

Superintendent's Entry Plan Progress Report



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Uxbridge Public Schools
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Purpose of the Entry Plan

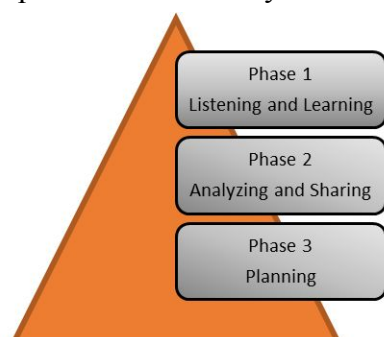
Increases in students' learning occur only as a consequence of improvements in the level of content, teachers' knowledge and skill, and student engagement (City, Elmore, Fiarman, & Teitel, 2010)) A high functioning school system is successful because it creates the conditions necessary for this "instructional core" to thrive. Therefore, all functions of the complex system that make up a school district need to focus on improving these three areas. It is also vital that the district's leaders defend against activities that interfere with its accomplishment of this purpose.

In September, I presented the Uxbridge School Committee with an entry plan that I had developed to assist me in my transition into the role of Superintendent of Uxbridge Public Schools. The purpose of this entry plan was to allow me to connect with stakeholders throughout the community to gain perspective on where our district has been, where it stands now, and where it should be moving toward. It also afforded me the opportunity to gain an understanding of the extent to which the system is focused on improving the instructional core from the perspective of those most closely associated with it.

The timing of this entry plan was purposely designed to overlap with the beginning of our strategic planning process. This allowed me to remain systematically focused on assessing the needs of our schools while also creating lasting relationships that serve as a foundation for collective planning and decision-making. Currently, we are gathering and analyzing data for the strategic planning process. The information garnered from this exercise will contribute to our strategic planning as both enter the action planning phase. Phase 3 of this plan will be encompassed by the strategic planning teams, to ensure that the map forward is a collective effort and not the whim of one person.

Design and Implementation of the Entry Plan

The Superintendent's Entry Plan was divided into three distinct phases:



Phase 1 - Listening and Learning (June - December)

During the months of June through December, I engaged in a series of activities designed to provide me with the opportunity to learn about Uxbridge Public Schools through the eyes and perceptions from varied groups of people. The following is a summary of those activities:

Entry Meetings (June - December)

I held structured individual and group conversations with 53 individuals. Each conversation was conducted with confidentiality, yielding emerging themes and trends for reporting purposes only. I am grateful to the participants for their time, candor, and interest in the success of Uxbridge Public Schools. It is important to note, that I have had hundreds of “unofficial” (as far as this entry plan) conversations with others throughout my time at schools, events, restaurants, meetings, etc. I am always pleased by the eagerness in which people are willing to speak about the schools.

School Visits (June)

Prior to my July 1 start, I spent one full day in each of the four Uxbridge Schools during the month of June in order for me to meet students and staff before they left for the summer.

Parent Communication Survey (June)

Learning that district communication was of concern to many people prior to my arrival, I developed an electronic survey that was sent to parents to gather information regarding the most effective and efficient ways to communicate with them at the school and district levels. The 190 responses provided me with some immediate areas on which to focus during my initial months in Uxbridge.

Uxbridge Tours (July-August)

I had the pleasure of touring my new community with three individual stakeholders who were born and raised in Uxbridge. Each one volunteered their time to drive me around in order for me to become familiar with the area, as well as and more importantly, to gain access to their unique perspective to the past, present, and future of Uxbridge. My sincere thanks to: Peter Emerick, Uxbridge Historical Commission; Dan Deveau, School Resource Officer; and Chris Whitten Real Estate Agent for three informational, diverse, and enjoyable experiences.

Document Review (July-December)

In my entry plan I identified a number of documents that I would review during my first few months to identify patterns and trends related to student performance, district policies and procedures, as well as current initiatives and priorities. Reading the documents for background information was helpful for me to see a broad perspective of the district and how it operates. However, there is no substitute for diving in and out of these documents, as well as many others, through the course of my daily work. For example, developing the budget, setting the district calendar, evaluating staff, calling snow days, and preparing for town meetings have allowed me to develop a more intimate knowledge of school committee policy, labor and individual contracts, communication strategies and technologies, curriculum guides, the town charter, budget documents, etc.

Superintendent Chats (August-December)

In addition to scheduled conversations, I held four informal chats with community members to discuss the Uxbridge Public Schools. With no set agenda, I was really able to talk with people, ask and answer each other's questions, and more importantly hear their praise and/or concerns about our schools and their suggestions. My sincere thanks to the Uxbridge Public Library, Bert's Diner, the Senior Center, and Jumbo Donuts for allowing me to host these events at their locations.

