Wednesday, November 4, 2015

Dear School Board Members, Staff and Community:

June 12, 2015 I was officially sworn in as Superintendent for the School District of Palm Beach County. Each and every day my work is driven by my commitment to ensure all children have equitable opportunities to learn, achieve and follow their dreams.

My first priority has been to listen and learn from all of the stakeholders, who have valuable information and experiences to share. My goal, as outlined in my 90-Day Entry Plan, was to acquire the information and knowledge needed to serve as the foundation on which to create a strategic plan. That plan will drive the District over the next five years and will build upon the many successes the District has enjoyed, as well as identify opportunities for improvement. In addition, it will serve as a shared vision for the future of our students and their families, our employees, and our community.

I am pleased to report that the 90-Day Entry Plan produced the strategic themes and outcomes that it was designed to achieve. Through directly engaging over 10,000 stakeholders, and an additional 8,000 who shared their thoughts via an online survey, the following strategic themes have surfaced:

- Effective and relevant instruction to meet the needs of all students
- Positive and supportive school climate
- Talent development
- High performance culture

Additionally, the following priorities have emerged:

- Increase reading proficiency by 3rd grade
- Ensure high school readiness
- Increase the high school graduation rate
- Foster post-graduate success

These priorities will be the long-term outcomes of our five-year strategic plan. The School Board will define success as they establish the measurable goal attached to each outcome. Staff will develop the strategic plan initiatives that will achieve the identified goals. Ensuring the plan’s success will require that I consider the following:

- District’s structure
- Allocation of human and financial resources
- Quarterly measurement (scorecards) results
- Detailed project management tasks, timeline and budgets
- Aligning my evaluation to the strategic plan goals

Within the 90-Day Entry Plan Findings report you will find an account for each item that was identified in my original entry plan.

This truly is our time to make a difference as we are currently standing together at a crossroads—we can either choose to continue with the status-quo or move in a direction that allows us to not only succeed but excel. I am asking you to join me on a path that allows us to make great strides by building on our current successes and forging new paths through innovative thinking and actions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert M. Avossa, Superintendent
Organization of Report Findings

The key findings from this Entry Plan are presented in five categories. Each category demonstrates the progression made from Pre-Entry to Entry to expedite the Superintendent’s abilities to address numerous challenges while expanding on the strengths and successes, as an organization. Key findings are presented as a result of reviewing both external input and internal analyses.
Categories

I.  Governance Team: School Board of Palm Beach County School District

II. Organizational Capacity and Alignment: Executive Staff

III. Student Achievement

IV. Engagement and Communications

V. Operation and Finance
Introduction

Since he was officially sworn in as Superintendent for the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC) on June 12, 2015, Superintendent Avossa engaged in a deliberate process of listening, inquiring, and analyzing. The goal was to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the District, its current performance, and critical issues. This understanding helped shape the formation of a strategic plan that will drive SDPBC for the next five years.

Purpose

The purpose of this comprehensive entry plan was to assist in developing an informed approach to the work ahead that honors teachers, principals, students, families, staff, and community stakeholders. This understanding includes a deepened knowledge of the current state and needed future state of the School District of Palm Beach County. Superintendent Avossa plans to use these report findings, along with his recommendations, to propel the work in shaping a strategic plan that will address future needs and deliver on the education system and public school experience that Palm Beach County deserves.

90-Day Entry Process

Palm Beach County is a dynamic community where its people are proud of their students’ accomplishments and sincerely care about the quality of public education. Superintendent Avossa learned this first hand after engaging multiple groups in meaningful conversations. Stakeholder input totaling 10,000 interactions with individuals over 34 public meetings with businesses and civic groups, and over 8,000 responses to an online survey. Dr. Avossa spent an extensive amount of time with the governance team and executive staff to assess what is working well and identify areas of improvement. This included a thorough analysis of the current state of teaching and learning as demonstrated by student achievement and performance gaps. Finally, he commenced a review of organizational practices to affirm his findings and observations from both the “listening and learning” activities and a review of policies and practices.
Goals

The following were the overarching goals throughout his 90-day entry process:

1. To ensure an effective, efficient, and orderly transition of leadership, keeping the focus on increased student achievement for all children.

2. To develop a trusting, productive, collaborative relationship with the School Board.

3. To create opportunities for himself to listen broadly and deeply to a multitude of stakeholders, and gain a comprehensive understanding of all key aspects of the SDPBC, including the District culture, as well as teacher morale.

