

# Entering the Ashlawn Community: Maintaining a Tradition of Excellence



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The new principal's entry plan will provide structure and direction and help to alleviate some of the uncertainty associated with the change of leadership of a school community.

The entry plan focuses on four areas: document and data review; staff, parent, student, and community conversations; external community member and partner conversations; and the sharing of information and insights gained by the new principal. It allows the involvement of all stakeholders in the school community. This plan allows the new principal to gain meaningful understandings about the school's culture and operations, and the school's successes and opportunities for growth and change.

The plan allows for the collection of a variety of information, from school assessment data to that which would be gathered through a variety of individual, small group, or large group conversations. The transition plan acts as a blueprint that works to create or maintain an environment of openness and teamwork, as the school moves forward academically and operationally.

In relation to school assessment data, a review of documents, including the school's management plan and the recent Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) report will be critical. Additionally, school assessment data including: the Phonological Awareness and Literacy Screening (PALs), Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), Degrees of Reading Power (DRP), Stanford 10 Achievement Test, World-Class International Design and Assessment (WIDA) for English language learners, and the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment data will be reviewed. The information garnered from this review will be discussed with all teacher leadership teams during summer planning meetings in preparation for the start of the new school year.

The transition plan for the entering principal is divided into benchmark objective segments whose outcomes will be determined and discussed as each is fulfilled. The timeline for the completion of the transition plan would include: a pre-summer segment (May-June), focusing on the insights of the current principal; a summer segment (July-August), focusing on early entry, prior to the start of school; the first quarter and beyond, the early segment of the school year (September-November).

Specifically, within the first month of accepting the new position, during an on-going dialogue with the departing principal, the new principal will attend after-school parent meetings and participate in several school visits. The parent meetings will serve to allow this segment of the school community to become more familiar with the new principal. School visits will allow staff and students the same opportunity.

Within the first weeks of entering the new position, after conversations with the former principal, the new principal will send an introductory letter to staff. Additionally, he/she will set aside several days, to provide an open door opportunity for any staff person who requests the time to have semi-structured conversations with the new principal. The conversation will be informal and involve questions that seek to provide insight related to the tenor of the program. Questions asked by the new principal will focus on gaining an understanding of individuals on the staff and on the topics of the positive aspects that pertain to the school and perceived needed changes in relation to building operations. Further, the conversation will allow insight into the new principal, as a person and as a leader.

The new principal will also provide an opportunity for grade-level teams to meet to discuss aspects of the upcoming school year, to include: curriculum mapping, the grade level calendar, field trips, the

exemplary project, technology standards, the master schedule, and team concerns.

Additionally, during the first weeks upon entering the new position the new principal will provide an opportunity to meet at the home of a community member. This meeting opportunity will allow the

community to see the new principal at a gathering outside the school facility and allow a chance for conversation and questions about school goals and objectives. It would be an opportunity to become better acquainted with the person who is the new principal. Community members will also have the opportunity to

share perceptions and hopes for the new school leader and about the future of the school.

Finally, the new principal will approach school partners to have an open discussion on past partnership experiences and the potential for exploring new opportunities.

## Entering the Ashlawn Community: Maintaining and Fostering a Tradition of Excellence

Timeline	Phase	Goal(s):	Meetings/Opportunities for Conversation/Activities	Document Review
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create positive, collaborative relationships with members of the Ashlawn school community</li> <li>To build a foundation of continuous improvement through the identification of Ashlawn’s strengths and opportunities</li> <li>To gain a full understanding of Ashlawn’s daily operational procedures and budget;</li> </ul>		
<b>May-June</b>	<b>Introductory Phase</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create positive, collaborative relationships with members of the Ashlawn community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial introductory visit with staff</li> <li>Write and receive letters to and from Ashlawn students</li> <li>Conduct June staff meeting</li> <li>Informal school visits (3)</li> <li>Visit the June PTA meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School calendar</li> <li>Kindergarten packet</li> </ul>
<b>July-August</b>	<b>Mid-Transition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To gain a full understanding of Ashlawn’s daily operational program and budget processes</li> <li>To create positive collaborative relationships with members of the school community</li> <li>To build a foundation of continuous improvement through the identification of strengths and opportunities</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Based Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative Open-office</li> <li>Office Staff</li> <li>Head Custodian</li> <li>Grade Level Team Meetings</li> <li>Lead Teacher Meeting</li> <li>FLES Teachers</li> <li>Specialists</li> <li>Lead Special Education Teacher and Team</li> <li>Librarian</li> <li>Counselor</li> <li>Instructional Technology Coordinator (ITC)</li> <li>Cafeteria Manager</li> <li>Individual Staff</li> <li>Principal’s Coffee</li> <li>Individual Parents</li> <li>Back to School Night</li> <li>Back to School Open House</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Management Plan and Assessment</li> <li>School Improvement Documents</li> <li>School Assessment Results—PALs, DRA, DRP, Stanford 10, WIDA, SOLs,</li> <li>School Website</li> <li>School communication documents</li> <li>Local School Report</li> <li>Evaluation Documents and Professional Development Plans</li> <li>Emergency Management Plans and Procedures</li> <li>PTA Meeting Minutes</li> <li>School Budget Documents</li> <li>Teacher Handbook</li> <li>Parent Handbook</li> <li>Student Files (as needed)</li> </ul>

