Mark Dziatczak
100-Day Transition Plan
Birmingham Public Schools
Candidate for Superintendent

12.12.18

Superintendent Dziatczak 100-Day Transition Plan for Birmingham Public Schools

INTRODUCTION: The purpose of this 100-day transition plan is to outline the key professional actions leading to a successful transition from my current position as Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning in Troy to the Superintendent of Birmingham Public Schools. According to Watkins (2013) in *The First 90 Days: Proven Strategies for Getting Up to Speed Faster and Smarter*, "Transitions into new roles are the most challenging times in the professional lives of leaders. Success or failure during the first few months is a strong predictor of overall success or failure in the job." It is my intention to hit the ground running from Day 1 of the establishment of my final transition plan and not stop until I have successfully achieved the elements of the plan by Day 100.

COLLABORATION: This 100-day transition plan is intended to serve as the first draft of an ambitious plan to ensure success during my first few months as Birmingham Public Schools Superintendent. While much time and care contributed to its development, it merely serves as a starting point from which to ensure that the students of Birmingham are well served by their new Superintendent. I welcome feedback from students, parents, staff, faculty, community members and Board of Education Trustees to ensure that my actions reflect the will of the Birmingham Public Schools community and are sharply focused on improving the learning communities across Birmingham.

RESEARCH ORIENTATION: Research into the performance of first-time superintendents versus experienced superintendents during their transition to a new superintendent role indicates that first-time superintendents can suffer from going too hard, too fast. Specifically, "Experienced superintendents devoted time to understanding the district context at the beginning of their terms, whereas first-time superintendents spent no time developing a broader perspective and immediately focused on operational matters." Lytle & Sanaghan (2008), *Creating a Transition Map for a New Superintendency*. My intention is to acknowledge this key finding in successfully transitioning to the Birmingham Public Schools Superintendent role and share this with colleagues and Board of Education Trustees in order to monitor and, if needed, moderate any potential, significant decisions impacting operations and procedures. I intend to go as slow as necessary in order to go fast, successfully.

Furthermore, during the development of this plan significant time and energy was placed into purposefully referencing research and best practice literature in both business/organization leadership and K-12 school leadership. My intentions are to utilize research and best practice not only during this important 100-day transition period but throughout the term of my career as the Birmingham Public Schools Superintendent. When we know better, we do better. "Leaders of companies which have been successful in minimizing the knowing-doing gap understand that their most important task is not necessarily to make strategic decisions… their task is to help build systems that facilitate transformation of knowledge into action in a smooth, reliable way." Pfeifer & Sutton (2000), *The Knowing-Doing Gap.* One of my long-term goals is to ensure that the Birmingham Public Schools District makes decisions collaboratively while incorporating research and best practice into thinking and action.

"Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out." Covey (1989),
The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT: The Birmingham Public Schools community is committed to the achievement of learning for ALL children. It is the expectation of this community that every day in every classroom and in every school, students are greeted by the highest quality teachers who employ the best instructional practices exemplifying the highest standards for student achievement. When students struggle, as ALL naturally do, every parent expects that a teacher will help their child by utilizing research-based interventions designed to improve student performance. It is expected that school leaders are transformational individuals who will listen to concerns from ALL in their learning communities, support the professional growth of ALL teachers and focus attention on ALL children when drafting plans for improvement. In Birmingham Public Schools ALL means ALL.

I am DEEPLY COMMITTED to honoring the promise of an effective, transformational education for ALL in the Birmingham Public Schools community. This means that we must focus on equity in the achievement of educational goals. This means that we must challenge ourselves to improve educational praxis. And, this means that school leaders must always concentrate on what is most important, learning for ALL students.

Once finalized, this 100-day transition plan will serve as my operating guide for my first few months as Superintendent. I commit fully to the Birmingham Public Schools community that the final plan shall be implemented with fidelity and appropriate flexibility to ensure learning for ALL.

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SUPERINTENDENT ACTIONS: I have long been a disciple of Stephen Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. This text describes the effectiveness principles that, if utilized by a leader, create the personal and professional ecosystem in which people can be both productive and prosperous. I commit to using the *Seven Habits* principles during my service to Birmingham Public Schools, especially those principles involving communication and decision making with stakeholders. I firmly believe that the success of any school district is dependent on the quality and strength of its leaders. Leadership matters. Leadership always matters. In the role of Birmingham Public Schools Superintendent, I plan to develop my own leadership potential and cultivate leadership in others throughout the district using the *Seven Habits*.

