

West Irondequoit Central School  
District

# Initial Entry Plan



*Our community welcomes each child,  
nurtures each mind, and inspires each other  
to peak performance*

*Prepared by:*  
Aaron R. Johnson  
Candidate- Superintendent of Schools

*The West Irondequoit Central School District is a distinct community marked by a strong vision, high expectations, and a commitment to children. The school-community and Board of Education exude a warm and inclusive culture to challenge and empower every student to peak performance. Recognizing the ever-changing landscape facing our graduates, West Irondequoit strives to provoke creativity and instill resilience as students explore their interests and assets on their way to college or career readiness. As Superintendent of Schools, my mission is to embrace these values and apply my knowledge, skills, and experience to complement and lead the District. I commit to modeling the character, integrity, and fairness, expected of a leader as we write the next chapter of West Irondequoit's brilliant legacy.*

*To prepare for this partnership, I have assembled the following plan as a framework for learning about the West Irondequoit school community. This plan will shape how we view our strengths, vision for the future, and what we believe our short and long-term priorities to be. This roadmap will also set the bar for my approachability, visibility, and transparency moving forward. My mission is to preserve and extend the excellent programs, activities, and services that contribute to the deep pride and student success that sets West Irondequoit apart.*

*Thank you for inviting me to partner with you, I look forward to our ongoing dialogue and sharing in the cultivation of our talented youth and outstanding community.*

*Sincerely,  
Aaron R. Johnson, Ed. D*

## **I. Targets:**

- ❖ Understand the identity, structure, beliefs, and needs of the West Irondequoit Central School District
- ❖ Establish trusting relationships with members of the Board of Education and administrative team
- ❖ Understand District policies, practices, plans, and the financial conditions
- ❖ Grow collaborative relationships and pathways for communication with students, staff, parents, and the community



- ❖ Recognize the celebrations and challenges within the District to enhance opportunities for student, staff, and organizational success and shared visioning

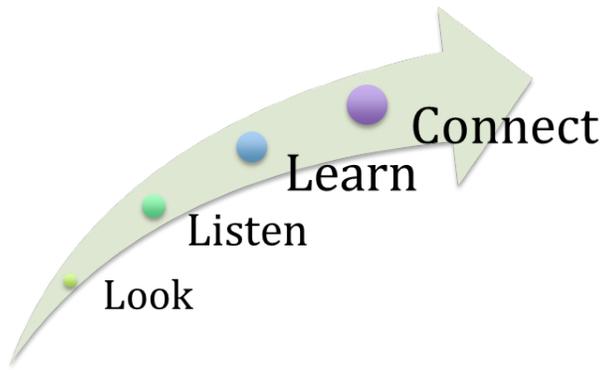
## II. Process:

Entry into the role of Superintendent of the West Irondequoit Central School District will include three phases. Each step incorporates progressive action aimed at connecting with the people, community, and School District. This work begins now and will extend through the duration of our first year together. These phases include:



The backbone of this process is people. Everyone has a story to share, a perspective to lend, and often, valuable knowledge and expertise on an issue. As Superintendent it is essential to listen to these voices. Research and best practice have its place. However, I believe that real understanding and growth comes from within. To accomplish this, I will first seek to understand the intricacies and nuances of the West Irondequoit community from the people's perspective. My goal is to be an active listener to gain the awareness, respect, and trust needed to lead. The idea illustrated below will provide the underpinning for this process.





As a newcomer, it is essential to spend time discovering the rich history, traditions, and people that make the West Irondequoit Central School District great. My mission is to compliment these assets and together find ways to leverage these strengths to shape our future. A mixed scanning approach will be used to accomplish this goal. Below is a list of activities intended as a starting block, a way to begin constructing the relationships, knowledge, and trust to lead effectively. They are:

1. Individual Interviews
2. Focus groups
3. Surveys
4. Site Visits
5. Document analyses
6. Participation in school and community events

I have prepared a proposed list of stakeholders and documents to include based on my current understanding of the District. This list is not intended to be a complete list but a simple beginning. With time spent in my new role, the plan is to be adjusted accordingly. Please feel free to offer recommendations and comments along the way to strengthen the process.

