

100 Day Entry Plan Final Report

*Dr. Tammy Campbell, Superintendent
Federal Way Public Schools
January 2016*

$1 + 1 = 2$



LISTEN. LEARN. LEAD.



**Federal Way
Public Schools**

January 13, 2016

Dear Federal Way Public Schools Team, Parents and Community Members,

In April 2015, the Board of Directors selected me as the next superintendent of Federal Way Public Schools. I immediately drafted an Entry Plan, including pre-entry activities, focusing on an intentional and inclusive process for my transition into Federal Way Public Schools (FWPS). Next, I convened a Transition Team, comprised of over 90 parents, student-scholars, community leaders, and district staff, in May to review and provide feedback to my Entry Plan. Following pre-entry activities, I began my 100 Day Entry Plan efforts, completing these activities in mid-December. At that time, I reconvened the Transition Team to review the data collected during my 120 days of listening and learning and to surface themes from the data I collected as shared by families, community members and staff.

During the pre-entry phase (April-June), I met one-on-one with 38 principals and 28 central office administrators. Additionally, during the pre-entry phase, I met one-on-one with over 150 parents, families, local officials, community leaders and former superintendents at local coffee shops, churches and homes. Beginning July, my work shifted to entry activities that included parent forums, coffee talks with the superintendent, meetings with elected officials, community leaders, and a two hour visit to each of the 39 sites in FWPS. During the school visits I walked through 8-10 classrooms at each school and I met with over 550 staff and 300 parents. In total, the data shared in this report represents the feedback from over 610 staff members and 450 family and community members during my pre-entry and Entry Plan activities.

Entry Plan Goal 2:
Gaining a Deeper Understanding of the organizational capacity and efforts in ensuring students are academically, emotionally, and socially successful: ready for post-secondary pursuits

I asked all of these groups the following questions:

- ✓ *What is working well in Federal Way Public Schools?*
- ✓ *What isn't working well?*
- ✓ *What is the most important expectation you have for a superintendent who is focused on student learning?*

The following report outlines key learnings gained during the 30 days of pre-entry work and 120 days of Entry Plan activities focused on assessing the organizational strengths and areas of growth of Federal Way Public Schools. The findings are organized around the key questions that were posed to stakeholders during my Entry Plan activities. The findings in this report will inform our collective work in creating a dynamic and informed strategic plan focused on the improvement of our student scholars' learning.

"Knowledge speaks, wisdom listens." ~ Jimi Hendrix

Respectfully,



Dr. Tammy Campbell, Superintendent

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What I Learned from Families and Community

Family and community overwhelmingly feel positive about the school their children attend. They shared that overall, staff care for and support students at their schools.

What is working well? (Answers ranked by the frequency of times mentioned)

1. Communication and culture at my child's school
2. Support by my child's teacher and staff; parents supported by staff
3. Parent and family engagement

In their words...

- ✓ "Our staff have a care and concern for students."
- ✓ "I feel welcome in my child's school and my daughter LOVES her school."
- ✓ "The family liaisons have been huge and I feel comfortable going to the principal with my concerns."



Summary

Family and community overwhelmingly feel positive about the school their children attend. They shared that overall, staff care for and support students at their schools. Families also felt positive about the communication they received at their school. A common comment shared by many families was the value for the family liaisons at elementary schools.

What isn't working well? (Answers ranked by the frequency of times mentioned)

1. Academics and student achievement, many comments focused on math
2. A need for more interpreters, a culture that is more inviting to parents, and support for families who want to help their children with homework
3. School lunches/nutrition program
4. Late start impacts
5. Communication at the building and district levels, specifically focused on grades being uploaded into ParentVUE in a timely fashion so parents can support their student
6. Discipline and misbehavior

In their words...

- ✓ "The district does not make decisions based on what is best for kids. The lack of classroom materials (books, etc.) is horrible. Our children deserve resources in order to learn."
- ✓ "The half days are not working and have had a negative impact on my ability to go to work."
- ✓ "The food is not good. My child asks me to send them with food because they won't eat it; "School lunches are frozen, poor quality foods—quality needs to be improved."
- ✓ "There is a lot of misbehavior in my son's classroom...why is one student allowed to disrupt the learning for the entire class?"
- ✓ "I want to monitor my student's progress frequently...it is hard to be responsible to check on my child's progress when teachers are not inputting grades on a consistent and ongoing basis."

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What I Learned from Families and Community

What isn't working well? *(Continued...)*

Summary

Family & community shared that there needs to be an improvement in the academic performance of our student-scholars. A majority of our families listed the improvement of academic achievement as an area to focus on as a district. A significant number of families shared the negative impact that late starts had on their schedules and the loss of learning time. We have subsequently moved to early dismissals. School lunches and food quality concerns were shared by a large number of families. Also, many families shared the need to enhance interpreting supports at all schools so that ALL families have full access in supporting their child's learning. Finally, many parents shared their frustration with online grades not being maintained on a more ongoing basis...allowing families to be responsible for supporting their children in being successful in school.