I have also had the pleasure of talking with groups of people through the Strategic Planning and Taft Principal Search Focus groups, as well as, participation in other school and community meetings and events.

School-Based Residencies (September-October)

I conducted an intensive, week-long residency in each of our three schools that provided me with a first-hand understanding of teaching and learning in our classrooms, the conditions of our facilities, and day-to-day operations. It also allowed me to connect with students, families, staff, and administrators. Making those personal connections at the beginning of my tenure has helped me to start building trust with people which, in turn, helps me to understand how I can better serve them. I am grateful to the staff, students, administration, and parents at each school who made me feel, and still make me feel very welcome. Residency Weeks: UHS, September 10th; Taft, September 24th; Whitin, October 15th.

Phase 2 - Analyzing and Sharing (January - February)

This entry plan cannot come close to covering all that I have learned about us as a district and community, but it attempts to synthesize what I believe to be the district's most telling and compelling characteristics. Upon reviewing the information that I have gathered formally and informally from my first seven months in Uxbridge there are themes, trends, and patterns that have emerged. I intend to incorporate these findings into our Strategic Planning Process as one more perspective to help us collectively examine our beliefs, assumptions, and values in order to reflect on our internal practices and functions.

The findings are divided into four main areas: **Leadership; Curriculum and Instruction; Parent and Community Relationships; and District Resources.** In each area, I summarize my thoughts on relative strengths and weaknesses based on activities of this plan and through my own experiences. I then provide an overview of what I believe next steps should/could be for each of the four areas. Though some have already been implemented, most of the next steps will be information for the strategic planning committee.

It is quite clear that our schools are filled with hard-working adults at all levels and all departments who greatly care about our children and are committed to making sure that they are educated. At the same time, it is also clear that there is much work to be done. The work of this entry plan has allowed me to begin taking steps that will enable us to build a shared understanding of not only how education ought to be implemented, but also how to position our district to ensure that we continue to learn and grow with the changing demands of the world. It is my belief, that the people who live, work and learn in Uxbridge have a renewed sense of optimism, are eager for a fresh start, and are ready to begin the work of setting a new direction for our schools.

LEADERSHIP

Major Findings:

Lack of trust and leadership transitions were brought up numerous times with regard to school, district, and town leadership throughout my entry plan process. Behind facilities, it was the number one answer of people I met to the question, "What are the key issues facing our school system?" It came up frequently in my chats, residencies, and other interactions across town as well.

From my understanding, it seems to be an environmental issue where competing, rather than collaborative, interests have toxified the atmosphere, thereby killing trust before it can grow. This has led to a zero-sum

power perspective, meaning that the mindset has typically resulted in a pervasive mentality of “if you have more power, then I must have less power,” as well as the perpetuation of defensiveness and self-preservation. As shared with me, this has resulted in continuous us-versus-them scenarios where there are no winners, i.e. Town v. Schools, Boards v. Boards, Schools v. Schools, Departments v. Departments, etc.

I noticed this on my site visits in June. The district seemed disjointed and, with the closing of the McCloskey Middle School, people were feeling misplaced. Through the evolution of the district over the past few years, each school and each department has grown and developed individually and were unintentionally cut off from each other. I addressed this at our opening day assembly for all staff and referred to them as their own islands. For some, this island arrangement seemed to work. They were self-sustaining and, when they needed to, they made strong alliances to secure what they needed for their students. For other islands, the isolation hurt their ability to provide for their community. Unfortunately, this isolation perpetuated misconceptions of what was happening in the other schools, which lead to some disdain and ultimately distrust of each other. From the outside looking in, it appeared to be a system of schools and not a school system.

Central office, as its own entity, has had a reputation of being set in its ways and not as responsive as some would like. Some stakeholders perceived central office as untouchable and not working and communicating well with others. There appears to have been a lack of information, innovation and flexibility in the past, and upon entering the district, I can see how that would be construed. I can see how a small staff, each holding parts of several roles and departments, without the initiative or directive to reflect on its practices, may become entrenched in its practice. Reviewing district systems, expectations, practices, and responsibilities will help central office operate more as a service for our schools, departments and families.