### Target Groups/Individuals:

Internal Stakeholders		
Board of Education Members	Deputy Superintendent	Assistant Superintendent for Personnel
Secretary to the Superintendent/District Clerk	Directors of Instruction	Director of Public Information



Director and Supervisor of Student Services	Executive Director of Operations	District Office Personnel
Administrative Team (by building)	Administrative Support Staff	Faculty and Staff (by building and department); Union and Association leadership
Security Leadership and Staff	Transportation Leadership and Staff	Technology Leadership and Staff (I.e. Director of Technology, Network Administrator)
Director of Health, PE, and Athletics	West Irondequoit Teaching Learning Center-Director	Helmer Nature Center-Director
Students/Parents/Community members (by building)	West Irondequoit Foundation; Booster Club(s)	WICPTSA
District Attorney	District Financial Advisor	District Architectural and Engineering Firm
District Project Management Firm	BOCES District Superintendent	Retired Superintendent
<b>External Stakeholders</b>		
Elected Officials/Municipal Administration	Media Partners	Irondequoit Chamber of Commerce
Town of Irondequoit Police; Town of Irondequoit Fire Dept. and Ambulance	Educational Partners (I.e. retired educators, local college representatives)	Civic, Nonprofit, and Other Local Service Organizations (I.e. Irondequoit Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis Clubs)
Faith-based Organizations	Local, State, and National Government Officials	Local Business Owners

## Document Review and Analysis:

<b>Documents</b>		
District Strategic Plan; Mission Statement and Core Commitments; Key Focus Areas/Key Measures	BOE Policy Manual; Operating Procedures; Administrative Regulations	Facilities Studies and 5- Year Capital Facilities Plan, Efficiencies Studies, Operational Audits (2013-18)
District Budget Documents (2013-18); Reserve Plan	Confidential Memorandums to BOE (2013-15)	Code of Conduct
Internal/External/Comptroller's Audit Reports (2013-18)	BOE Minutes and Reports (2013-18)	Salary Schedules
District and School Report Cards	Village Growth Trends, Census Data	High School Athletic Guidelines
Bargaining Unit Contracts (past 3)	Media Reports (2016-18)	Dropout and Graduation Data
District Technology Plan	School-based Plans;	Assessment Calendars



	Program Evaluations	
Professional Development Plan	Employee Handbook(s)	Organizational Chart
Next Generation Implementation Plan(s)	Personnel Procedures	Administrative Evaluations
Teacher and Administrator's Evaluation and Supervision Process- Annual Professional Performance Review Agreements	District and Building-level Safety and Emergency Plans	Advanced Placement Data
College and Career Placement Data	Website	Press Releases

### III. Methods:

The objectives and activities that follow comprise Phase I and Phase II of the entry plan. This period is loosely the time leading up to the official start date and the first 180 days in the role. Before beginning, the Board of Education will give feedback and input regarding this plan, its scope, and timeline.

#### Phase I: Pre-Entry

#### *Discovery*

Starting in the months leading up to the official start date, I will begin gathering and analyzing academic, procedural, contractual, and financial information. This scan will focus on understanding the processes, policies, and history that guide the District. Particular focus will be on the Board of Education policy manual, operating procedures, protocols for shared-decision making and collaboration, and understanding the points of pride and areas of need for the District. I will also dedicate attention to observing scheduled Board of Education meetings and attending school athletic, extracurricular, and community functions. Initial meetings with Board of Education members, District personnel, administrative teammates, and the Secretary to the Superintendent/District Clerk will begin as schedules permit. This work will carry over into Phase II as well. An introductory letter will be drafted and distributed to the school community and at least three "meet and greet" events will occur. Relationships, community building, and personal connections are at the heart of this work.

Included below are specific and detailed subsets to Phase I to help with the planning and scheduling of the work. They are:



<b>Priority #1-</b>	<b>Initiate relationships and begin to build trust with members of the Board of Education. Understand the District policies, procedures, and protocols of governance.</b>
<p><b>Establish an understanding of District governance norms and expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review and discuss my draft entry plan with the Board of Education to gather suggestions and input for modification</li> <li>○ Understand the Board of Education’s expectations, priorities, and vision for the District</li> <li>○ Review the remaining 2018-19 schedule for Board of Education meetings including presentations, reports, building tours, etc.</li> <li>○ Confirm agenda setting practices for regular business meetings and study sessions; discuss expectations for reporting, updating and meeting dynamics</li> <li>○ Discuss the 2019-20 budget development process, 5-year Capital Plans, and the Renewal Project</li> <li>○ Review important policies, procedures, and protocols regarding District governance and the Board-Superintendent relationship</li> <li>○ Establish collaborative agreements for internal and external communication</li> </ul> <p><b>Interview individual Board of Education members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See Appendix A- Board of Education Questionnaire and Appendix B- BOE Individual Discussion Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discuss key issues and priorities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Interview the retiring Superintendent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See Appendix B- BOE Individual Discussion Questions</li> </ul>	

