



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HARFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT BULSON BEGINS LISTEN AND LEARN TOUR

Harford County Public Schools Superintendent Sean Bulson today released his Entry Plan detailing how he will learn the strengths and values of the school system while building a foundation for trusting and productive relationships as Harford's new superintendent.

Designed as a two-phase plan, the first phase highlights his "Listen and Learn" tour, an opportunity to acclimate to Harford County and establish positive working relationships and partnerships with colleagues and stakeholders, a top priority for Dr. Bulson.

In addition to meeting those he will work with outside of the school system, Dr. Bulson has scheduled time to talk individually with each of his Leadership Team members and the principals of all the county's 54 public schools.

An aggressive schedule with just a few weeks left before the start of the school year, Dr. Bulson has already begun his meetings and is focused on being prepared to start the new year.

"I have encountered a great deal of enthusiasm and willingness to engage in discussions about the future of our schools from community and school leaders. It is essential that I learn the landscape before we discuss the future of HCPS," said Dr. Bulson.

Following the Listen and Learn tour, the second phase of the plan utilizes information Dr. Bulson gathers to identify priorities and determine the appropriate strategies to address them.

Finally, in October, Dr. Bulson will present his findings to the community. Information about this event will be forthcoming.

Dr. Bulson's entry plan in full is below. You will also find Dr. Bulson's entry plan on www.hcps.org by clicking on the "Superintendent of HCPS" button.

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Superintendent’s Entry Plan

Sean Bulson, Ed. D.

July 16, 2018

Introduction

I am honored to be the next superintendent of Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) where the vision is to inspire and prepare each student to achieve success in college and career. Over the next four months, I will embark on an entry plan to learn about the strengths and values of the school system while building a foundation for trusting and productive relationships. This entry plan consists of two phases: *Listen and Learn* and *Prepare for the Future*. I expect to complete both phases by the end of October, when I will share my findings and recommendations for next steps with the community.

Phase 1: *Listen and Learn*

The *Listen and Learn* sessions are the centerpiece of the plan. They involve a deliberate focus on listening to voices that represent the diversity of Harford County. I have organized *Listen and Learn* sessions into three phases. In July, I will focus on system and community leadership including meetings with individual Board of Education (BOE) members, school system administrators, elected officials, and other community leaders. When 10-month employees return to our buildings in August, I will focus on schools and school employees. Once the school year begins in September, I will focus on parents/guardians and students along with other community groups.

Month	Focus
July	Community and System Governance
August	School and System Leadership
September	Students, Staff, Parents/Guardians, and Community

Listen and Learn sessions will help me identify strengths and opportunities. I will develop an understanding of existing relationships between school system leaders and various stakeholder groups. I will be listening for how system leaders seek input, how stakeholders provide input, and how system leaders then process that information. I will use what I learn to build a foundation that establishes effective two-way communication with stakeholders throughout the county.

While the focus of individual meetings will vary, the system vision will be a common element in all meetings. I am interested in understanding how stakeholders think our schools *inspire* and *prepare* each student to *achieve* success in college and career. Defining the three key words—inspire, prepare, and achieve—for HCPS as a system is important while also ensuring we are working for each student.

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Plan Detail: *Listen and Learn*

Community and System Governance	
Who	Focus
BOE members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System strengths and opportunities • Identify community members to meet • Tour region/community
County Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • County priorities
County Council members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • County priorities
County department heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • County priorities
Aberdeen Proving Ground leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • APG priorities
Mayors and other elected community leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • Community priorities
Community College President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • Discuss current and future partnerships
County Sherriff and other law enforcement leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • Safety priorities
Chamber of Commerce President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of HCPS • Economic development priorities
Education Foundation President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • Foundation priorities
State elected legislators representing Harford County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of HCPS • Legislative priorities
Visit all non-school properties operated by the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet staff and become acquainted with how all operational elements contribute to the system's vision

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School and System Leadership	
Who	Focus
System Administrators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief of Administration • Executive Directors • Assistant Superintendents • Coordinator of Safety and Security • Manager of Communications • Supervisor of Equity and Cultural Proficiency • General Counsel • Director of Technology • Director of Special Education • Director of Student Services • Supervisor of Accountability • Coordinator of Leadership and Professional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our schools <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Review performance data • Discuss system strengths and opportunities
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your school <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Review performance data • Discuss system strengths and opportunities
Association Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do your members <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Discuss system strengths and opportunities

Students, Staff, Parents/Guardians, and Community	
Who	Focus
Elected student leaders (group meeting with representatives from each high school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our schools <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Discuss system strengths and opportunities
System-level PTA leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our schools <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Discuss system strengths and opportunities
Community listening events by BOE region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our schools <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Discuss system strengths and opportunities
Additional community leader meetings (BOE members will assist in identifying leaders to meet from across the county)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do our schools <i>inspire</i> and <i>prepare</i> each student to <i>achieve</i> success in college and career? • Discuss system strengths and opportunities

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Phase 2: Prepare for the Future

Prepare for the Future is the second phase of the entry plan. As I collect information about the system during the *Listen and Learn* phase, I expect to receive suggestions about how to inspire and prepare students to advance achievement. During the second phase I will utilize the data I gather to identify priorities and determine the appropriate strategies to address them. Setting these priorities will assure the system has a clear set of goals moving forward and that the strategies we will use to achieve those goals are clearly delineated.

Plan Detail: Prepare for the Future

Community and System Governance; School and System Leadership; Students, Staff, Parents/Guardians, and Community	
Who	Focus
Share initial findings from <i>Listen and Learn</i> sessions with system administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek feedback and additional information about what is currently being done as well as past efforts • Discuss priorities from the administrators’ perspective
Conduct work session with the BOE to discuss findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present findings from <i>Listen and Learn</i> sessions • Identify opportunities to strengthen existing initiatives • Discuss new initiatives based on community needs
Develop stakeholder advisories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify groups to meet regularly • Determine requirements for group membership • Establish meeting schedules

Closing

As the superintendent of HCPS, my goal is to hear from as many voices as possible over the next few months. I have set forth this aggressive schedule of *Listen and Learn* sessions to gather information from stakeholders. The system will use this data to create a path for future work on behalf of our students.

In October, I will present my findings to the community. This presentation will include sharing the themes that emerge in the *Listen and Learn* sessions as well as potential new initiatives and the strategies for considering those initiatives as we *Prepare for the Future*.

Month	Focus
October	Community Presentation to discuss Entry Plan findings

I sincerely believe a strong foundation of personal relationships will be necessary to meet the goals we have set for our students, our system, and our community. Together, we must do everything possible to inspire and prepare each student to achieve success in college and career.

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