4. To proactively ensure that all voices (not just those who traditionally avail themselves to collaboration with the school system) are heard and engaged in the process of continuous improvement.

5. To identify and execute activities that must happen immediately to ensure an outstanding beginning to the school year.

6. To build excitement and momentum for SDPBC’s vision, mission, and future strategic plan, while also establishing the commitment to engage in needed change to ensure a system of continuous improvement.
I. Governance Team: School Board of the School District of Palm Beach County

In order to ensure that the District has an intense focus on meeting the needs of all children, the Board and Superintendent must develop a trusting, positive, collaborative, team-oriented relationship. These relationships must be established with each individual Board Member and the Board, as a whole. During the Entry Plan phase, Superintendent Avossa worked with the Board to discuss issues and matters of governance, management, core values, and beliefs. In addition, he approached the structures of their working relationship, and considered reform issues and methods to the work (Theory of Action).

Key Findings:

1. There is a clear set of beliefs and profound commitment to improving student achievement for all students.
2. The School Board shared clear expectations with the community prior to hiring a superintendent and nurtured input on the selection and hiring process.
3. The School Board has confirmed top priority issues and matters of governance, management, core values and beliefs critical for moving forward.
4. The working relationship of the School Board and Superintendent is ready to evolve into considering issues-reform and a shared approach to the Theory of Action for change.
5. Productive and proactive communication has been established. Staff is moving the District forward through the development of a five-year strategic plan.
6. Protocols are in place for the development of agendas with respect to Board workshops and Board meetings.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Entry</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Engage in one-on-one meetings with Board members to deepen relationships and broaden perspectives.</td>
<td>✓ Conduct one-on-one meetings with all Board members to continue to build positive, productive relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Ask key District employees to provide important information about the District and their work.</td>
<td>✓ Meet with all union leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Present the 90-day Entry Plan to the School Board to gain their input.</td>
<td>✓ Hold a Board retreat to discuss communication protocols, roles and responsibilities, norms of behavior and interaction, expectations for first year, and agenda setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Meet with all Board members to continue to build positive, productive relationships.</td>
<td>✓ Meet with the Board Chairman and Board committee chairs to determine how they work in partnership with Dr. Avossa and senior staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Conduct a performance evaluation process and format with indicators of success to evaluate Dr. Avossa for year one.</td>
<td>✓ Collaborate on a performance evaluation process and format with indicators of success to evaluate Dr. Avossa for year one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Determine the schedule and proposed agendas for Board meetings.</td>
<td>✓ Collaborate on the next Board retreat to focus on shared values, initiate reflections on organizational structure, and areas of improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Collaborate on the next Board retreat to focus on shared values, initiate reflections on organizational structure, and areas of improvement.</td>
<td>✓ Establish a Board Management Oversight Process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Establish regular meeting times with the Board Chairman for reviewing and constructing agendas (what’s working and what the Board would like to change).</td>
<td>✓ Review and/or develop a Constituency Services Process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Establish a Board Management Oversight Process.</td>
<td>✓ Review and/or develop a Constituency Services Process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. Organizational Capacity and Alignment: Executive Staff

It was critical that Superintendent Avossa obtain a deep understanding of how the organization was currently operating – what’s working well and where there were opportunities for improvement. The executive team’s primary role was to support the key functions of the District. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to ensure that the District operates as a highly effective cross-functional team, dedicated to a positive, professional culture focused on service and improving morale. The focus remains on meeting the needs of all students.

Key Findings:

1. Constituents are concerned about morale, and there are significant cultural issues that must be addressed if cross-functioning teams are to maximize their expertise and work in unison toward a common goal.
2. Central office staff presented their current state of operations and ability to measure the value of their impact. A hiring freeze was instituted until the strategic plan is approved to equip teams with the needed direction and focus to eliminate unneeded areas. The plan will drive how the District is structured and where to invest in human resources.
3. Key District functions are operational with pockets of excellence; yet, there are identified areas needing improvement.
4. The not-for-profit agency, Education Resources Strategies (ERS), will undertake a 10-month study to analyze how the system is currently investing time, money, and resources compared to other large districts across Florida and the United States. The study will identify opportunities for resource optimization, greater efficiencies, and mission alignment.
5. A Deputy Superintendent was hired and tasked with establishing the foundation for systems development to improve planning, collaboration, oversight, and to ensure a cohesive and effective executive team.
6. Superintendent Avossa established working protocols on how to manage executive staff and department heads. In addition, he established an open and deliberate approach with the focus being on complete transparency.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Entry</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two Pre Entry Activities / 100% Completed; 15 Entry Activities / 100% Completed</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Review the current District office structure to determine its alignment on student achievement and maximizing operational efficiency.</td>
<td>✓ Conduct a retreat with senior staff to: review department strategic plans, improvement plans, most recent achievement data, balanced scorecards or metric documents, review current or anticipated vacancies in the District office or with school leadership, and discuss leadership team structures, protocols, norms, and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Conduct one-on-one interviews and review resumes and briefing papers with all direct reports and senior staff.</td>
<td>✓ Determine how communication and decision-making occurs with executive team and how it might need to improve. Reestablish meeting norms and protocols designed to focus on increased efficiency and alignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Conduct one-on-one interviews with all department heads in District office, focusing on alignment and execution of key strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Conduct department reviews to ensure there is alignment and coherence within the current organizational structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Initiate plans to establish key metrics and customer service goals for each department to ensure the performance of District office can be measured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Meet with Area Superintendents to assess current data and performance of all schools under their supervision, and review their plans for making improvements – particularly for the lowest performing schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Understand the role of District Office vs. Area Offices in terms of supporting students and their performance, and what strategies are in place for those students who are not meeting expectations – are they receiving appropriate and targeted interventions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Identify the specific strategies that are in place to increase access and equity in our most advanced classes (e.g., Honors, Advanced Placement).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Determine the specific methods or initiatives that are in place to increase overall SAT scores, National Merit Scholars, and AP/STEM schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Determine how students are identified as Gifted, Special Education, and English Language Learners and what strategies have been identified to improve outcomes for these students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Determine how much autonomy and authority principals have in the current organizational structure and establish how much access and opportunity they have in decision-making at the District office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Plan a second retreat with senior staff to review accountability plans for all functional units, clarify process and progress toward improvement with strategic plan and District improvement plan, review current and future budget issues, and current organizational structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Ensure all necessary plans and preparations are in place for an outstanding opening of school; establish protocols for assessing effectiveness of the opening of schools (e.g., scheduling, transportation, facility preparedness, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Review our agreement with the Department of Justice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Review and/or develop succession planning and leadership development plans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Student Achievement

It is the responsibility of every employee to ensure all students graduate from the District ready for college and/or a career. To ensure instruction is occurring at high levels, teachers must have a rigorous K-12 instructional curriculum, pacing guides, unit plans, and systems designed to facilitate optimal learning opportunities. They need tools to monitor student progress, as well as research-based interventions to deploy when the students are not successful. The focus of all discussions will be to ensure that all decisions are made using the following guiding questions:

1. Is it good for children?
2. Is it research-based?
3. Is it fiscally sound?

Key Findings:

1. Overall, the District is performing well compared to other large districts in Florida, yet clear and demonstrable achievement gaps exist among subgroups, particularly in comparison to benchmark school systems. This is deeply concerning and it is incumbent upon the entire system to ensure significant changes are made through a comprehensive commitment to the growth and success of every child. Equity and access are paramount. If the goal is to be a “World-Class” system for all of our students, District leadership must address these gaps in a monumental and sustainable way.

2. The District must capitalize on the strengths found within Choice. Families want more options and personalized learning experiences. With over 300 Choice and Career options, schools are poised to maximize this strength, and do so with a comprehensive approach to offer pathways for all students. These programs are highly sought after by students and families and should be increased and expanded. A need exists to further explore partnerships and different approaches to technical and trade programs as there are tremendous career opportunities for individuals with such training.

3. Parents, students, and teachers are considerably concerned about testing and test implications. There must be a responsible approach to testing; and, working together as a community, it is possible to overcome challenges imposed by policy makers beyond the borders of Palm Beach County.

4. Both instructional and non-instructional staff report that they want clear and more frequent feedback to focus their professional growth and improve practice.

5. There is a lack of a common system-wide understanding of what high quality instruction looks like and how schools can implement it. Collaborative instructional systems, such as Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and Learning Team Meetings (LTM), must be clarified and maximized to deliver an effective use of curriculum and instruction to elevate teaching and learning.

6. Structural precision is needed to support schools, specifically how the Central Office, Area, and Transformation Teams are organized to reduce duplicative services, and execute their specific functional roles.

7. The currently untapped value of teacher-leaders must be harnessed. The perspectives of teachers must be valued and contribute to a process of continuous improvement for the organization. It is imperative that the talent that exists within the system is advanced and top performing instructional leaders are recognized in ways that are meaningful.
8. Compelling work in Single School Culture© remains present and elements of this prolific body of knowledge will support the work going forward. It is critical that we ensure all students feel safe at school. The School District of Palm Beach County will regain its strength in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) through effective classroom instruction and engaging students and families in positive experiences both on and off school campuses.