<b>Priority #2-</b>	<b>Initiate relationships and trust with District leaders. Collate their perceptions, historical knowledge, perceptions, and advice.</b>
<p><b>Individual discussions with the Secretary to the Superintendent/District Clerk and other District Office personnel</b></p>	



- See Appendix C- Stakeholder Discussion Questions
  - Secretary to the Superintendent/District Clerk- Patricia Kelly
  - Deputy Superintendent- Dr. Tim Terranova
  - Assistant Superintendent for Finance- James Brennan
  - Executive Director of Operations- John Conti
  - Director of Public Relations- Jeff DiVeronica
  - Grades K-6 Director of Instruction- Christina Miga
  - Grades 7-12 Director of Instruction- Karen Finter
  - Director of Student Services- Dr. Susan Flood
  - District Treasurer- Gregory Pheterson
  - Accounts Payable- Diane Connelly
  - Accounts Clerk- Kristine Quattrociocchi
  - Additional Support Staff
  - Others as recommended

**Individual discussions with administrators and others in a supervisory or leadership role**

- See Appendix C- Stakeholder Discussion Questions
  - High School Principal- Douglas Lauf
  - Dake Junior High Principal- Michelle Cramer
  - Iroquois Middle School Principal- Christian Zwahlen
  - Rogers Middle School Principal- Michelle Flood
  - Briarwood and Colebrook Schools Principal- Kathleen Bush
  - Brookview and Seneca Schools Principal- Alicia Spitz
  - Listwood and Southlawn Schools Principal- Kelly Santora
  - Director of Technology- Dan Fullerton
  - Network Administrator- Bruce Baker
  - Others as recommended

**Phase II: Entry**

***Assimilation***

During approximately the first 180 days as the new Superintendent, my work will be rooted in the “look, listen, learn, and connect” reasoning as I take on the daily functions of the role. The pace of this work will remain dependent on availability and schedule. This phase will include:

➤ **Classroom visits:**



Each week, I will spend time in our schools and classrooms learning about the students, staff, and programs by performing simple learning walks. My goal is to visit every classroom at least once during this phase.

➤ **Building Visits:**

To experience the operations and individual cultures of our schools, I will visit every school building numerous times to attend build-based faculty, department, grade level, and shared-decision making meetings, shadow staff as applicable, and have lunch with students and staff.

➤ **School and Community Events:**

I will continue to attend District and community events including student performances, recognition events, athletic competitions, co-curricular events, service-related organization meetings, and other functions as advised. My time will be spent learning about the school and community culture and climate while having personal interactions with stakeholders and making myself available for conversations and questions.

➤ **Transportation:**

To conceptualize the varying needs of our families and to understand the geographical landscape of our District, I will ride morning and afternoon bus runs as my schedule permits. I will also commit to greeting students, parents, and staff at building arrivals as available. These personal interactions will help to form a fundamental approachability and rapport with those I meet.

➤ **Internal/External Stakeholder Meetings**

Individual and group discussions will take place with the internal and external stakeholders identified. Each conversation will use Appendix C- Stakeholder Discussion Questions to talk about interests, passions, and advice. All dialogues will reflect the “look, listen, learn, and connect” ideal with the goal of capturing an accurate, 360 degree perspective of our District. All findings will be summarized and shared with the Board of Education first, then the administrative team, staff,



students, and the community. If possible, a web-based application like <https://www.thoughtexchange.com/> will be used to supplement individual meetings and focus groups as a means to gather a broader range of stakeholder input.

➤ **Document Review and Analysis**

Seek advice from the Board of Education, Deputy Superintendent, and District Personnel regarding additional suggestions to add to the documents previously listed for review. Identify where key materials are housed or who can be used as a resource for access and begin reviewing materials starting with those most critical to our initial work. Setup access to District software and databases as needed (I.e. NYSED Business Portal, Infinite Campus, Financial Management Software, Absence Management Software, and others).