Timeline	Phase	Goal(s):	Meetings/Opportunities for Conversation/Activities	Document Review
			<p><b>Feeder School (Pyramid) Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swanson Principal</li> <li>• Kenmore Principal</li> <li>• W-L Principal</li> </ul> <p><b>Central Office Based Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math Supervisor</li> <li>• Language Arts Supervisor</li> <li>• Science Supervisor</li> <li>• Social Studies Supervisor</li> <li>• Foreign Language Supervisor</li> <li>• Director of Planning and Assessment</li> <li>• Facilities Director</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Based Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exemplary Project Partner (Global Citizen Project)</li> <li>• Community Partners</li> <li>• Civic Association Leadership</li> <li>• Principal Chat</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductory Letter to Staff</li> <li>• Introductory Letter to Parents</li> <li>• Welcome Back Letter to Staff</li> <li>• Welcome Back Letter to Students/Parents</li> </ul>	
<b>September- November</b>	<b>Final Transition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create a shared vision and mission for Ashlawn based on current strengths and opportunities</li> <li>• To create positive, collaborative relationships with members of the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Back to school staff meeting (Monday and Friday)</li> <li>• Informal Staff Gathering</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Teacher Meetings</li> <li>• Grade Level Representative Meetings</li> <li>• Staff Meetings</li> <li>• Principal's Advisory Board Meetings (Management Plan creation, Management Plan Assessment)</li> <li>• Student Advisory Board</li> <li>• Back to School Night</li> <li>• Annual Pre-start Open House</li> <li>• Family Activity</li> </ul>	

Stakeholder Group	Examples of Guiding Questions for Semi-Structured Group/Individual Conversations
<p><b>Individual Classroom and non-Classroom based Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office Staff</li> <li>• Classroom Teachers</li> <li>• Special Education Teachers</li> <li>• Specials Teachers</li> <li>• Counselor</li> <li>• Librarian</li> <li>• Resource Teacher for the Gifted</li> <li>• Math Coach</li> <li>• Instructional Lead Teacher</li> <li>• Assistants</li> <li>• Instructional Technology Coordinator</li> <li>• Custodians</li> </ul> <p><b>Parents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PTA Executive Board</li> <li>• Parent</li> </ul> <p><b>Teacher Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade Level Representatives</li> <li>• Core Lead Teacher Group</li> <li>• FLES Teacher Group</li> <li>• Special Education Team</li> </ul> <p><b>Parent Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PTA Executive Board</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civic Association Membership</li> <li>• Partnership Representatives</li> </ul> <p><b>Curriculum Supervisors/Specialists</b></p> <p><b>Facilities Director</b></p> <p><b>Food Services</b></p>	<p><b>Base Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the strengths of the school?</li> <li>• What are the areas we might work on or improve?</li> <li>• What expectations do you have of me, as your principal?</li> </ul> <p>Classroom based and non-classroom based Staff/Assistants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base Questions</li> </ul> <p>Office Staff – Focus (Customer Service, Efficiency, Accuracy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base Questions</li> <li>• How may I support you to be sure that students, staff, callers, and visitors are receiving the highest level of service?</li> </ul> <p>Counselor – Focus (The Emotional Needs of Students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base Questions</li> <li>• Share some of the initiatives currently in place at Ashlawn.</li> </ul> <p>Instructional Technology Coordinator – Focus (Fostering the enhancement of instruction through technology)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base Questions</li> <li>• What priorities do you see for Ashlawn in the area of technology integration?</li> <li>• How do you intend to support the teaching staff in relation to the Social Studies textbook adoption?</li> </ul> <p>Custodians—Focus (High Expectations for a Clean Working Environment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base Questions</li> <li>• What can I do to be sure you are performing at your very best to provide a clean environment for our students, staff, and visitors?</li> </ul> <p>Special Education Team – Focus (Meeting specialized student learning needs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base Questions</li> <li>• How can I assist in the communication and support in relation to the implementation of APS special education initiatives?</li> </ul> <p>PTA Executive Board – Focus (Principal Leadership, Guidance, Support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are two things I can do to help maximize the work that we do through our roles in the school and PTA?</li> </ul> <p>Grade Level Representatives – Communications/Instructional Leadership Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How may I assist you in your role as teacher leaders?</li> <li>• What are one or two of your priorities in the area of school communication?</li> </ul> <p>Supervisors/Specialists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can Ashlawn do differently in order to better support APS curriculum initiatives?</li> </ul>