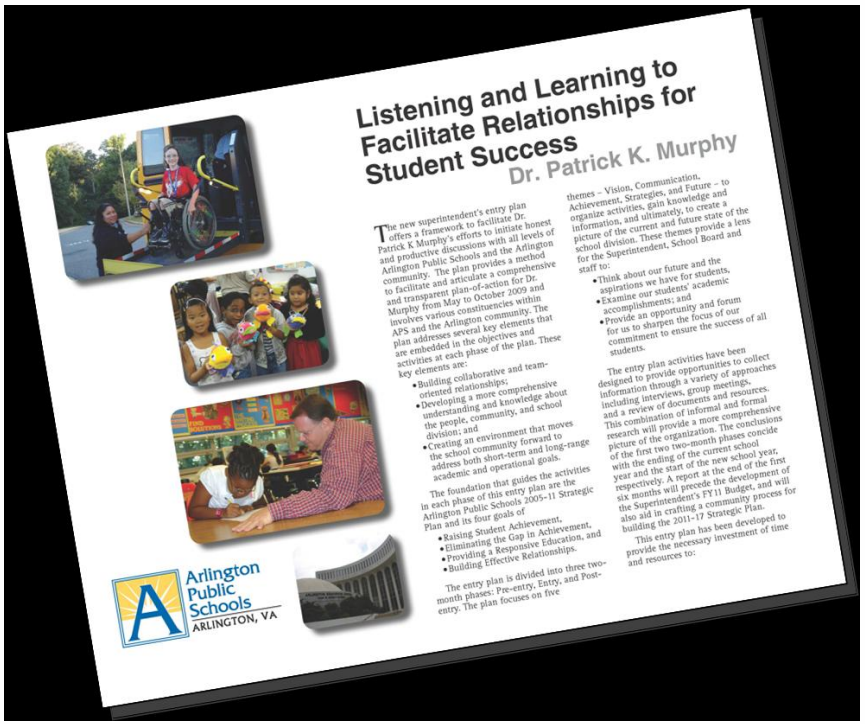
Superintendent's Entry Plan: Final Report

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy

November 17, 2009

Purpose

- Develop understanding and knowledge
- Foster collaboration and team-oriented relationships
- Examine short-term and long-range academic and operational goals
- Take us to the “next level” of excellence



Listening and Learning to Facilitate Relationships for Student Success

Dr. Patrick K. Murphy

The new superintendent's entry plan offers a framework to facilitate Dr. Patrick K Murphy's efforts to initiate honest and productive discussions with all levels of Arlington Public Schools and the Arlington community. The plan provides a method to facilitate and articulate a comprehensive and transparent plan-of-action for Dr. Murphy from May to October 2009 and involves various constituencies within APS and the Arlington community. The plan addresses several key elements that are embedded in the objectives and activities at each phase of the plan. These key elements are:

- Building collaborative and team-oriented relationships;
- Developing a more comprehensive understanding and knowledge about the people, community, and school division; and
- Creating an environment that moves the school community forward to address both short-term and long-range academic and operational goals.

The foundation that guides the activities in each phase of this entry plan are the Arlington Public Schools 2005-11 Strategic Plan and its four goals of

- Raising Student Achievement,
- Eliminating the Gap in Achievement,
- Providing a Responsive Education, and
- Building Effective Relationships.

The entry plan is divided into three two-month phases: Pre-entry, Entry, and Post-entry. The plan focuses on five themes – Vision, Communication, Achievement, Strategies, and Future – to organize activities, gain knowledge and information, and ultimately, to create a picture of the current and future state of the school division. These themes provide a lens for the Superintendent, School Board and staff to:

- Think about our future and the aspirations we have for students,
- Examine our students' academic accomplishments; and
- Provide an opportunity and forum for us to sharpen the focus of our commitment to ensure the success of all students.

The entry plan activities have been designed to provide opportunities to collect information through a variety of approaches including interviews, group meetings, and a review of documents and formal research will provide a more comprehensive This combination of informal and formal picture of the organization. The conclusions of the first two two-month phases coincide with the ending of the current school year and the start of the new school year, respectively. A report at the end of the first six months will precede the development of the Superintendent's FY11 Budget, and will also aid in crafting a community process for building the 2011-17 Strategic Plan.

This entry plan has been developed to provide the necessary investment of time and resources to:

Arlington Public Schools
ARLINGTON, VA

Entry Plan Format

- Identify objectives
- Create guiding questions
- Establish timeline
- Gather information

Sources of Information

- Conversations
- Focus-Group Meetings
- Document Review

Guiding Questions

Theme	*Guiding Questions*
Vision	What is currently being done to accomplish our mission, vision, and goals?
Communication	How will we communicate our mission and vision in order to accomplish the goals?
Achievement	What successes have been achieved toward meeting APS Strategic Plan Goals? What successes must be achieved to meet the goals?
Strategies	What steps are necessary to accomplish the goals?
Future	What are the aspirations of APS?

Entry Plan Activities

- **31 + 9 + 5**
  31 School visits – 9 Senior Staff interviews – 5 School Board interviews
- **350+**
  Classroom visits with teachers and students
- **10**
  Meetings with teacher and staff advisory groups to date
- **12**
  Superintendent's Chats
- **6**
  Retreats with School Board and Senior Staff
- **3**
  Student advisory-group conversations
- **1**
  Document Review

Areas of focus & next steps

- Student achievement plans
- Student service models
- Communication framework
- Business operation practices
- Cycle of improvement model—“Plan, Do, Study, Act” (PDSA)

Next Steps

Student Achievement Plans

- Create comprehensive PK-12 roadmaps
- Develop cohesive graduation plan *(Focus: At-risk students)*
- Build culture of student responsiveness *(Focus: Gap)*
- Reduce suspensions and other disciplinary infractions

Next Steps

Student Service Models

- Evaluate school-based program initiatives *(Focus: APS needs, strategic direction and community interest)*
- Evaluate student service delivery models (*Focus: Comprehensive and consistent communication)*

Next Steps

Communication Framework

- Enhance and expand parent involvement (e.g. PTAs, Parent Academy)
- Develop consistent protocols for dialogue with parents, students, staff and constituents
- Utilize a broad spectrum of communication channels to articulate APS programs, initiatives, and activities

Next Steps

Business Operation Practices

- Evaluate data and information services and operations
- Establish protocols and controls for facilities operations
- Establish systematic personnel management reviews in all departments
- Update human resources practices
- Develop training modules to ensure consistent personnel management
- Develop and implement a budget framework
- Evaluate and streamline fiscal, budgetary and procurement procedures
- Develop a comprehensive HVAC plan of action

Next Steps

Cycle of Improvement Model

Plan – Do – Study – Act

- Evaluate accountability system's relationship to Strategic Plan
- Provide continual support to schools to enhance and evaluate instructional practices, teacher effectiveness, and use and need of resources and materials
- Provide ongoing internal professional learning experiences to enhance administrator and teacher effectiveness and student learning
- Use "*Plan-Do-Study-Act*" to evaluate student achievement, student services, communication and business practices

Implementation of Next Steps

Shared Vision

and

Responsibility

Toward a Higher Level of Excellence

- Next Steps Process
- Three-year period
- 2011-17 Strategic Plan
- “Next Level of Excellence”

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