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Transition Plan



RESEARCH | PLAN | IMPLEMENT | EVALUATE

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Introduction

This document is my entry plan and describes my first 100+ days in the position and action planning leading up to my first official day, July 1, 2021. This entry plan is designed to focus on listening and learning activities with both internal and external stakeholders. In addition to the information gleaned from stakeholder conversations, the plan includes a review of various operational and academic data in order to gain a deep and thorough understanding of the school district, including its many strengths and areas where growth and improvements are possible. This deep dive will include an examination of the core approaches to teaching and learning, business systems, culture, and District relationships with the community/community partners.

As the newly selected superintendent of this learning organization, I am committed to the achievement of the District mission that was carefully created to serve all Summit Hill School District 161 students.

The mission of Summit Hill District 161, in collaboration with the family and the community, is to provide our students with the highest quality educational opportunities in a safe, supportive, and stimulating learning environment which will empower them to become productive global citizens and successful lifelong learners.

Major goals include (Revisions TBA):

1. Improve student achievement by developing and implementing a challenging curriculum. At least 88% of grade levels (eight out of nine) will meet or exceed the nationally normed NWEA Mean RIT score. Common assessment work. The percentage of students demonstrating algebra readiness is expected to grow from the current 6% to 35% of our 8th grade class. Students will attain 80% mastery of the grade level skills. 90% implementation rate in lesson planning. Develop STEM programming. Est. a growth mindset (support teachers with A&G practices, equal interval grading scale, summative reassessments, and academic behaviors.)
2. Ensure a safe, inspiring, and welcoming environment for students, staff, parents, and community members. Student attendance/school engagement: the students-to-school connection will be strengthened to ensure the average attendance rate of at least 90%. Restorative justice practices are utilized to minimize OSS. Student participation in at least one school-related activity or sport. Bullying/cyberbullying: Ensure teacher involvement in the implementation of Internet safety, including bullying/cyberbullying prevention.
3. Strengthen communications and connections by establishing a communications program that helps the District achieve its goals. Telling the District's story: The SHSD161 mobile app will serve as a school community portal for on-demand access to school, District, and Board of Education information. Next generation readiness: Dashboards of indicators (as noted in ESSA and the high school's readiness checklist) will be communicated. Progress toward grade level student growth in ELA and math. Progress towards 8th grade Algebra readiness. Progress toward mastery of technology grade level skills. Progress toward maintaining a student attendance rate of at least 90%.
4. Maximize time, talent, and finances by aligning these resources to the mission and goals of the District. Building utilization: The District will continue to host Goal 4 Superintendent Advisories to share student enrollment information and gather community feedback to address future building utilization that will allow for a) effective delivery of instruction and b) optimization of District resources. An enrollment study will be part of the data collection. A building utilization strategies report, with a recommendation, will be shared prior to the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

As I think about entering Summit Hill School District 161, enthusiasm and excitement abound. Who I presented myself as throughout the interview process is an accurate portrayal of who I am and how I lead. As such, I will begin to know the valuable people of Summit Hill 161. Once I begin to understand the norms, culture, and gather a behind the scenes look at the organization, a direction must be cast, a vision must be communicated, and every asset must be aligned to helping accomplish our collective mission and major goals. For this venture to be successful, it will take us all working together collaboratively.

By developing our moral imperative and then connecting people to their purpose, I intend to inspire, motivate, challenge, and lead Summit Hill 161 forward, all centered around providing a world class learner experience. In fact, we plan to produce results/treat people with so much care and respect that goes so far beyond expectations people are surprised by our work.



Structure and Timeline

This transition plan is carefully crafted to honor and respect the fine work that has been done here, leading us to this moment, this time, where we can emerge from the pandemic and take our place as a leader in Will County, in the state, and throughout the nation. We can learn much from our neighboring Districts, but we will also take our place at the forefront, leading thoughtfully, courageously, and in a forward-thinking manner. Time is needed prior to July 1, 2021 to meet with identified stakeholders in both formal and informal venues, perform data analyses, conduct program and systems evaluations and begin the comprehensive process for developing a thorough operational plan on the mutual expectations and priorities of the Summit Hill School District 161 Board of Education and the Administrative Team. All of this, again, will be predicated upon the learner experience, ensuring it represents the whole child as we develop world-class learners.

My activities will include recommending a Board of Education-superintendent planning session/retreat, proposing/presenting/reading content together from the book, The Governance Core, meeting with BOE members, administrators, Union Leaders, teachers and staff in order to gather information and gain perspective from each of these vantage points, and conduct school visits to survey the educational environment in which our students learn. Additionally, I plan to review with the administrative team, the mission and Board Goals and discuss where we want to head as a learning organization to ensure our work is appropriately aligned. We will also discuss the manner in which documentation is kept to ensure progress is being made. Along the way, in all of our work, we will ensure accountability and transparency are a part of the process.

This plan consists of 4 stages: Research, Plan, Implement, and Evaluate

Research (March 17-June 30, 2021):

The Summit Hill School District 161 Board of Education has spoken of unity, bringing everyone together, through a relentlessly positive, thoughtful, thorough, and expertly guided approach to learning. Further, topics have emerged such as infusing energy and enthusiasm into the school district as we brand the learner experience as our most important priority. Meet with each BOE member individually to build relationship and rapport.