Outside of the schools, the focus of this mistrust, as is often the case in municipalities, is in the area of finance. Where dollars are limited, each department is advocating for its share. In the absence of a collaborative environment where people assume positive intent, reach out to the appropriate staff for clarification, and follow established processes, rumors and assumptions are used to cast a pall over the targeted person, school or department. The goal appears to be not about students or citizens, but more around resources, power, and personal winning. I have seen first hand how this scenario has taken place and I have heard dozens of other examples from members of our community.

This type of environment takes its toll on the leadership of a school district, as it has on ours. Instead of dealing from a position of advocacy and aspiration, our district has found itself continuously defending what has already transpired and, thus, its time and ability to think beyond the status quo is limited. In an environment where people are continuously questioned around everything they do, the ability to assume positive intent and faith in their teammates is compromised resulting in people stepping over boundaries and their roles.

Turnover in leadership is a predictable result of such an environment and is concerning to many of our employees and parents. For example, of the seven school committee members who hired me under a year ago, only four remain. Currently, the seven-person committee is not at full capacity due to the resignation of a member last June and the unwillingness for anyone in town to step forward. Member turnover is a recurring issue for the committee, as evidenced by 16 different members serving over the past 5 years. The political climate in Uxbridge is such that committee participation is less attractive, as evidenced by uncontested races and the resignation of several committee members before the end of their term.

In the last five years, the Uxbridge Public Schools has had two superintendents, four curriculum directors, two business managers, two directors of pupil services, two high school principals, two middle school principals, three intermediate/elementary school principals, two food service directors, and three facility directors. This level of turnover in leadership has brought inconsistency to all areas of our school district and hampered our ability to meet the needs of our staff and students. It ensures that the bringing together of a district is continuously compromised.

From the direct instruction in the classroom to the academic and emotional supports that are needed, to the management and organization of schools, to hiring, training, and evaluating staff, to working with local agencies, to the changing standards, laws, and regulations, to understanding the evolution of cultural norms, rapid technological advances, and family dynamics, developing a system that supports the educating children is a richly complex process. UPS is hamstrung, at times, by the changes in technical tasks that get in the way of addressing adaptive problems. For example, addressing the adaptive problem of digital literacy at the lower grades was delayed by the lack of internet access. Developing emergency response protocols has been more difficult due to the conditions of the facilities. Generating a larger pool of qualified candidates has been hampered by the underutilization of resources. I believe many of these technical or systemic tasks are caused by inconsistency in the follow-through due to the continuous changes in personnel.

Despite the context described above, there is a lot to be optimistic about with regard to our current leadership. The Uxbridge School Committee is a group of six individual citizens committed to the success of our district and are ready and eager to lead our district. The blend of new and experienced members provides a varied perspective needed when shaping policy and budget for a 1700 student school district. Their ability and willingness to work with each other and the administration provides the framework for building on the positive steps already taken this year.

The school and district administration is a dedicated group of professionals starting to think strategically inside and outside of their area of responsibility. We are dedicated to challenging our own and collective assumptions around how we “do” education here in Uxbridge and are learning from current research and each other in a true professional learning community. We are developing technical systems that are built around positions and not people, have clear expectations and accountability, and have a built in cycle of review. All of this is being fostered by a shared sense of purpose, relationship building, and being structured to work collaboratively and interdependently.

Next Steps:

As this leadership work is being done, it needs to be communicated internally and externally. I repeatedly heard that communication and transparency is what is needed to gain back the trust of the school district and is what is most desired of me as superintendent of schools. To that end, the following are included in our next steps:

- Continue the strategic planning work of the district. By involving stakeholders from across our community, we will be better able to develop researched based strategies and actions that will align district, school, and educator goals, sharpen our focus on the allocation of resources, and drive student achievement under consideration of the values of our town. Having one team with a shared purpose helps to build understanding of others, build a shared capacity, and provides equity in service to

students. By overtly sharing these strategies and actions there will be reduced question around the district, thereby creating more trust.

- Continue the schedule of meetings developed this year to promote efficiency, shared understanding, problem solving, and professional and personal respect. Different meetings include school, district, and municipal leadership and vary in time frame including weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, and ad hoc.
- Continue the development and review of systems to enhance productivity, efficiency, and transparency and create a strong infrastructure that is lacking. Examples include the following processes: budget, capital planning, hiring, student and staff information, communication, publicity, scheduling, emergency response, transportation, special education identification, extended school year services, grants, staff training, professional development, student support systems, investigations.
- Continue to engage, both formally and informally, with the professional organizations for school committees (MASC) and superintendents (MASS), as well as other state and national resources for continuous opportunities to learn about best practices and reflect on our own practices.
- The Central Office Administration should conduct a review of the organization of Central Office Staffing and of workflow systems to ensure roles and responsibilities are aligned with the needs of the system. Steps should be taken to ensure that tools that are currently in the District's possession, such as iPass, Teachpoint, Atlas, and Schoolspring, are fully implemented throughout the system and that continuous training and accountability measures are in place to ensure implementation with fidelity.
- Continue to develop and refine communication strategies that result in a district communication plan. The school district needs to maintain ownership of its own narrative and can only do that by providing timely, accurate, and appropriate information that is made available to the community in a variety of modes with a consistency on which people can rely.
- Make Uxbridge Public Schools a destination district for educational leaders from school committee to central administration to school and department leadership.

