Lincoln Public Schools

BALLFIELD ROAD
LINCOLN, MA 01773
781-259-9400 • FAX: 781-259-9246

Parry Graham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Dear Lincoln Public Schools Families and Staff,

I cannot tell you how excited I am to be the new Superintendent of Lincoln Public Schools! This is a position that carries great responsibility, but it is also a great privilege: it means a tremendous amount to me that I have the opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of students, families, and staff.

As a new Superintendent, two of the activities that will be most important for me are listening and learning. Each community is unique, with particular histories, strengths, and areas for growth – before I am able to lead the Lincoln Public Schools in identifying long-term priorities for continued improvement, it is critical that I have a deep understanding of those histories, strengths, and growth areas. And the only way I can do that is to listen and to learn.

To that end, I will be spending a significant chunk of time, energy, and attention for the first half of the school year meeting with staff, caregivers, students, and members of the community. I will be asking questions about your experiences; looking at data around student learning and instructional practices; reviewing district curricula and documents; and exploring existing systems and structures. This process constitutes my formal Entry Plan, and at the end of this process I will share a summary of my findings with the School Committee and the larger community. In that summary I will highlight the primary themes and trends that I identified, and what next steps I will be taking based on what I learn.

The rest of this document outlines the specific details of my entry plan, including:
- My short- and long-term goals for the first half of the school year
- The timeline for my activities connected to my entry plan
- The types of data that I will collect
- Sample questions that will drive the data collection process

Sincerely,

Parry Graham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Short- and long-term goals

While this entry plan details steps that I will be taking for the first half of the year, my responsibilities as the new Superintendent began several months ago. In May and June I was able to lead the hiring process for a new Assistant Superintendent, and I was very excited to be able to appoint Torrance Lewis to this position; over the summer, I was able to work with Erich Ledebuhr to create a new leadership structure for the Hanscom School; and during August, I was able to work with the district's leadership team to identify critical areas of focus for this coming school year.

As a result, I have a number of shorter-term goals that are particular to the work we will do at the school and district levels this year. Those goals are to:

- Implement the Responsive Classroom model as a vehicle to ensure that all students feel a sense of belonging in their classrooms and schools, and that all students are building the social-emotional skills to be happy and successful learners;
- Revisit the district's five-year AIDE plan to identify opportunities for improvements, and operationalize identified practices this year to continue our AIDE work;
- Support new leaders in the district, and build an effective sense of community and collective efficacy among the district's leadership teams;
- Build a transparent, fiscally responsible budget that reflects school and district priorities for the 2024-25 school year; and,
- Begin planning for the negotiation of the next Hanscom contract.

As part of the entry plan process, however, I will be working on broader goals that look at a longer timeline. Those longer-term goals are to:

- Identify the the most important district values, systems, traditions, and practices that need to be maintained for the long term;
- Understand the most pressing areas for improvement to ensure continued and improved student success; and,
- Build a long-term, strategic plan that preserves what is working well; that clearly identifies and prioritizes areas for improvement; and that explicitly connects fiscal decision-making to district goals.

Timeline and activities

Some of the steps connected to my entry plan have already occurred, but the bulk of the work will take place over the course of the 2023-24 school year. Here are the key components to the entry plan, the timeline for when they will occur, and the activities associated with them:

Entry Plan Component	Timeline	Relevant Activities
Develop the Superintendent's Entry Plan	July and August 2023	- Solicit initial feedback from school, district, and community leaders - Participate in training for new Superintendents through the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents - Work in collaboration with my assigned

		coach, a veteran Superintendent assigned to me through MASS
Present Plan to School Committee, Staff, and Community	September 2023	• Present Entry Plan to School Committee in early September • Based on School Committee feedback, incorporate any suggested edits • Share with LPS staff and community by end of September
Data and Information Collection	September 2023 - January 2024	• Work with Assistant Superintendent to review a broad range of data around student learning • Meet with various stakeholders, both individually and in small groups, to collect feedback • Work with Assistant Superintendent to review school curricula and pedagogical practices • Review school and district documents, structures, practices, and procedures
Data Analysis and Preparation of Report of Findings	January and February 2024	• Analyze quantitative and qualitative data and information to identify patterns, with a particular emphasis on student and family sub-group discrepancies • Work with school and district leaders to review initial findings • Based on findings, identify key areas of strength and key areas for improvement
Presentation of Findings to School Committee, Staff, and Community	March 2024	• Present findings to School Committee in early March • Based on School Committee feedback, incorporate any suggested edits • Share findings with LPS staff and community by end of March
Work with Administrative Council to Develop Long-Term Strategic Plan	April - June 2024	• In collaboration with school and district leaders, develop a draft multi-year strategic plan • Present draft plan to School Committee for feedback • Based on School Committee feedback, incorporate any suggested edits • Share strategic plan with LPS staff and community