Other activities include:

- Research, read, and know all final candidates for all 2021-2022 positions throughout the District. Investigate processes, resources, and methodologies so that we can meet and exceed District goals for academic performance. Stress the importance of educating the whole child. Review key district financial reports, budget, AFR, recent audits, grants/ESSER funds, financial projections, long-range planning, scattergram of employees, and current resource allocation. Research building utilization and assess viability of current structure through a financial lens
- Evaluate the school district and individual school building culture, strengths, and areas identified for growth. Meet with the administrative team, build relationships, and get to know my core leadership team. Evaluate communication structures, review current meeting schedules, and develop ground rules for effective and equal participation. Additionally, openly discuss academic data, identify where we have strengths and where we have performance gaps and what is currently being done to address this

- Assess the current professional development model and offer a differentiated, targeted approach to building skills. Develop a record-keeping system to ensure all staff receives core PD over time and that upcoming institutes/PD offerings are differentiated and on point
- Audit current District and school safety plans
- Audit current District summer learning plans and Fall 2021 reopening plans.
- Thorough read of new CBA/Teacher Contract
- Thorough read of 161 Policy and Administrative Procedures
- Thoroughly review the 161 technology program and infrastructure to support it
- Meet with district attorney to review any legal matters impacting the district including the forensic audit, and any other pending matters
- Review all current curriculum documents and curriculum revision cycles, focus on middle school ELA and create report on findings for the BOE
- Analyze all current academic data (growth and attainment)
- Assess the evaluation system for administration and D.O. staff, look at past evaluation ratings and key findings
- Review the org chart and make changes that will help us be flexible, nimble, and ready to move forward quickly and efficiently

Plan (March 20-July 31, 2021):

The Illinois Association of School Boards has offered a free ½ day BOE planning session to 161, investigate this or SchoolExecConnect for a BOE retreat that fits our BOE personality and style. Establish quarterly Discussion Meetings with the BOE, in Open Session, with no voting on the agenda for these meetings. Help on-board new BOE members through thoughtful, purposeful dialogue. Hold a second BOE retreat to review this plan and offer a summary of findings as well as progress in key areas of 161. This will enable the BOE/superintendent team to create, revise, and/or adjust our plans as we work together to ever-improve our work and the learner experience. A suggested timeline: June-BOE retreat. September-

Discussion Meeting. January- 2nd BOE Retreat. April-Discussion Meeting. Additionally, help establish a Governance Handbook.

- Insert myself into the hiring process for all employees. Influence key hires for the Administrative team as well as meet with all employees being recommended for hire anywhere within the District, to the extent allowed. Ensure all new team members are a good match for the 2021-2022 team being built
- Begin to devote intensity and resources to areas where we would like to see academic progress and assess return on investment (ROI), establish an annual audit structure to measure progress, and thoroughly glean information from both local and state sources
- Determine a 161 Superintendent's Book Club Book, read, write questions, develop the Google classroom and plan dates to host the discussions, plan flyer, and create excitement around the idea
- Begin to build trust by establishing highly effective communication processes, acting with integrity, consistency, and honesty. Meet individually with each building staff. Begin to plan and build a new culture
- Plan for Fall 2021, presumably 5 days a week, full time school. Determine whether Remote Learning is an ISBE mandated option for 21-22 and if the Governor's Disaster Proclamation will continue
- Update all social media tools. Explore opportunities to develop a comprehensive, integrated communications plan that includes possible branding strategies surrounding the 161 Learner experience as we tell our story including blogging, podcasts, extensive use of social media platforms, newsletters, and more
- Meet with the Administrative Team to establish key metrics to determine if appropriate growth is occurring towards goals. Assess, keep/revise current structures for maximum efficiency
- Establish a regular meeting schedule for Administrative Team
- Establish PD for the year, based on staff needs and desires. Prepare a staff survey. PD must be differentiated and communicated prior to the beginning of the school year. Observe past Institute agendas and make key strategic changes

- Schedule meeting/retreat for leadership team
- Meet with Union leaders

Implement (July 1-December 31, 2021):

We have reached my official start date and the transition between the former team and the future team has taken place. This is so exciting and I want to harness this positivity, gather the team together, and cast a vision that energizes people towards willingly participating in our pursuit of the District mission and major goals. So much learning has taken place, and there is also so much more to accomplish. Focus myself and the team on what we will accomplish this year. Ensure the team is working relentlessly, while enjoying their work, feeling supported, and being vocationally satisfied.

- Deliver the 161 message, theme, and language that will drive our year's work. Provide t-shirts and infuse energy across the system for the work ahead
- Offer the opportunity for staff, parent, student, community, BOE, and Admin voice...with appropriate guidelines for civil discourse
- Attend a new teacher orientation session
- Visit each school on first day of school; D.O. admin will do the same. Visit schools weekly throughout this time period. Engage with staff, students, parents, and community members
- Push out video to staff
- Push out video on website
- Attend PTA/Foundation meetings and events
- Meet with area Superintendents
- Meet with 843 Special Education Cooperative
- Meet with Elected officials, community groups, state and national education leaders/organizations
- Each administrator will create a 100-day plan every 100 days, which will help document their work, focus their attention, and add input into their future evaluations

Evaluate (July 1-December 31, 2021):

For a school district to successfully provide opportunities for excellence, a mindset of continuous improvement, coupled with a strong system of support and accountability for all employees is paramount. Help move the District mindset to one of failing forward and safe/ educationally appropriate risk taking on behalf of our students. Unlock passion, energy, and enthusiasm for learning. Ensure the environment is provocative, alive, inspiring, thoughtful, supportive, and a place where everyone wants to be.

Look through Fall to Winter data. Compare last fall and this fall, what observations can be made? Do we have identifiable student groups who are underperforming...if so, what are we doing to address this? Likewise, are there results that surprised us, whether good or otherwise, and clearly communicate this information to the BOE/team.

Hold a second BOE retreat to review this plan and offer a summary of findings as well as progress in key areas of 161. This will enable the BOE/superintendent team to create, revise, and/or adjust our plans as we work together to ever-improve our work and the learner experience.

Enjoy every moment; this is our life's work! Make it count!