OUTCOME: At the conclusion of the first 100 days, I will publish a report for the Board of Education that not only outlines objectives achieved but delivers the work products included in the plan. Due to this important accountability step, the community has a guarantee that the goals outlined in this plan shall be realized. Following the presentation of the final report to the Board of Education I will welcome continued feedback regarding how I can best serve the Birmingham Public Schools community as its Superintendent.

"All credible leaders know that it is their visible actions that demonstrate their true commitment." Kouzes and Posner (2003), *Credibility*

Goal #1 - Initiate highly effective governance structure featuring exemplary Board of Education - Superintendent relationship

"It takes a group of people working together with a common purpose in an atmosphere of trust and collaboration to get extraordinary things done." Kouzes and Posner (2010), *The Leadership Challenge*

Outcomes:
1. Establish cohesive governance team including Superintendent and Board of Education with unity of purpose
2. Build positive relationships between Superintendent and individual Board of Education Trustees and among individual Board of Education Trustees
3. Determine immediate organizational policy, procedure and finance needs
4. Establish a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, expectations, and systems for shared accountability for the Birmingham Public Schools Governance Team
5. Create or affirm regular, special and emergency communication systems between the Superintendent, Executive Assistant and Board of Education Trustees
6. Determine action plan for review and evaluation of the Birmingham Public Schools Strategic Plan set to expire in 2018
7. Chart collaborative learning path of Governance Team through June 2019

Specific Actions (Completion Day):
1. Schedule individual meetings with all existing and future Board of Education Trustees to review Birmingham Public Schools history, accomplishments, key people, priorities, concerns, plans, land mines and vision for the District using common framework (Day 21)
2. Collaborate with Board of Education President on the design and scheduling of two Board of Education-Superintendent retreats (Day 45 & Day 100) – the first retreat will focus on establishing purpose and group operating norms for Board of Education-Superintendent team, and the second retreat will focus on a research-based assessment of Governance Team commitments, ideas for establishing a new Strategic Plan and review of the initial 100-Day Plan report from Superintendent
3. Publish expectations, Code of Ethics, commitments, rules for staff engagement and any other accountability documents created during the retreat (Day 50)
4. Consult with Board of Education President regarding facilitation method for two transition Board of Education-Superintendent retreats (Day 21)
5. Establish regular communication or meeting times with Board of Education President regarding Board of Education study session and meeting agendas (Day 21)
6. Determine ongoing communication method or meeting times with individual Board of Education trustees (Day 21)
7. Consult with new Board of Education Trustees on transition to new role and professional learning plans (Day 30)
8. Create and execute collaborative learning plan of Governance Team (Day 30 & Day 100)

"Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust." Dervarics and Eileen O'Brien (2011), *Center for Public Education*

Goal #2 – Establish clear understanding of Birmingham Public Schools current academic performance profile in order to collaborate with students, staff, Board of Education and community members regarding enhancement of academic achievement for all students

"Hedgehogs see what is essential and ignore the rest." Collins (2001), *Good to Great*

Outcomes:
1. Create evidence-based report of academic progress of Birmingham Public Schools students
2. Determine baseline student achievement data and performance characteristics
3. Identify initiatives, programs and methods employed to enhance academic achievement including accelerated and ameliorated learning
4. Articulate enhanced performance opportunities for students based on performance data
5. Begin to evaluate efficacy of significant, districtwide programs designed to accelerate and track student learning (ex. literacy instructional framework, interventions, diagnostic assessments, etc.)
6. Outline opportunities to produce curricular and instructional clarity
7. Begin to collaboratively imagine initiatives to bring authentic, deep learning opportunities for all students
8. Assess educator professional learning its and impact on student achievement