<u>Data collection</u>
In collecting data and information about the district's current state and practices, I will emphasize three broad categories:

- Quantitative and qualitative data/information around curriculum, pedagogy, student learning, student sense of belonging, and student social-emotional needs
- Quantitative and qualitative data/information around staff, family, student, and community priorities
- Quantitative and qualitative data/information around school and district structures and practices

While it will ultimately be my responsibility to analyze and synthesize the data and information into a report of findings, I will nevertheless be engaged in a collaborative process to do so. Throughout this process I will rely heavily on our central office administrative team and building principals to help me collect and analyze a variety of information around student learning, curricula, pedagogical practices, intervention systems, special education structures, etc. I will similarly rely on other members of the district's leadership team to help me look at existing structures, practices, and procedures.

The quantitative and qualitative data and information listed below are intended to be illustrative examples, rather than exhaustive lists. In any large-scale data collection process, patterns in one area of data can inevitably lead to new questions and new information to collect. Nevertheless, the data and information listed below represent important, initial places that I will begin.

Category of Data/Information	Examples
Curricula	- Existing curricular programs - Existing supplementary curricular resources - Curricular budgets
Pedagogy	- Patterns of student engagement - Sub-group discrepancies, if any, in patterns of student engagement
Student learning (both aggregate and sub-group data)	- DIBELS and other literacy data - iReady and other math assessment data - MCAS achievement and growth scores - Standards-based report cards - High School data from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School and Bedford High School - Special Education referrals
Student social-emotional needs	- Responsive classroom implementation data - Number of students receiving formal counseling - Special education and 504 referrals
Staff feedback around school and district priorities	- Focus groups - One-on-one interviews with staff leaders - Large-scale surveys

Family feedback around school and district priorities	- Focus groups - One-on-one interviews with caregivers in positions of leadership - Large-scale surveys
Student feedback around school and district priorities	- Focus groups (upper elementary and middle school) - Large-scale surveys (upper elementary and middle school)
Community feedback around school and district priorities	- One-on-one interviews with community leaders (Lincoln, Hanscom, and Boston) - Community forums
School and district structures and practices	- Intervention referrals - School schedules - Historical district and school strategic plans - Hanscom contract - Equity audits - Five-year AIDE plan - Professional development plans

Sample data collection questions
Both during the data and information collection process, and during the analysis of what has been collected, there will be a variety of questions that will drive my work. The questions listed below are not meant to be an exhaustive list, but will comprise key components of the lens through which I attempt to learn about the district.

Driving questions around curricula
- What curricular programs do we use K-8 in our core curriculum areas (ELA, math, science, and social studies)?
- How long have these programs been in place, and what long-term patterns exist in student achievement data during the lifetime of these programs?
- What opportunities do we provide students in other subject areas (e.g., the arts, world languages, computer science)?
- What supplementary curricular resources do we use to support struggling students and challenge high-achieving students?
- How do our current curricular programs and supplementary resources address the needs of a broad range of learners?

Driving questions around pedagogy:
- What does student engagement look like?
- What patterns exist in terms of student engagement? Are there differences across schools, grades, and student sub-groups?
- What do teacher pedagogical practices look like?
- What patterns exist in teacher pedagogical behaviors across schools, grades, and student sub-groups?

Driving questions around student learning:
- What patterns exist around student academic achievement and growth?
- What differences exist (if any) across various student sub-groups in terms of student achievement?
- What differences exist (if any) across different subject areas in terms of student achievement?

Driving questions around student social-emotional needs:
- To what extent do students feel a sense of belonging in their classrooms and schools?
- What differences exist (if any) across various student sub-groups in terms of student sense of belonging?
- What supports are in place around students' social-emotional needs?
- What patterns exist in disciplinary data across schools, grades, and student sub-groups?
- What patterns exist in mental health data across schools, grades, and student sub-groups?

Driving questions around stakeholder feedback
- What do staff, families, students, and community leaders see as the schools' and district's greatest strengths?
- What do staff, families, students, and community leaders see as the schools' and district's greatest areas for improvement?
- What differences exist, if any, across different stakeholder groups and across stakeholder sub-groups around areas of strength and areas of improvement?

Review of school schedules
- How are students' days organized?
- How much time are students spending in instructional activities? How much time in non-instructional activities? What does non-instructional time look like?
- How are teachers' days organized?
- How are scheduling decisions made?

Review of school and district documents
- What priorities are highlighted in school and district documents (e.g., district strategic plans, school improvement plans, five-year AIDE plan, prior year budgets)?
- How does prior school and district work connect to identified strengths and areas for improvement?

Review of school and district structures and practices
- How are students identified for interventions through a multi-tiered system of support?
- How are students with identified disabilities supported in both general education and special education environments?
- How is professional development planned for teachers? Who participates in this process?
- How has the five-year AIDE plan been implemented?