9. Exceptional Student Education (ESE) continues to evolve by incorporating new teaching methods and concepts that create a rich learning experience for students regardless of their backgrounds and abilities. Too often fiscal concerns take center stage; but, working with parents and educators, administrators, and policymakers, a wide variety of programs to prepare our children for life will be supported and sustained.

10. When compared to similar urban districts, English Language Learners (ELL) in Palm Beach County are not reaching high levels of proficiency. A drastically different and innovative approach is imperative in order to accelerate interventions that support the immediate needs of this growing student population, while recognizing their cultural and linguistic characteristics as assets for success.

11. There is great talent to be found in the 22,000 plus employees of the District that includes teachers, principals, staff members, and executives. However, the District’s current structure of human capital is not maximizing the talent of staff for the benefit of the students and their learning. Upon completion of the strategic plan, staff will create a structure that best aligns human capital with the District’s priorities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Entry</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two Pre Entry Activities / 100% Completed; 14 Entry Activities / 100% Completed</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ✓ Analyze patterns in student achievement data and achievement gaps in order to begin assessing the current state of teaching and learning.
- ✓ Assess District's expectations for all students' academic success and commitment to meeting the needs of all its diverse learners.

- ✓ Review and/or evaluate the current assessment practices with the curriculum and instructional staff. Additionally, review the status of infrastructure that handles the demands of online assessments.
- ✓ Evaluate what processes are in place to provide the following services: Guidance Counseling, Mental Health, Physiological, and Social Services.
- ✓ Meet with District's instructional leadership team to review disaggregated achievement data, instructional program alignment and current goals, and priority action areas for the District.
- ✓ Identify chronically under-performing schools and initiate root-cause analysis for why they are not meeting the needs of students; determine a course of corrective action.
- ✓ Determine how comprehensive and research-based the current curriculum is, and to what degree it is aligned among schools that have high student mobility; assess the fidelity with which the curriculum is used throughout SDPBC.
- ✓ Review the teacher evaluation system.
- ✓ Review all other employee evaluation systems.
- ✓ Review and engage in the academic disparity study that the District has underway.
- ✓ Conduct a review of curriculum and programs, especially with student populations currently not meeting with success, such as English Language Learners, Special Education Students, and other subgroups.
- ✓ Assess current professional development efforts and capacity for meeting the training needs of principals, teachers, and central District staff; determine the degree to which it is job-embedded, differentiated, and student-achievement directed; do a "deep dive" in determining how much of the budget is devoted to professional development and how and if it is being assessed.
- ✓ Evaluate SDPBC efforts toward improving graduation rates for all students with special focus on African American, Hispanic, and children living in poverty.
- ✓ Determine what monitoring methods are used in SDPBC to ensure all students are performing at grade level and are receiving appropriate, targeted interventions (e.g., are there risk factor scorecards?)
- ✓ Review and/or develop succession planning and leadership development plans.
- ✓ Review the procedures to report suspected child abuse.
IV. Engagement and Communications

Public schools require a deep commitment from the entire community to be successful. It is critical that Superintendent Avossa understands the culture, history, and expectations of the entire community. Working with staff, he was proactive and deliberate in reaching out to all stakeholders - particularly those who are traditionally under-represented in public engagement - to ensure their voices were included and valued. There was a focus on establishing openness and transparency in all communication systems and protocols used to communicate both internally and externally.

Key Findings:

1. The people of Palm Beach County are passionate about public education and are seeking change that inspires greatness for children, families, and the health of the community. An unprecedented number of 18,000 points of engagement were organized and delivered through 34 community forums, meetings with over 10,000 individuals, and feedback from 8,000 responses to an online survey. This unprecedented level of engagement served to drive the formation of the five year strategic plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Themes</th>
<th>Outcome Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Effective and relevant instruction to meet the needs of all students.</td>
<td>1. Increase reading proficiency by 3rd grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Positive and supportive school climate.</td>
<td>2. Improve high school readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Talent development.</td>
<td>3. Increase the high school graduation rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. High performance culture.</td>
<td>4. Foster post-graduate success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Transparency and frequent communication is the centerpiece of a successful relationship between schools and families. Moving forward, the District will place a high value on reaching out to segments of the population that have been traditionally disenfranchised from our schools. To honor this principle, meetings were held with specific groups, such as the Haitian-American and Guatemalan-Maya populations. In many of these instances the sessions were conducted in native languages to reduce any barriers to understanding.