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

Major Findings:

When asked to identify the strengths of the Uxbridge Public School District, overwhelmingly the dedication of the faculty and staff were mentioned. Having spent much time with our staff at all levels, I eagerly agree with this assertion. We have hard working staff who greatly care about their students and families. Inconsistency in direction and support has impeded them, and thus their students, from fully realizing their potential.

Though we are moving in the overall right direction academically, there are inequities between the schools as a result of the decentralized manner in which they have recently developed. These inequities are reflected in instructional practices, professional development, student opportunities, capacity building for staff, grants, technology, and facilities, to name a few.

Uxbridge High School, for example, has just completed its NEASC accreditation process and is awaiting its final report. There is much optimism with the progress that has been made in all seven NEASC standards. The opportunity to reflect on their practice has afforded them the chance to make significant changes in their curriculum, instruction, and assessments. Their successes have produced a desire for continuous reflection on practice in order to meet the needs of their students.

During my initial visit to UHS in June, 90% (by my estimation) of staff told me about the positive school culture that existed and how they have grown professionally while being there. This professional learning community has developed a model of distributive leadership where teachers are empowered to work together to find the best ways of not only meeting, but planning to meet the future needs of their students. This includes basing decisions on relevant data and the administration's willingness to engage staff in thinking beyond traditional practices. The results speak for themselves in terms of post-graduation placement, number of college courses successfully taken in high schools, internships, and connections to real world experiences. Being one of the first four schools in the state for an Innovative Pathway designation, UHS has become a leader across the Commonwealth in developing alternative pathways to post-secondary readiness.

Juxtaposed with UHS is the Taft Early Learning Center, where the culture is self-reportedly not optimal. This theme was abundantly evident during my residency, my staff and parent focus groups and online surveys related to the principal search, and subsequent times in the school. Where the high school could be described as having a growth mindset, the Taft, at times, demonstrates a fixed mindset, or the inability to collectively think beyond its own experiences. In fairness, the Taft has not had the opportunity to engage in a facilitated self-assessment transformative process. However, targeted professional development over the past two years has helped our hard working staff increase their capacity for instructing our students. The renewed focus on research and standards-based, rather than program-based, instruction will hasten their development in this area. Creating a culture of data-driven decision making, defining and implementing tiered-based instructional and behavioral supports, and developing meaningful avenues of shared leadership, will also greatly move the Taft to the next level.

The Whitin Intermediate has had the very difficult task of combining a middle school and an elementary school this year. The two buildings, McCloskey and Whitin, were very different with regard to leadership style, instructional philosophy, schedule, school culture, and community. While the staff and administration have done a tremendous job of successfully pulling off the physical and logistical aspects of this venture, there remains a lack of continuity in curriculum, instruction, and assessment. In my discussions with staff, this was predictable, given the previously isolated nature of the schools. This continuity is achievable over time, but only with a clear assessment of where they are now and an even more clear sense of direction in which they need to move. Like the Taft, the Whitin (and McCloskey) staff need support in focusing on identified good instructional practices, tiered instructional and behavioral supports, and a shared sense of leadership.

As we work on pulling the respective school communities together, staff in each school are gaining more insight into what is taking place at the other schools, thus reducing the us vs. them mentality. We have actually seen a growing impetus to engage in cross building discussions and connections. Capitalizing on the relationships between grade levels that were separated during last year's restructuring (8th grade linking Whitin to UHS and 3rd grade linking Whitin with Taft), was a good place for us to start. Overall, as a district, we need to facilitate an assessment and reflection on the way that we provide for all of our staff, students, and families at all three of our schools. The strategic planning process will be the catalyst in this endeavor.

