



Matthew A. Ferron

Superintendent's Entry Plan

Learning about Hanover

August 2013 – January 2014



Hanover PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduction

Dear Friends of our Hanover School Community,

Thank you very much for making my family and me feel incredibly welcome in Hanover. Over the past few months, I have enjoyed meeting so many of you. I've enjoyed listening and learning from you as you have shared your great ideas, your hopes for our schools, your concerns, and your desires to participate in the exciting opportunities ahead of us. As a school community, we have a great deal of important work to do, and I believe we are coming together as a team in order to address the challenges and to pursue the amazing possibilities here in Hanover.

As we continue to work together and to have these conversations, there will be core values and beliefs that will guide our decisions. I deeply believe in a future that will allow my own young children to enjoy meaningful and fulfilling lives in a society committed to community, creativity, prosperity, and the freedom for them to reach their unique and full potentials. That desired future is not guaranteed for any of our children – we need to earn it, together. We need to be willing to work hard and to dream big. We must focus our collective energy as a school community to ensure that each and every student has the opportunity to learn and to grow in a safe and supportive environment. We will not get it right every time, but if we are true to our guiding principles, we will rarely get it wrong. As we address the varied and complex issues facing our schools, this allegiance to our core values and beliefs will ensure that we stay grounded and focused and committed to what is most important.

This entry plan is intended to serve as a map for gathering data and to provide a framework for learning all about our school system. We want to understand how you view our strengths, your thoughts on our direction, and what you believe our priorities should be. Later this year, your feedback will assist us to develop important strategic goals, focus our energy and resources on the most important issues, and to ensure that we preserve the excellent programs, activities, and events that contribute to the deep community pride that Hanover enjoys.

During this period of acclimation, our leadership team will be working hard to ensure that 2013 - 2014 is an excellent year for all of our students, staff, and families. There are no "time-outs." Our kids will only get one shot at this school year, and we intend to make it a great one. On behalf of our leadership team, we look forward to meeting you, working alongside you, and sharing in all of the incredible things our students will do this year and beyond.

Respectfully,

Matthew A. Ferron
Superintendent of Schools

ENTRY PLAN PHASES

Phase I: Conversations and Document Review

General Themes and Questions for Conversations:

1. Tell me about yourself. Why is the success of our school system important to you?
2. What are the strengths of our school system? What are the most notable recent achievements?
3. From your perspective, what do you see as the one or two key issues or challenges facing our school system?
4. What are the recent important events (positive or negative) that have impacted our system? What important lessons can we learn from these experiences?
5. Are we headed in the right direction as a school system, and are we pursuing it in the right way? Why do you feel this way?
6. What is our school system's core strength? What is the one thing that needs to be preserved at all costs?

During the Conversation Phase:

1. I will regularly attend school activities and events to get to know our students as quickly as possible.
2. I will visit classrooms and programs at each school as frequently as possible to observe the learning process and to get to know our teachers and staff across the district.
3. I will encourage and expect visits from other Hanover central office team members to each school to become familiar with our staff, students, and our school culture.

Preliminary Plan for Scheduled Conversations

SUMMER - SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2013

Individual Conversations With:

- School Committee Members
- Town Manager
- Hanover Town Selectman
- Police Chief and Fire Chief
- Town DPW Director and Management Team Members
- District Administration and Leadership Team Members
- School Principals and Building Administrators
- Hanover Teachers' Association Leadership Team
- Community and Religious Leaders
- Local Business Leaders
- North River Collaborative, Cardinal Cushing, and South Shore Regional Vocational Technical HS Leadership
- State and Federal Elected Officials
- Members of Press and other Media
- Other Interested Parents, Guardians, Teachers, Staff, and Community Members

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2013

Group Conversations With:

- Student Leaders and Student Advisory Council
- Classroom Teachers at Each School
- District Support Staff Teams (Paraprofessionals, Food Services Staff, ABA Tutors, Secretaries)
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council
- Hanover Parent Teacher Alliance
- School Advocacy Groups (Hanover Students First, HFEE, Building PTA's)
- Hanover Youth Athletics Association
- Hanover High School Booster Groups
- Higher Educational Partners
- Others as Identified and Requested

Preliminary Plan for Document Review and Analysis

SUMMER - SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2013

Review of Academic Documents:

- Student performance, behavior and programs disaggregated by subgroups: MCAS, SAT, AP, graduation, college attainment, attendance, disciplinary action, special education enrollment
- HHS NEASC reports and response plans
- School improvement plans
- HHS Program of Studies
- Policy manuals
- Curriculum scope and sequence review in all content areas
- Early childhood policies and practices
- Abrahams Report: Staff and Community Surveys
- Special education reports, parent survey results, and policies
- Arts and Enrichment Curriculum
- Athletics and Extracurricular Programs
- Others as Identified

Review of Financial and Operational Documents:

- Abrahams Report Findings and Recommendations
- The FY 2013 and the FY 2014 Budgets
- District financial reports and audit findings
- Facilities reports: MSBA SOI for Center/Sylvester Project
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Student Handbooks
- Employee Manuals
- Job Descriptions and Organizational Charts
- School Committee and sub-committee minutes
- Capital improvement plans
- Human resource reports and processes
- Technology Strategic Plan
- Others as Identified

Phase II: Analysis of Findings

The purpose of the first phase of entry is to listen, learn and observe Hanover Public Schools in action and hear from different perspectives about the current state of our

school system. The second phase of this Entry Plan will require careful analysis of the data gathered from individual and group conversations as well as a review of the various documents and procedures in place. Themes and trends that are identified from the dozens of conversations and hundreds of documents will form the basis for a preliminary report.

The findings in this report will be used to develop draft goals and strategies for our school system. These preliminary findings and recommendations will be shared with the School Committee and the entire Hanover school community in January, 2014, for comment and feedback. We are in a very unique position as a leadership team as many of us are completely new to Hanover. This information gathering phase is incredibly important to us so please be assured that we are listening to all perspectives.

Phase III: Developing Preliminary Goals

In the late winter and spring of 2014, we will engage the School Committee and focus groups comprised of interested representatives from the school community (teachers, staff, parents, etc.) in a strategic planning process driven by the findings and recommendations that emerged from the Entry Plan analysis. Based on the ideas and recommendations that are developed during this process, we will collectively create a plan that reflects the core values of the community, sets ambitious goals for educational excellence as well as social/emotional supports for all students and identifies resources, strategies and opportunities to get us there.

Conclusion

This Entry Plan represents key transition activities as Superintendent of our school system. There are three distinct phases which allow me to hear from different stakeholders inside and outside of the school district, identify important themes and review my findings with the community: 1) Listening, Learning and Observing; 2) Analyzing and Sharing Feedback; and 3) Developing Preliminary Goals. During this introductory period, it is essential to all of us that we take the time to build the important relationships that will help move us forward together with the common goal of educational excellence and unlimited opportunities for all of our students. I look forward to learning with you and becoming a part of the Hanover community!