

Amesbury Public Schools
Superintendent's Entry Plan Timeline
Elizabeth S. McAndrews, Superintendent of Schools
August 2021



Vision

Our vision is that the Amesbury Public Schools will be highly valued for its academic excellence which is built upon a culture that respects individuality while socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually preparing students to create and innovate within a rapidly changing world.

Mission

The Amesbury School District is unconditionally committed to every child, ensuring that all students experience success through the development of attitudes and skills necessary for lifelong learning by providing the highest quality staff, meaningful learning experiences, and a vitally involved community.

SUPERINTENDENT ENTRY PLAN

Elizabeth McAndrews

OPENING LETTER

Dear Amesbury Public School Community,

Thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve as your Superintendent of Schools. The eight months that I served as Acting Superintendent provided me with the chance to work with a much broader group of people including students, staff, and most importantly, families. I entered this position having been in the Amesbury Public Schools for fifteen years. During that time, I held three different administrative positions at the high school and developed an appreciation for the strengths, passions, and traditions of the Amesbury community. In addition, I have formed and nurtured relationships within our schools as well as within the community as a whole. I have worked diligently and tirelessly to provide the most meaningful learning experiences for our students.

Beginning in the month of September, I will conduct a Listening and Learning Tour during which I will have conversations with a range of stakeholders in our community. As you are aware, there has been significant turnover (due primarily to retirements) in many leadership roles within our community in the last few years. As I assume my new role, I believe it is essential to ask meaningful questions to our stakeholders about the Amesbury Public Schools in order to provide data to develop a strong Strategic Plan. I also feel strongly that despite my fifteen years in the district, I can learn a lot from our community especially by approaching those conversations with a district view rather than an individual school view. These conversations will provide some of the necessary data to help us prioritize our actions and resources to help continue to move the Amesbury Public Schools forward.

Over the next few months, I will have purposeful conversations with students, staff, parents, and our community as a whole to learn as much as I can. Below, you will find the details of my Entry Plan as well as a timeline for those conversations, presentation of findings, and the development of a Strategic Plan for the Amesbury Public Schools.

I am truly excited about beginning this process and sincerely hope that all of the people with whom I speak feel comfortable sharing their thoughts about the successes and concerns within our district. I genuinely appreciate that I am able to partner with all of you to develop a shared vision for the Amesbury Public Schools.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth McAndrews
Superintendent of Schools

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this entry plan is to detail the intentional leadership actions that I will use to learn more about the Amesbury Public Schools in my new role as Superintendent. Although I have learned about Amesbury Public Schools from the high school administrative lens, I will now have conversations with people and hear the information as the Superintendent of Schools.

My goals in my entry process are:

- To deepen my understanding of the district's core values/culture
- To identify the strengths and areas of challenge within our schools in order to strategically develop and prioritize goals and action steps, including financial, to address those issues
- To ensure that systems, structures, and supports are in place to assist with efficient and effective school operations and to maximize student learning
- To build collaborative relationships with key stakeholders based on mutual trust and respect
- To provide opportunities for members of our community to learn about and understand my core values, core beliefs and leadership style

Core Values and Beliefs: As I conduct my Listening and Learning Tour my core values will be present as lenses through which I review the data.

- **One Amesbury** - We must focus on collaboration which builds on the concept that we have a shared responsibility for all students to support them and their families so that they are able to learn in a safe, inclusive, and appropriately challenging environment.
- **Students as the focus** - All decisions I make must be made through the lens of what is in the best interest of students.
- **Building, maintaining, and enhancing relationships** - Whether in the classroom, in the hallways, or on the playground or playing field, relationships are the key to success in almost any other area.
- **Develop students both academically and in terms of Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** - Given the impact of the pandemic, it is especially important that we support students in the development of their social emotional competencies in addition to their academic development.
- **Clear communication** - The Amesbury Public Schools community must be provided with the information that is needed to help all students and families be successful in the school environment.

I am very excited to do this work to learn more about Amesbury Public Schools' culture, climate, strengths and areas for improvement. Through my conversations with stakeholders within our community and review of district data, I will gather the information needed to develop a Strategic Plan, focused on teaching, learning, and equity that moves the district forward and maximizes the opportunities and support for students as they move through the Amesbury Public Schools.

ENTRY PLAN PHASES AND TIMELINE

Phase	Tasks	Timeline
Phase I: Planning and Preparation	Write Draft Entry Plan Share Draft Plan for Feedback Create Survey Questions for Stakeholders Schedule Interviews and Forums	July - August 2021 August - September 2021 August - September 2021 September - December 2021
Phase II: Information and Data Gathering	Document Review Conduct Interviews, Hold Forums, and Attend Meetings School Site Visits	September 2021-December 2022 September 2021 - January 2022 September - December 2021
Phase III: Process Information	Report to School Committee on Process and/or Progress Analyze and Synthesize Information and Data	September - December 2021 December 2021 - January 2022
Phase IV: Next Steps and Action Plan	Report to School Committee Emerging Themes Generate Draft of <i>Report of Entry Findings</i> to Share with Administrative Team	November 2021 - January 2022 January 2022
Phase V: Presentation of Entry Plan Findings	Complete and present a <i>Report of Entry Findings</i>	February 2022
Phase VI: Development of District Strategy	Working with the Leadership Team to develop the District Strategy for Improvement.	March 2022 - August 2022
Phase VII: Implementation	Implement Strategic Plan to move Amesbury Public Schools forward	September 2022