Specific Actions (Completion Day):
1. Schedule individual meetings with all members of the central administration team to understand current academic initiatives along with recent accomplishments, opportunities and ideas (Day 21)
2. Schedule individual meetings with all members of the Department of Teaching and Learning, Department of Specialized Instruction and Special Services and ESL Program Leaders to understand current initiatives along with recent accomplishments, opportunities and ideas (Day 30)
3. Schedule on-site meetings and classroom visits with all school leadership teams to learn about, appreciate and assess how instruction is affecting all Birmingham Public Schools students (Day 60)
4. Review all recently published academic reports and performance information including M-STEP, NWEA, PSAT/SAT, AP, dual enrollment and other building-level assessment data reports (Day 30)
5. Conduct deeper analysis of data revealed in reports to identify gaps and opportunities for groups and/or levels of students to deliver equity for Birmingham Public Schools learners (Day 90)
6. Review all school building improvement plans and the district improvement plan to understand the academic and affective student goals outlined by educators across the District (Day 60)
7. Establish calendar of participation Teaching and Learning meetings including Subject Area Leadership Teams (SALT), Curriculum Action Teams (CAT) and curriculum work groups (Day 30)
8. Establish and promote community input opportunities to provide feedback on successful academic programs for their students and opportunities for improvement (Day 90)
9. Schedule meetings with District reading specialists and elementary teachers to understand opportunities to enhance literacy teaching and learning at the elementary level (Day 60)

"The greatest influence on student progression in learning is having highly expert, inspired and passionate teachers and school leaders working together to maximize the effect of their teaching on all students in their care." Hattie (2015), *What Works Best in Education*

Goal #3 – Communicate openly, transparently and effectively with the Birmingham Public Schools community to establish a high degree of credibility, promote and showcase accomplishments of the learning community and develop positive, strong relationships

"It's as simple as this. When people don't unload their opinions and feel like they've been listened to, they won't really get on board." Lencioni (2002), *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*

Outcomes:
1. Develop keen appreciation for Birmingham Public Schools history, traditions, cultures and community expectations
2. Establish positive relationships with Birmingham Public Schools students, employee groups, municipality leaders and local businesses
3. Establish positive relationships with key Birmingham Public School support groups including but not limited to the BAAFN, BBCC, BEF, BYA, FODL, NEXT, PTO, Booster and SCP organizations
4. Initiate open and transparent culture of communication with Birmingham Public Schools community
5. Cultivate a high quality customer service orientation for all constituent engagements with central administration and staff
6. Develop or continue consistent communication and messaging efforts with all constituents
7. Plan for the development of an innovative and powerful messaging, marketing and branding campaign for Birmingham Public Schools
8. Create or affirm media communication protocols and connections with media representatives

Specific Actions (Completion Day):
1. Establish Student Superintendent Advisory Group of junior Groves, Seaholm and Lincoln Street students to inaugurate group this year and expand into the next (Day 90)
2. Schedule meetings with leaders of all Birmingham Public Schools community and school support groups to discuss opportunities for strengthened collaboration and impact on students (Day 45)
3. Consider and plan Board of Education and/or Superintendent outreach opportunities to visit schools and/or facilitate student forums for input (Day 90)
4. Form connections with key Birmingham Public Schools municipality civic organizations (Day 90)
5. Schedule meetings with leaders of all employee groups to discuss ideal working relationship and opportunities for collaboration (Day 30)
6. Schedule ongoing meetings with members of the Department of Communications and Family Engagement to establish iterative process of refining and developing communication methods rooted in effective messaging, marketing, and branding strategies (Day 100)
7. Publish weekly, Friday Superintendent's update to the learning community (First Friday)
8. Transition existing or form new Superintendent Twitter account (Day 7)
9. Establish appropriate open-door communication protocol while respecting regular lines of communication (Day 1)

"We must be sure that what we want from our schools is precisely what we communicate - simply, clearly and persistently." Schmoker (2018), *Focus*

Goal #4 – Create high performance leadership teams across the organization with actions aligned to the mission, vision, core values and goals of Birmingham Public Schools

"A high performance organization consistently outperforms its competition over long periods of time because of the link between high performance teams and individual behavioral change." Katzenbach and Smith (2015), *The Wisdom of Teams*