3. The community has defined “World-Class” as providing a higher standard of education with excellence and equity to empower each student to reach his/her highest potential. This definition is our new standard for performance. We will streamline and formalize systems of communication to ensure meaningful two-way feedback that facilitates a profound knowledge of what families need from our schools to deliver on being “World-Class”.

4. All 186 school principals were able to meet and share concerns and feedback in small groups. During his visits to 42 schools, it became clear that the schools embrace families and want to improve their relationship with each child’s first teacher, the teacher found at home.

5. An intentional effort was made to establish relationships with media professionals through media tours, 16 press conferences, and an intense effort to include all elements of communication outlets (e.g., Telemundo, Univision, Mundo-Fox, Clear Channel 980 Haiti Amerique Internationale, and Radio 1340 Nouvelle Lumiere). The focus of this effort is to create transparency between the School District and the community.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Entry</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three Pre Entry Activities / 100% Completed; Five Entry Activities / 88% Completed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Call key leaders and introduce myself and begin to build relationships.</td>
<td>✓ Reach out to a multitude of critical stakeholders and establish routine meetings, communication protocols and reciprocal dialogues, focusing on increasing student achievement and continuous improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Send letters to teachers, staff, and other key constituents.</td>
<td>✓ Initiate open, honest, and transparent dialogues with the goal of strengthening and improving strategic partnerships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Meet with key leaders in consultation with the School Board members.</td>
<td>✓ Conduct visits to 50 schools (10 in each of the five geographic areas) meeting with principals, teachers, support staff, and parent volunteers about where the District is as a District and where it should be in order to meet the needs of all children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Along with Board Members and senior staff, host multiple &quot;town hall&quot; meetings using the Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis model (or other protocols) to gather community input and initiate continuous dialogues about student achievement and improvement.</td>
<td>✓ Meet with leaders of local media outlets, editorial boards, and education reporters—including ethnic and business press.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Superintendent visited 42 of the intended 50 schools. The issues related to School Transportation Services impacted priorities and occupied a portion of these 90 days, impeding the original goal of 50 school visits. However, all 186 school principals had the opportunity to participate in small group input and focus sessions. A priority on school visits will continue.
V. Operation and Finance

In order to meet the needs of all students in the SDPBC, it is critical that Operations and Finance are "World-Class" as well. Understanding the current strengths, strategies, and opportunities for improvement, in light of current budget challenges, will be a critical focus. Each division will be reviewed to determine how they maximize support and services to schools using the continuous improvement model.

Key Findings:

1. Effective project management discipline is critical with the roll out of new initiatives. Dedicated project management must become the driving force to deliver successfully on projects and ensure they stay strong. Staff has not been properly trained in project management processes. Well-defined and attainable project goals and objectives, process mapping, solid execution, performance management and evaluation, and measures to determine optimization are necessary to develop a high performance culture.

2. The legacy student information system (TERMS) is functional, but antiquated, and a project is underway to replace this system with current technology as approved by the Board prior to the arrival of the Superintendent. The Student Information System (SIS) is of the utmost importance to the core business function and impacts all students and parents. A focus will be placed on ensuring this project is managed and communicated properly including the oversight of parallel system testing, change management, and employee training.

3. The current funding mechanisms are inadequate and as a result deteriorating infrastructure is at a crisis level. The FY16 capital budget adopted by the School Board includes a line item to fund an external Facilities Condition Assessment. Given the tremendous capital demands facing our District, this independent assessment is a critical step in documenting the needs to the community and developing a long-term plan to finance and perform the identified capital improvements.

4. The District has commissioned two independent reviews focused on the Transportation Services Department. The independent investigation by the law firm of Haliczer, Pettis & Schwamm, P.A., concentrated on what led to the District’s transportation problems in the opening weeks of school, while a peer review by the Council of Great City Schools examined every aspect of School Transportation Services and provided recommendations for improvement.

5. The District has multiple systems and operations that are not optimized. However, the District does have effective data management systems that support the enterprise. For example, the Oracle (PeopleSoft) system provides a robust solution for human capital and financial management.