Phase VIII: Monitoring and Assessing the Strategic Plan	Review School Improvement Plans, budget priorities, and educator goals. Consider new relevant data to determine additional focus points	September 2022 - Ongoing
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ENTRY PLAN PHASES I AND II: PHASE I - PLANNING AND PREPARATION AND PHASE II INFORMATION AND DATA GATHERING

These two phases overlap and will include:

- The In depth review of key documents including:
 - Collective Bargaining Agreements
 - School and District Improvement Plans
 - DESE school and student data including AP, MCAS, discipline, RADAR reports demographic and discipline.
 - NEASC Report
 - Educator Evaluation documents
 - Coordinated Program Review
 - Special Education Coordinated Program Review
 - School Committee Policy Manual
 - School Committee Meeting Agendas and Minutes
 - School Safety Plans and Emergency Response Protocols
 - Superintendent Search Survey Results and Report
 - Budget Documents FY '20 and FY'21
 - Financial Audits
 - Capital Improvement Projects and Facilities Data
 - Annual Reports FY'20 and FY'21
 - Grants
 - DEI Team Findings
 - Administrator Job Descriptions
 - Curriculum Guides
 - District and School Websites
 - School Handbooks
 - Faculty Handbooks
 - Employee Handbooks

- Interviews, conversations, and forums with stakeholders
 - Faculty and Staff including custodial, secretarial, and cafeteria staff
 - Parents and/or guardians in small groups or grade span forums
 - Meet with individual School Committee members
 - Meet with individual administrators
 - Meet with Technology Director to identify technology strengths and wants and assess progress made
 - Financial Review (budget, capital improvement plans, practices and staffing)
 - Visit schools to meet, observe students, teachers, administrators and support staff
 - Meet with community stakeholders including Mayor, City Council, Police Chief, and Fire Chief
 - Meet with with AFT President and Executive Board

- Classroom and school visits and observations

- Surveys of stakeholders

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Below are some possible questions to ask of stakeholders regarding the Amesbury Public Schools:

- Before COVID-19 forced the district into remote learning, what had gone well in the district? i.e. What have been the district's strengths?
- What has the district learned about itself since the pandemic forced everyone into remote learning?
- What do you value most about the Amesbury Public Schools? What must be maintained at all costs?
- What are the two greatest successes and two greatest challenges of the District?
- What has the District done to address the ideas of Diversity, Equity and inclusion? What would you like to see the District do in this area? What does equity mean to you?
- What do we specifically do to support our students of color? Our families of EL students to ensure that they are included?
- Are we headed in the right direction as a school system? Why evidence leads you to feel this way? Why is this important to you?
- In what area is the District's greatest need for improvement?

- Is the system addressing equity opportunity and achievement gaps?
- What do you value in a Superintendent? What leadership do you want the superintendent to provide in the present and the future?
- How would you describe the culture of the school District?
- What is the vision for teaching and learning in the District?
- Is there anything that I have not asked you that you want to make sure that I know?

ENTRY PLAN PHASE III: PROCESS INFORMATION

From September 2021 through January 2022, I will be gathering information, analyzing data, and looking for patterns that emerge. During this time, I will include updates on the Entry Plan process as part of the Superintendent's Update within School Committee meetings.

ENTRY PLAN PHASE IV: NEXT STEPS AND ACTION PLAN

In November, December, and January, I will share information with the School Committee regarding themes that are beginning to emerge within the data from various stakeholders. This information will begin to frame my thinking and will be represented in a draft Entry Plan Findings Report to be shared with the School Committee in January.

ENTRY PLAN PHASE V: PRESENTATION OF ENTRY PLAN FINDINGS

In February, I will present an Entry Plan Findings Report at a School Committee meeting. In addition, I will share the findings with the District Leadership Team and with stakeholders at a public forum. The findings will provide me with the information that I need to work with my District Leadership Team to develop a Strategic Plan for the Amesbury Public Schools.

ENTRY PLAN PHASE VI: DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

The information gathered will serve as the foundation for the Amesbury Public Schools Strategic Plan. As part of this process, from March to August, goals for the district will be developed collaboratively and will drive every aspect of the workings within the system, including superintendent, administrator, and educator goals; school improvement plans, professional development and budget priorities. The end result will be a shared focus among all stakeholders in the District.

ENTRY PLAN PHASE VII: IMPLEMENTATION

This is the final step of the Entry Plan process. The summer retreat of the District Leadership Team will focus on advancing the strategic plan of the school district. This Strategic Plan will include goals that have been developed through the findings of the Entry Plan process. The Strategic Plan should be reflected in each of the building's School Improvement Plans for the 2022-2023 School Year. Again, this Strategic Plan will drive all aspects and decisions of the District.

ENTRY PLAN PHASE VIII: MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Each spring we will monitor the progress of the Strategic Plan through an assessment of each initiative. I will work with the Leadership Team to make updates and changes to the plan in order to continue to drive our goals, School Improvement Plans and budget priorities that will move our district forward.