Next Steps:

- Continue with the strategic planning process to engage in an assessment of where we are to inform our direction forward. By collectively identifying actions that we believe will lead to increased student achievement, we will develop goals, initiatives, practices, and trainings, many of which we are already engaged, that are made clear to everyone. The coordination of district, school, department, and educator goals will improve our efforts as a district to function more effectively and efficiently in the service of meeting our students' needs. Providing benchmarks for success in our efforts will also inform our decisions in allocating resources such as professional development, staffing, funding, programming, etc. and ensuring sustainability.
- Align curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments to the current content standards of the MA Curriculum Frameworks. A major emphasis needs to be on embedding the Digital and Literacy Standards throughout the curriculum. Provide opportunities for staff to engage in personalized professional development with colleagues both vertically and horizontally regarding these standards.
- Create and maintain a cycle of continuous improvement starting with defined and consistent expectations for high quality instructional practices and developing and implementing a system of assessing student learning and growth. Providing professional development for administrators on teacher-specific feedback and supports and professional development for teachers and teacher teams on using student data to adapt and improve instruction.
- Create and develop a consistent system to use data in identifying student-specific academic and non-academic needs and providing targeted interventions and monitoring progress in order for all students to learn and grow.
- Provide the opportunity for every student and staff member to develop and maintain a growth mindset that will enable us to creatively address internal and external inhibitors to our individual and collective growth.
- Schedule each building with an understanding of how time on learning impacts the instructional core.
- Design opportunities for teachers and administrators to collaboratively review district processes, including professional development and teacher evaluation, to ensure consistency and effectiveness
- Develop a sense of shared ownership and leadership for the success of all students. Consider models to further embed instructional leadership.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Major Findings:

The most common theme to come across almost every aspect of this plan and my daily working in Uxbridge is the need for consistent, clear, timely, and relevant communication from the school district, within the school district, and about the school district. Some of the answers and conversations regarding communication include: trust; financial support for the schools; students choosing to leave; politics; lack of buy-in from staff; and answer to the question around desired attributes of a superintendent.

Communication is the key to relationship building. Predictably, parents are connected to the school(s) that their children are currently attending. They receive school based information through teacher and principal newsletters, they participate in the PTOs, and they attend parent functions. Through my interactions with parents and staff, that seemed to be exceptionally true here. Parents and staff at the Taft for example, could tell me very little about the Whitin or UHS. There is a contextual sense of understanding, and thus relationships, without a broader understanding of the system as a whole.

My interactions with people who do not work nor have children in the district were, and continue to be, quite fascinating. There is a significant disconnect between the operation, goals, needs, successes, and requirements of the schools and the understanding and perception of people outside of it. If people are not communicated with then they will have difficulty understanding us and developing relationships with us. They will have difficulty supporting us as well. Communication is always a two-way street, and I believe the lack of it has perpetuated the situations identified under Leadership.

Recognizing the lack of consistent internal and external communication, I prioritized overall communication throughout the year. Internally, this has manifested itself in the development of meetings designed for collaboration, understanding, and appreciation as mentioned in the Leadership section. It also is seen the number of systems, processes, timelines, and handbooks being designed or revised over the course of the year.

Externally, I have been working with administration on improving one-way and two-way communication with their school communities either through newsletters, blogs, tidbits, surveys, or parent meetings. The exercises in this entry plan, as well as my participation in town department meetings and school events and meetings, has helped me to build relationships across the community. I have developed a local cable access show to highlight some of the positive work being done across the district. These efforts are always a work in progress, as relationships need to be sustained and the needs of the community and the means of communicating continuously change. One of my educator goals this year is the development of a communication plan and strategies that will serve as a framework of expectations and methods of communication with the community.

Prior to my official start to my new role, I received permission to send out a parent survey with regard to communication before school ended in June. I was pleased to get back 190 responses. In those responses were some very specific pieces of feedback on district and school communication strategies that I appreciate. However, the most significant singular issue that dominated the survey was the need for a new website. Hearing that clearly, we are in the process right now of opening our new website before the school year ends. The new site will be the tree trunk of information from which other methods of external communication will branch and serve as the consistent and predictable place to go for information regarding our schools. We are launching it this spring in order to receive feedback and make any necessary adjustments over the summer.

The relationships with other town departments in Uxbridge is a point of strength for our schools. We work and communicate consistently well with the fire and police departments. Our monthly district emergency response team meetings have always included members of both departments. This has resulted in critical professional dialogue in developing emergency procedures and dissecting specific events. My participation on the town safety committee with the Police and Fire Chiefs, DPW Director, and the Town Manager also serve as a way to provide for the safety of the people in our charge.

