals and/or directors.*
- *Periodic listening / Q & A forums with the TIGER community.*
- *Annual surveys of the TIGER community.*
- *Annual review of district and state assessment data.*



FOCUS AREAS: FINANCE, FACILITIES & THE FUTURE...

Finance

- Continue to be fiscally responsible while working to address the current and long term needs of the district.

Facilities

- Continue branding / “front facing” work.
- Address current needs with a focus on necessary safety and security enhancements.
- Finalize a community facility study to prepare for and then transparently communicate about the upcoming February 2026 Bond.

Future

- Develop a strategic plan with the ultimate goal to bridge KIDS and their LEARNING.
- Finalize a community facility study to prepare for and then transparently communicate about the upcoming February 2026 Bond.

RELENTLESS PRIORITIES...

Belief in Students: Students are our future and our future is amazing! We MUST recognize that students are extraordinary and capable of changing the world for the better.

Belonging: All students want to be wanted and feel valued! We MUST provide opportunities for all students to have a place to exist, a way to connect and a reason to belong.

KIDS and their LEARNING: Student needs are as important as academic achievement! We MUST consider students’ physical, social-emotional, and academic needs in every decision.

High-Quality Instruction: The adult in the room matters more than anything! Our instruction MUST be engaging and aligned with student needs to promote high levels of learning for all.

Effective Assessment: A results orientation will define us! We MUST continuously measure progress to guide instruction and improve outcomes.

Shared Responsibility: It can’t be done alone! Educators and students MUST both actively engage in the learning process for high levels of learning for all to be possible.

Collaboration: Excellence in isolation isn’t enough! We MUST work to improve from within, using the power of teamwork and collaboration.

Continuous Improvement: We will never arrive! We MUST constantly evaluate and refine our practices to meet the needs of all students.





OVERARCHING GOALS...

Build Strong, Trust-Based Relationships Through Transparent Communication

- **Goal:** Establish clear, open communication channels with the TIGER community to foster trust and transparency.
- **Actions:** Provide regular updates and host periodic listening sessions; keep stakeholders informed of both progress and challenges as they arise.

Strengthen Instruction and Assessment to Drive Student Success

- **Goal:** Elevate instructional quality and assessment practices to ensure they align with the goal of high-level learning and student achievement.
- **Actions:** Conduct a needs assessment with teachers and administrators; invest in professional development; support consistent, data-driven evaluations to measure instructional impact.

Advance Belonging in All Aspects of District Operations

- **Goal:** Create a safe, inclusive environment where every student feels valued and has equitable access to resources and opportunities.
- **Actions:** Implement policies and practices to address disparities; prioritize resources for students who may need additional support; celebrate and integrate diverse perspectives within the curriculum and school activities.

Cultivate a Collaborative Culture Focused on Continuous Improvement

- **Goal:** Foster a culture of collaboration, encouraging input from all staff and stakeholders to drive continuous improvement throughout the district.
- **Actions:** Utilize leadership teams and committees for feedback and improvement initiatives; encourage professional learning communities; promote shared accountability for district goals.

Prepare Students for the Future by Reinforcing Academic and Social-Emotional Supports

- **Goal:** Develop and implement strategies that equip students with the skills, confidence, and knowledge to be future-ready, focusing on both academic achievement and social-emotional growth.
- **Actions:** Expand career and technical education pathways; invest in social-emotional learning programs; ensure every student receives guidance and support that prepares them for life beyond graduation.



EPHRATA

SPECIFIC TARGETS...

Improve Tier I Student Success

The percent of students in grades K-8 and grade 10 meeting reading and math standards in Tier I, as measured by math and reading STAR Benchmark Assessments (grades K-8) and the ELA and math SBA (grade 10), will increase by 10% annually.

Increase Achievement of Multilingual Learners

The percent of Multilingual Learners making progress towards English language proficiency, as measured by WIDA Access, will increase 10% annually.

Increase Student Attendance

Chronic absenteeism, which is defined as students missing 10% or more school days, will be reduced by 5% annually.

Improve Staff and Student Behavior Support, Including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS implementation will be advanced in all schools with the goal that exclusionary discipline actions will be reduced by 2% annually.

The Ephrata School District is committed to building a bridge between KIDS and their LEARNING. We believe that exceptional INSTRUCTION and ASSESSMENT, combined with ACTIVE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, are the key to this bridge. Professional Development (PD) and collaborative teams (PLCs) provide essential supports for this bridge, while family involvement, a positive school culture, state-of-the-art facilities, a healthy and safe environment, and a dedicated staff form the bedrock of this bridge's foundation. Working together, we can ensure that our KIDS have the support they need to cross this bridge successfully.