Outcomes:
1. Develop leadership teams across Birmingham Public Schools united in purpose and driven by passion to achieve excellence for all students
2. Collaboratively imagine the next iteration of Birmingham Public Schools improvements rooted in the professional dreams of constituents and leaders
3. Clarify roles and responsibilities for central administration team and provide motivation to ask questions, clarify actions and ensure accountability to professional commitments
4. Create purpose and group operating norms with central administration team
5. Understand leadership goals in place for the 2018-2019 academic year
6. Clearly define operational norms for central administration team engagement with Board of Education – Superintendent Governance Team including communication, agendas, reports, requests, resolutions and concerns
7. Collaborate on learning for relevant administrative teams consistent with District core values
8. Establish process for establishing District calendar and central administration team calendars

Specific Actions (Completion Day):
1. Facilitate Birmingham Public Schools unfinished statement "Dream" exercise with all constituents to inspire a new vision for the District (Ongoing)
2. Review publications related to organizational leadership including organizational charts, handbooks, administrative procedures and policies (Day 30)
3. Schedule individual meetings with all members of the central administration team to understand leadership goals in place for current school year (Day 21)
4. Schedule individual meetings with individual school leadership teams to solicit feedback on effective central administration team and district leadership support (Day 60)
5. Establish regular, individual meeting times with central administration team members (Day 21)
6. Establish or confirm administrative meeting dates, times and locations through end of year (Day 7)
7. Plan central administration team purpose and group norms clarification meeting (Day 30)
8. Establish central administration team collective "Wildly Important Goal" (WIG) that when executed faithfully will make a significant, positive difference on the organization (Day 45)
9. Publish and review expectations for central administration team work with Board of Education – Superintendent Governance Team immediately after first retreat (Day 45)
10. Regularly review and assess adherence to central administration team norms and report on collective commitments toward achievement of WIG (Ongoing)

"School leaders can have a profound effect on the achievement of students in their schools." Marzano, McNulty & Waters (2005), *School Leadership That Works*

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Inspiring all learners to positively impact their world.

Goal #5 – Provide effective leadership for key District support departments including Human Resources, Business Services, Facilities and Technology in order to best serve student, staff, and family needs

"An enterprise that is constantly exploring new horizons is likely to have a competitive advantage in attracting and attaining talent." Hamel (2012), *What Matters Now*

Outcomes:
1. Develop understanding of goals and major initiatives of each department
2. Outline critical changes in queue for future consideration and implementation
3. Ensure resource allocation is aligned to critical District needs and goals
4. Establish importance of efficacy in support role for the advancement of teaching and learning in Birmingham Public Schools
5. Assess operational efficiency in each department
6. Assess employee engagement through the lens of recruitment, retention and growth
7. Collaborate with Board of Education and District leadership to begin to build overall strategy to address budget deficit with quality stakeholder input

Specific Actions (Completion Day):
1. Schedule individual meetings with leaders of each department to understand goals, initiatives and plans in progress for current school year (Day 30)
2. Attend a regular department meeting of each support branch to open dialogue about enhanced function and support needed from central administration team (Day 75)
3. Hold special meeting with Assistant Superintendent of Business Services focused on the budget deficit to assess current status of contributions from general operating structural deficit and revenue loss from non-homestead property millage rollback or loss of enrollment (Day 30)
4. Hold special enrollment meeting with Deputy Superintendent and related staff members focused on the history of enrollment in the District, analysis of past enrollment projection accuracy and analysis/development of school enrollment heat map in order to outline potential concerns and opportunities for the 2019-2020 academic year (Day 50)
5. Hold special meeting with Deputy Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources to understand current teacher FTE allocation by building, grade level, and department to understand staffing allocations across District (Day 50)
6. Schedule tours of current building projects and potential needs with members of the Facilities Leadership Team (Day 75)
7. Collaborate with Board of Education President to schedule and plan budget study session/retreat in winter to outline plan for collaborative approach to reducing deficit (Day 45)
8. Collaborate with Board of Education President to schedule and plan budget study session/retreat in early spring to discuss Michigan school finance landscape and establish budget assumptions for 2019-2020 academic year (Day 75)

"As we think about efficiency and effectiveness (in the use of resources to improve student engagement and learning), clearly the starting point needs to be making sure that the district and/or every school is explicitly clear about its mission." Gendron and Faherty (ND), *Managing Resources to Focus on Student Performance*

Goal #6 – Further commitment of Birmingham Public Schools toward achievement of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategic Plan, Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) Professional Learning Plan and implementation of high quality Character Education (CE) to enhance student achievement for all learners