6. Once the five-year strategic plan is launched in early 2016, staff will structure operations and systems around the priorities outlined in the plan.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Entry</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Pre Entry Activities / 100% Completed; 12 Entry Activities / 100% Completed</td>
<td>✓ Review key District financial materials, budget, most recent audit, and grants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Conduct one-on-one meetings with direct reports on budget, operations, and human resources.</td>
<td>✓ Request briefing papers from all Directors/Division heads providing an overview of their current area of responsibility, major initiatives under way with projected timelines, and a review of significant or potential problems in each area of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Conduct one-on-one meetings with all office heads, ensuring each division has fidelity to its core function and has a student-focused agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Review employee contracts, salary schedules, and benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Review District’s financial projections, resource allocation, and budgeting processes; assess how District’s budget and budgeting process is aligned to support student achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Determine what should be centralized and what should be decentralized within the current organizational structure to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and support to schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Conduct one-on-one meetings with District attorneys to review any current legal proceedings or outstanding judgments against the District and to provide a briefing on state education code with particular attention to statutes currently impacting or likely to impact the District.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Review District’s safety, inclement weather, and crisis communication plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Conduct a review of the District’s Department of Communications and Engagement. Review the history, services, and outreach to entire community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Assess the degree to which all offices are cross-functional and begin to establish key metrics and customer service goals to ensure peak efficiency and support for student achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Examine the effectiveness of the SDPBC information-data management system, especially around student achievement, budget, and human resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Evaluate the type of technological tools and digital resources are available to teachers and students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Review and/or develop succession planning and leadership development plans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Conclusion

Based on the early research about the School District of Palm Beach County and the vast communities that it serves, Superintendent Avossa discovered people, families, networks, and community members who want to be part of a vision for a “World-Class” school system. In order to achieve this, staff must address the gaps in student achievement and operational development through bold and monumental means. As a result of this 90-day entry period and deliberate solicitations of stakeholder input, four dominant themes of focus have emerged:

1. Effective and relevant instruction to meet the needs of all students;
2. Positive and supportive school climate;
3. Talent development; and

Teams have been formed to address each of the themes above and are tasked with determining future initiatives and activities. Teams plan to consult with parents, teachers, and school-based administration as they outline what is necessary to achieve the Strategic Plan’s outcomes.

In addition, Education Research Strategies (ERS) has been engaged to perform an in-depth review of current utilization of resources (e.g., people, time, money). These areas will be compared to patterns within benchmark districts and best practices to identify opportunities to improve student achievement with existing resources. The project is underway and currently undergoing the ERS School System 20/20 diagnostic which assesses school system conditions, resource use, and student outcomes. The final phase of this 10-month project will help reallocate resources and engage stakeholders to carry out the Strategic Plan.

There are many challenges ahead, from improving the learning environment, to needed repairs, to outdated systems, and improved constituent satisfaction. To remain indifferent to these challenges is indefensible. This is the moment when the District and all segments of the community will collaborate toward greatness in building the “World-Class” school system Palm Beach County deserves.
Strategic Plan Outcomes

Recommended Long-term Outcomes of the Strategic Plan

- Increase reading proficiency by 3rd grade
  - Interim milestones: Kindergarten readiness, Early literacy

- Ensure high school readiness including academic achievement, behavior and engagement
  - Interim milestones: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies proficiency, Promotion

- Increase the high school graduation rate
  - Interim milestones: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies proficiency, Course pass rates

- Foster post-graduate success including high school scholars, dual-enrollment degrees and industry certifications, college enrollment and persistence, military enlistment
  - Interim milestones: AP/IB/AICE participation and pass rates, Dual enrollment participation and pass rates, Career course participation and pass rates, SAT and ACT scores

Strategic Plan Themes

- Effective and relevant instruction to meet the needs of all students
  - Includes concepts such as: curriculum alignment, real-world application, personalized learning, extended learning, technology integration, program and career choices

- Positive and supportive school climate
  - Includes concepts such as: student engagement, elimination of bullying, school safety, parent involvement, community support

- Talent development
  - Includes concepts such as: effective classroom teachers, effective leaders, employee engagement, professional growth

- High performance culture
  - Includes concepts such as: process improvement, program management, shared alignment and customer focus, resource optimization, sound governance, employee engagement
PALM BEACH COUNTY
SCHOOL BOARD

Chuck Shaw
Chairman
District 2
561-434-8038

Frank A. Barbieri, Jr. Esq.
Vice Chairman
District 5
561-434-7481

Mike Murgio
District 1
561-434-7481

Karen M. Brill
District 3
561-434-8038

Erica Whitfield
District 4
561-434-7481

Marcia Andrews
District 6
561-434-8139

Debra Robinson, M.D.
District 7
561-434-8139

Visit PalmBeachSchools.org