



SPRINGFIELD
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Every Student, Every Day



ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN

by Interim Superintendent Shawn Stover

Letter to Our Community

from Interim Superintendent Shawn Stover

I am excited to join the educators and staff of Springfield Public Schools (SPS) who work tirelessly every day to inspire, engage, and empower all learners to achieve their highest potential. My life and career trajectory were significantly impacted by educators who saw potential in me that I never saw in myself. Outstanding teachers like Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Mooring, Dr. Benavie, and Mrs. Sessoms showed me the power of connection while providing me with grace even when I did not deserve it. These educators, along with the colleagues I have worked with over the course of my career, continue to powerfully influence my actions and will help guide every decision I make here in Springfield.

I believe down to my core that a district’s success depends on the people who serve our students every day. Whether in the classroom, on a school bus, in the cafeteria, in the front office, maintaining our facilities, supporting instruction, or working behind the scenes, every employee plays an essential role in helping students succeed. My primary focus is to ensure every employee feels valued, supported, and connected to our shared mission of serving students.

During my first one hundred days, you may see me riding a bus route, shadowing students, team teaching with educators, attending community events, and visiting every school. These experiences are designed to help me better understand our District through the eyes of those we serve, ensuring future decisions are grounded in firsthand experience rather than assumptions. If you happen to see me out and about or in a school, please do not hesitate to introduce yourself and let me know whatever is on your mind.

The purpose of this Entry Plan is not simply to help me learn about Springfield Public Schools. It is to ensure our priorities as a school district are reflective of the voices, experiences, and aspirations of the students, staff, families, and community we serve. By listening and learning together, we can move forward with confidence that our work is grounded in our shared commitment to every student, every day.

With gratitude,

Shawn Stover

Guiding Principles

My Entry Plan is guided by five ideals and commitments:

1. Listen before leading.
2. Seek to understand before making commitments.
3. Ground decisions in evidence, data, and lived experience.
4. Honor Springfield’s history and culture while preparing for its future.
5. Keep students at the center of every decision.

Goals

- Build relationships with students, employees, families, the Board, and community partners.
- Develop a deep understanding of District strengths, challenges, culture, and opportunities.
- Evaluate District systems, practices, and supports through stakeholder feedback, survey results, and quantitative data.
- Strengthen governance, collaboration, and organizational alignment.
- Develop a shared systemwide framework that maintains a relentless student-centered focus to inspire, engage, and empower every learner.

Deliverables

Reporting

- Present Entry Plan to the Board on August 10.
- Provide regular updates to Board during the 2026-27 school year.

Engagement

- Fall family survey.
- Spring family survey.