I connected the Economic Development Office earlier this year with our high school principal to discuss possible ways of leveraging our partnerships with the area manufacturing firms and our manufacturing innovative pathway. Recent connections with the Senior Center culminating in a special presentation for our seniors of The Wizard of Oz at the high school. Our students also provided lunch for our elderly neighbors.

Next Steps:

- Develop the UPS Communication Plan to set expectations and guidelines for communicating with our parent community and the community at large.
- Continue to develop community awareness of the district's strengths and successes. We should also continue to work with UCTV to reach a broader audience and use of Facebook, Twitter, and other means to share the stories of our district of our students and staff.
- Operationalize the new UPS Website and have it serve as reliable place that parents and community members check first for information about Uxbridge Public Schools
- Continue to refine documents such as student handbooks to serve as an accessible reference for families
- Ensure that we are fully utilizing tools such as iPass, SchoolSpring, and Blackboard ConnectEd to their fullest potential
- Be transparent with our District/School/Department goals
- Seek out additional ways to partner with community organizations and other town departments
- Develop a district-wide sense of customer service that is solution orientated and student focused

DISTRICT RESOURCES

Major Findings:

When discussing resources the conversation often starts with funding. Throughout the implementation of this entry plan, funding for the schools has been a consistent area of concern. Recent events such as a Proposition 2 ½ override attempt, reducing staff, and the closing of the McCloskey Middle School have had the school budget at the forefront of conversation. Combined with variables described under the Leadership section, including the continuous transition of leaders, there is a palpable sense of concern regarding the planning for or the spending of our financial resources.

Regardless of the dollar amount, school districts need to ensure that they are maximizing the most out of every dollar toward improving student achievement. Efforts such as negotiating vendor contracts, creating special education programming, and closing a school have been done recently to reduce costs and create efficiencies. Administratively we have been reviewing systems for accuracy and efficiency. Examining workflows such as hiring, grants, professional development, course reimbursement, purchase orders, data flow and state reporting, communication, reimbursements, and technology acquisition is something that we have begun this year and will continue every year. By tightening the flow of information and funds, we will be able to ensure that our spending and our state funding is accurate. Creating efficiencies may relieve staff of time that could be devoted to shoring up other practices in our district.

To that end, we also engaged in a more collaborative budgeting process this year where each school served as a cost center and directors worked closely with principals to identify needs, costs, and opportunities at each site, as well as, across the district. The Business Manager and I worked with each principal and director individually and collectively on multiple occasions provide clear expectations to thoughtfully push back on their proposals. These forced reflections resulted in a multiple and thorough review of each line item. Having aligned priorities for student improvement throughout the district and schools will support us even further in prioritizing our needs in all areas of our budget. As previously mentioned, better communication about our schools, strengths, services, and needs is essential in garnering support for our schools.

Facilities are a concrete resource that supports the environment in which our children engage the instructional core. The condition of our schools and the maintenance thereof is an ongoing topic throughout the district and the town. The realization of many is that there are a lot of needs to be addressed and that we should address them systematically knowing that it will be a long process. Throughout the year we have detailed the capital needs of our district and presented to the School Committee and the Capital Planning Committee a thorough, four-year Capital Improvement Plan. We have also identified the impact that deferred maintenance has had on our schools and how it will continue to hamper our ability to move forward. With the support of the School Committee, we are identifying root causes of issues and allocating funds to address some of those needs.

Ours is a service industry and our greatest resource is our professional and support staff. As mentioned earlier, they are a caring and hard-working group who are dedicated to meeting the needs of our children. We need to ensure that we engage them in our planning and provide them with the training, the time, the technology, and the support they need to be successful. Our staff has been resourceful in identifying and pursuing both entitlement and competitive grants to support our strategic outcomes. They have also developed excellent relationships with other districts in the Blackstone Valley to pool resources to provide for the needs of our staff and students. Continuing these trends will help us help our staff.

Next Steps:

- Continue to examine district's systems and practices to ensure operational efficiencies
- Continue to provide training for all staff in their areas of responsibility, as well as, cross-training in related areas
- Continue to develop and enhance relationships with other boards and departments in town, community partners, and state agencies
- Continue to refine the budgeting processes for transparency and communication to restore trust of all stakeholders.
- Create and/or revise operational procedures and manuals
- Provide updates regarding our facilities to the community and our efforts to maintain/improve/protect them

Phase 3 - Planning (March - June)

The third phase of this plan will be to filter the synthesized data collected from stakeholders and documents in Phase 2 into the existing strategic planning process.