Included below are specific and detailed subsets to Phase II to help with the planning and scheduling of the work. They are:

<b>Priority #3-</b>	<b>Form collaborative relationships and pathways for communication with students, staff, families, and the community. Collate their perceptions, historical knowledge, perceptions, and advice.</b>
<p><b>STAFF-</b>  <b>Conduct individual and group discussions with instructional and non-instructional staff based on personal preference and interest (by building, department, or grade level)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ See Appendix C- Stakeholder Discussion Questions             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teachers</li> <li>○ Instructional Support Staff</li> <li>○ Clerical</li> <li>○ Operations and Maintenance</li> <li>○ Food Service</li> <li>○ Transportation</li> <li>○ Athletics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



- o Extracurricular

*Review personnel files and other documents as suggested*

**STUDENTS-**

**Conduct individual and group discussions with students and student leaders based on personal preference and interest (by building, grade level, or club/team)**

- o See Appendix D- Student Discussion Questions
  - o Conduct individual and group conversations at each building and/or grade level
  - o Interview student government(s), National Honor Societies, class officers and other student leadership or club representatives as identified

*Student discussion times and forums will be decided based on student convenience and with the goal of minimizing interference with instruction*

**PARENT/GUARDIAN/COMMUNITY MEMBERS-**

**Conduct individual and group discussions with parents, guardians, and community members based on personal preference and interest**

- o See Appendix C- Stakeholder Discussion Questions
  - o Schedule and conduct "meet and greet" events at various locations in the community.
  - o Conduct individual and small group discussions based on preference and interest

<b>Priority #4-</b>	<b>Form collaborative relationships and pathways for communication with Union and Association leaders and investigate the current and past state of the District-Union/Association relationships and agreements</b>
<b>Discussions with Union and Association leaders</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o See Appendix E- Union Leadership Discussion Questions           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Conduct individual and small group discussions with key</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



leaders

- Identify current agenda items
- Establish schedule for regular meetings and pathways for communication

### **Review Union and Association documents**

- Review the most recent contracts (last 3), memorandums of agreement/understanding, and other related documents
- Review past grievances, arbitration, and communications related to each Union/Association (2013-18)

### **Priority #5-**

**Review the Capital Planning documents with particular focus on the 2020 Renewal Project and identify essential steps/timeline for completion**

### **Review Capital Planning documents and updates**

- Review all related planning documents, communications, meeting minutes, presentations, detailed plans and submittals related to current Capital Plans specifically capital exclusion project(s) and the Renewal Project
- Review the May 15, 2018 voter referendum, public informational meeting artifacts, vote results, voter feedback, or other materials related to the vote
- Review Renewal Project summary document
- Other documents as suggested

### **Interview(s) with the District's Architects and Engineers, Project Manager, Financial Advisor, Board of Education, Executive Director of Operations, and retired Superintendent**

- Identify key participants at Clark Patterson Lee and the Construction Management Firm, conduct multiple interviews regarding current capital improvement plans, and confirm points of contact for regular communication
- Identify key participants with the District's Financial Advisors, conduct multiple interviews regarding capital improvement plans and long-range financial plans, and confirm points of contact for regular communication
- Interview the retiring Superintendent Mr. Jeffrey Crane and the



- Board of Education separately regarding Capital Planning, capital exclusion plans, and the Renewal Project
- o Interview the Executive Director of Operations and confirm regular points for communication

### **Phase III: Post-Entry**

### ***Leading***

By this time I intend to be familiar with the landscape and needs of the West Irondequoit Central School District and community. The findings of this work will be reported back to the Board of Education and stakeholder in late 2019 for comment and discussion. This awareness will serve as the base for moving West Irondequoit forward as a financially sound, innovative, and widely admired school district graduating students with the intellectual and emotional footing to flourish as globally-conscious citizens.

#### **Core Commitments**

*We are committed to partnering with our community to:*

- Provide challenging curricula and embrace authentic experiences
- that complement the academic achievement of each student.
- Foster the emotional and physical wellness of all students.
- Encourage students to embrace creativity, welcome challenges,
- learn from setbacks, and develop resilience as integral parts of
- lifelong learning.
- Maintain a working environment that draws and retains knowledgeable, creative, dedicated, and caring professionals.
- Balance resources and educational needs to promote a fiscally
- sound and financially stable educational program.
- Provide students opportunities to explore possible careers, develop
- future paths, and hone 21st century skills for global