"Character education teaches the habits of thought and deed that help people live and work together as families, friends, neighbors, communities and nations. It enables students and adults in a school community to understand, care about and act on core ethical values such as respect, justice, civic virtue and citizenship, and responsibility for self and others." U.S.D.E. (2005), *Character Education, Our Shared Responsibility*

Outcomes:
1. Identify key measures used to gauge progress toward Character Education and Diversity and Inclusion goals including key student performance indicators
2. Reinforce importance of Character Education and Diversity and Inclusion initiatives to constituents of Birmingham Public Schools
3. Build positive relationships with Steering Committee members and community members serving on the Diversity Committee
4. Develop report related to achievement of Diversity and Inclusion and Culturally Responsive Teaching implementation plans
5. Appreciate efforts of students, staff and community members toward achievement of goals designed to uplift student achievement for all
6. Engage students in the achievement of equity for all in classrooms and extracurricular endeavors
7. Begin development of plans for future Character Education and Diversity and Inclusion initiatives beyond the expiration of the District Strategic Plan and the Diversity Strategic Plans

Specific Actions (Completion Day):
1. Schedule individual meeting with Director of Character Education, Diversity and Equity to review leadership goals and progress toward implementation of Character Education and Diversity goals (Day 30)
2. Include references to importance of Character Education and Diversity and Inclusion in key District communications (Ongoing)
3. Schedule opportunities to attend and participate in Diversity Committee work during introduction to Birmingham Public Schools (Day 30)
4. Include Character Education and Diversity and Inclusion in discussions with inaugural Superintendent Student Advisory Group (Day 90)
5. Discuss Character Education with school leadership teams and central administration team to define opportunities for continued District progress (Day 60)
6. Produce report outlining progress toward achievement of Character Education, Diversity and Inclusion and Culturally Responsive Teaching goals including significant accomplishments and opportunities for further development (Day 90)
7. Assess impact of CE, D&I and CRT programs on school climate, culture and achievement (Day 90)

"Caring is a value and mission of utmost importance to most teachers and is a fundamental tenet of culturally responsive teaching." Gay (2010), *Culturally Responsive Teaching*

"We simply don't take issues of when as seriously as we take questions of what." Pink (2018), *When*

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS OVER TIME: To gain a better picture of my transition work during the first 100 days, it is helpful to view a summary of my proposed actions organized by proposed completion day. This could be adapted to a Gantt-style chart that graphs the action schedule by goal area. Each action step rests in the appropriate timeframe organized by goal and action number with the proposed completion day (see below). *Legend:* Goal.Action (Proposed Completion Day)

As indicated in my statement of commitment to the Birmingham Public Schools Board of Education, I intend to faithfully implement the final plan once endorsed by the Board. There could be a time during the first 100 days where a critical incident or significant challenge demanding the immediate attention of the central administration team will necessitate shifts in the plan. I intend to provide ongoing, regular updates to the Board throughout the transition period so that when flexibility is required, all Trustees are aware of any changes.

Phase 0: Ongoing – Continuous Action

4.1, 4.10, 6.2

Phase 1: First 30 Days – Immediate Action

3.9 (1,) 3.7 (5), 3.8 (7), 4.6 (7)

1.1 (21), 1.4 (21), 1.5 (21), 1.6 (21), 2.1 (21), 4.3 (21), 4.5 (21)

1.7 (30), 1.8 (30), 2.2 (30), 2.4 (30), 2.7 (30), 3.5 (30), 4.2 (30), 4.7 (30), 5.1 (30), 5.3 (30), 6.1 (30), 6.3 (30)

Phase 2: 30-60 Days – Action Over Time

1.1 (45), 3.2 (45), 4.8 (45), 4.9 (45), 5.7 (45)

1.2 (50), 5.4 (50), 5.5 (50)

2.3 (60), 2.6 (60), 2.9 (60), 4.4 (60), 6.5 (60)

Phase 3: 61-100 Days – Action Before End of Transition

5.2 (75), 5.6 (75), 5.8 (75)

2.5 (90), 2.8 (90), 3.1 (90), 3.3 (90), 3.4 (90), 6.6 (90), 6.7 (90)

1.3 (100), 1.8 (100), 3.6 (100)

"In the end, leaders don't get to decide who leads. Followers do." Kouzes and Posner (2003), *Credibility*