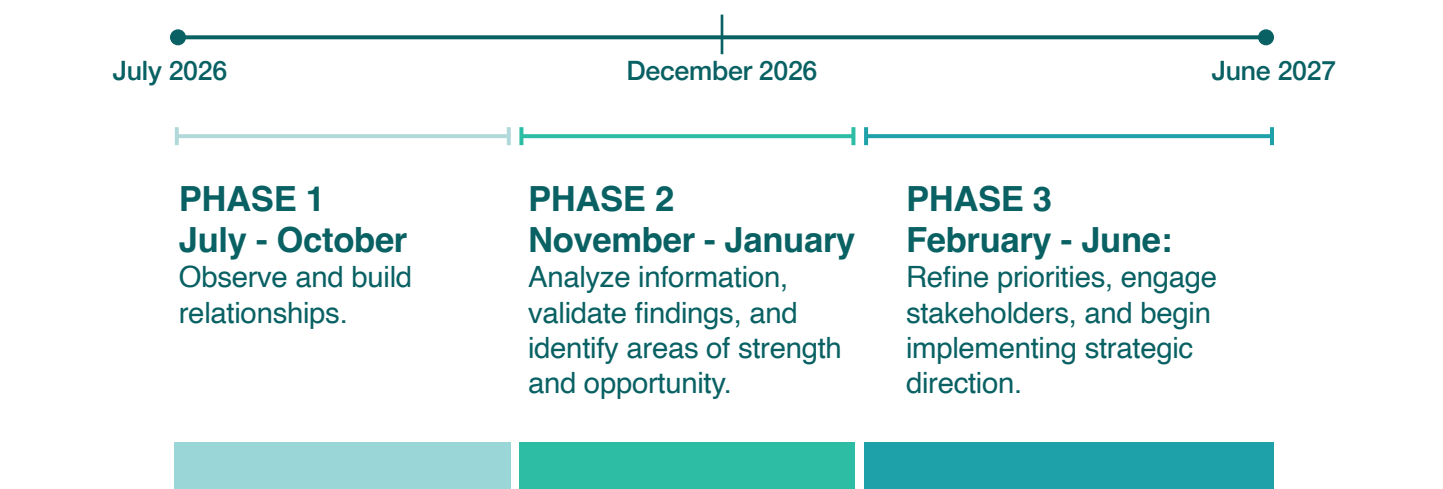
Leadership Experiences

- Visit every school at least twice in first semester time frame.
- Shadow students at each grade level.

Findings

- Complete districtwide data review.
- Identify emerging improvement opportunities.

Entry Plan Phases



Phase I

Seeing the District through the eyes of our stakeholders

In order to best support our staff and students, I need to understand what it is like to learn, teach, and work in our district. I, and other members of the central office team, will spend a full day with randomly selected students to see what it feels like to be a student in our district. I will also spend time working with staff members throughout the district. I will teach with some of our colleagues, serve on a cafeteria line, ride some bus routes, etc.

- District Staff and Superintendent shadow a student at all three school levels for a full day during the month of September.
- Teach with or substitute for teachers throughout the district during September/October.
- Work with and/or shadow principals, central office staff, and classified staff during August, September, October.

Listening to learn and build trust

It is essential you trust me as a leader and believe I listen to a wide variety of voices before making major decisions. While I will start a “listening blitz” during my first hundred days, my commitment to hearing from all of our stakeholders will be a constant theme. Some opportunities to hear from our stakeholders:

- Spend meaningful time at every school (observing, meeting with staff, eating lunch with students, etc.). September - November.
- Small group empathy interviews for randomly selected students. Ongoing starting in September.
- Schedule one-on-one small group meetings with school board members, principals, teachers, administrative staff, parents union leaders, and key community members. Ongoing starting in July.
- Meet with current advisory councils and groups already established in the division. July - October.

Connecting to the community

As stewards of the school system, it is essential we listen to and learn from our families, community leaders, local businesses, and community members not directly connected to the school system:

- Attend community events, council meetings, local churches, and chamber events. July - Ongoing.
- Host town halls with board members across the district July and August.
- Meet with leaders of the military and military support organizations. July - Ongoing.



Phase II

As I continue to listen, learn, and connect, I will synthesize my initial findings and prepare a report for the board and community outlining where I will focus my time for the year. I will then start a more comprehensive review of data with the goal of identifying areas of strength to leverage and investigate areas of opportunity to address.

Analyzing information

- Deep budget analysis, ensuring budget decisions are aligned to our District’s strategic plan. September - October.
- Review and analyze student data to assess academic strengths, challenges, and areas of disconnect. Use qualitative approaches (school visits, departmental reviews) to triangulate and form theories. October - Ongoing.
- Review processes and systems to ensure alignment with the Division's strategic plan and individual school and classroom needs. October - ongoing.

Targeted feedback and visits

- Attend school leadership team and PLC meetings to assess effectiveness and strategic alignment to school and district goals. October - ongoing.
- In smaller group settings (coffee chats, advisory boards, focus groups) gather feedback on initial theories. October - December.

Synthesis and ideation

- Prepare and present a comprehensive report to the board on district process alignment, highlighting areas of strength and areas of opportunity. December.
- Start planning retreats and training needed to develop ideas. December - January.

Phase III

Using the findings from the summary report, I will refine my approach to stakeholder meetings and feedback opportunities so that I am able to triangulate data and test theories that I have developed in the previous two phases.

- Continue targeted visits and feedback opportunities with leadership team, principals, and board members, to continually refine theories developed. January - March.
- If feasible, introduce comprehensive school visits and data-based problem solving step-backs and pilot for selected schools/departments. February - June.
- Roll out areas and focus, strategic direction, and next steps at State of the Schools event. April.
- Plan engagement process to get feedback and refine findings. April - June.



CONCLUSION

Throughout this process I will provide ongoing updates regarding what I am learning while remaining transparent about emerging themes, questions, and ideas. The foundation for our future work should be rooted in what we collectively learn from students, staff, families, and the community. I look forward to partnering with you as we build Springfield Public Schools together.



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