What is the most important expectation you have for a superintendent who is focused on student learning? *(Answers ranked by the frequency of times mentioned)*

1. Focus on an improvement in the academic achievement in Federal Way
2. A superintendent who is visible and accessible both in schools and in the community
3. Improve communication; school lunches; safety and security



In their words...

- ✓ "I want to see academic progress. Students at grade level in reading and math."
- ✓ "Teachers and leaders need more training...period."
- ✓ "I want my children to have a visible path from elementary through high school. Our system feels disjointed."
- ✓ "I want to see a superintendent who sets the vision, direction and leads with transparency."
- ✓ "Please set a tone in the district and across all schools that says, parents are welcome."

Summary

Most families shared their expectation that the superintendent focuses on the improvement of academic achievement. Many saw a key strategy in this focus was in providing professional development for all staff. A significant number of parents expressed frustration in not being able to access "real-time" progress/grades about their child on ParentVUE and the need to hold teachers accountable for updating student grades. Visibility and accessibility were both seen as key leadership moves that the superintendent needed to take to enlist the trust and support of families and communities. Finally, families expressed a need to ensure that schools are inclusive and welcoming to all families, particularly English Language Learner(s) (ELL) families and communities of color.

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What I Learned from Staff

Staff at all sites expressed strong conviction and pride about their colleagues and peers' commitment and dedication to students. Many of our staff expressed positive sentiments about the impact of PLCs on their grade level/department teams.

What is working well? (Answers ranked by the frequency of times mentioned)

1. Staff, administrative team, and team of people I work with are dedicated, supportive, and team oriented
2. Communication and collaboration (Professional Learning Communities - PLCs**) are working and help us to focus on the improvement of student learning
3. Systems of support, specifically our coaching model and mentor program
4. New superintendent willing to meet with staff and is accessible and visible



*** PLCs are a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students*

In their words...

- ✓ "We have a strong staff that supports one another and we work well together as a team...I feel like I have administrative support from my principal."
- ✓ "We have a supportive principal...communication between administration and staff is good."
- ✓ "PLC time is valuable and helps me improve learning in my classroom...I like how our PLCs are creating a very collaborative team in our department! We are looking at student work and data every week and in some cases everyday!"

Summary

Staff at all 39 sites expressed strong conviction and pride about their colleagues and peers' commitment and dedication to students. With the launch of formalized professional development focused on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) this past summer, many of our staff expressed positive sentiments about the impact of PLCs on their grade level and department teams.

What isn't working well? (Answers ranked by the frequency of times mentioned)

1. Minimal or no updated, aligned curriculum
2. Staffing in a transparent and equitable (not equal) manner—workload
3. School culture and student discipline
4. Substitute shortage, technology access, and professional development

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What I Learned from Staff

What isn't working well? *(Continued)*

In their words...

- ✓ "I need a curriculum so that I am not individually writing curriculum and recreating the wheel."
- ✓ "There have been many changes in the past 3-5 years. I believe teachers and parents are feeling the need to be on the same page with common language, goals, etc."
- ✓ "We need training on discipline and behavior management."
- ✓ "Because Federal Way is so diverse, I believe that we really need to focus on the support for our bilingual/English Language Learners (ELL) students and families. We need to support our general education teachers in serving those students."

Summary

Both certificated and administrative staff expressed the need to provide updated and high quality materials (curriculum) for student-scholars. New teachers as well as veteran teachers shared the negative impact of having to "recreate the wheel" in writing curriculum when they should be focusing on teaching their student-scholars. Staff shared the need to identify a focus and commit to it for several years so they can actually become "good at something". Additionally, staff and parents shared a need to provide training for staff on discipline and cultural competency.

What is the most important expectation you have for a superintendent who is focused on student learning? *(Answers ranked by the frequency of times mentioned)*

1. Accessibility and visibility
2. Understanding the needs of staff while creating a culture of collaboration, focus, and sustained academic improvement
3. Clear and consistent communication
4. Maintain a focus on students
5. Address the lack of curriculum



In their words...

- ✓ "Provide a vision for what a turnaround district or school looks like when increasing student learning for staff to reach for."
- ✓ "I expect our superintendent to bring our schools together, make sure we have curriculum and professional development that will push us to continuously grow and improve our instruction."
- ✓ "Please keep us informed and communicate frequently and transparently."
- ✓ "You need to be visible, coming into classrooms, being involved in our schools and listening to us."

Summary

Staff expressed a strong desire to have a superintendent who has a vision, an understanding of improvement, and is visible, accessible, relatable and connected to the real work of schools. An area that surfaced as an immediate focus was the provision of high quality standards-aligned curriculum.

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