



# Superintendent's Entry Plan

The first 90 days in the Newton Community

Presented by  
**Duke Bradley, III**







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Dear Newton County Community,

Throughout my years of service in public education, I have been driven by the overriding belief that all children can achieve at high levels and deserve an education that places them on a trajectory to pursue their hopes, dreams, and aspirations.

As the new Superintendent of Newton County Schools, I will work to facilitate and steward the school system to reflect the excellence that all children deserve – working to fulfill the desires of the community and the Board of Education, and to align the work of the district around those interests. Fortunately, the Newton community is one that I have come to learn has a passion for its schools and for its young people which is why I am enlivened by this opportunity.

For all of my adult life, I have worked in service to children. While on that journey, I have also discovered that there is no more noble profession than education, no more honorable service than to that of children, and no better conditions to lead than with people who are willing to work in collaboration toward common goals. Furthermore, I am humbled by this Board's belief in my potential to lead this district and to build on its legacy. I am convinced that Newton County, historically known for its rich and fertile land, is also fertile ground for the preparation of young people, and so I offer an entry plan that reflects the initial steps that I will be taking as Superintendent pursuant to the Board of Education's expressed priorities.

The general goal of this plan is to provide a roadmap for a successful transition process – and you will note that a significant portion of what has been outlined in this plan involves listening and learning – but not for the sake of listening and learning alone, but to demonstrate the truly collaborative spirit that I believe the Superintendent must embody. The work of serving the needs of children cannot be done in isolation; the task is too great, and the stakes are too high.

I kindly invite your review of my offering. Through the engagement opportunities that I have outlined, I am confident that I will address the Board's priorities and will capture the voices of many while assessing the findings that are generated.

Yours in service,

*Duke Bradley, III*

## Thank you Newton County Board of Education,

A high performing school system begins with a high performing Board of Education. I am grateful for the leadership of the Newton County School System Board and look forward to working with you to advance the goals of our community.



## Newton County Board of Education

Trey Bailey, District 1

Eddie Johnson, District 2

Shakila Henderson-Baker, District 3  
Board Chair

Anderson Bailey, District 4

Abigail Coggin, District 5  
Vice-Chair



### Newton County Schools Vision

All students will be well-rounded and prepared for the future.

### Newton County Schools Mission

The mission of the Newton County School System is to provide educational excellence for all students.

### The Board's Beliefs

Students are our first priority; Our principals and teachers make the critical difference in student achievement; Respectful partnerships among students, staff, parents, and the community are integral to student success; All students and staff deserve a safe, positive, and supportive environment; Success is based on high expectations for our students, parents, and school system staff; and Lifelong learning is essential in a diverse and changing world.







# Guiding Beliefs

## ACHIEVEMENT

I believe that **all children can achieve at high levels** if they're given the right resources, the right supports, and placed in the care of a continuously improving adult.

## COLLABORATION

I believe in the power of collective effort and the unifying force of public education – where **extraordinary achievement is possible** when a community is organized and aligned to support and advance the aspirations of young people.

## EQUITY

I believe in the limitless possibilities of all people – children and adults alike; that **everyone holds value and potential** which must be identified and cultivated through the even distribution of opportunities and access.

## EXCELLENCE

I believe that work **must be performed with excellence** – especially when done on behalf of a community, and in service to children.

## JOY

I believe that hard **work should be performed with passion and joy** – and better results are produced when people are heard, seen, valued, and positioned to be meaningful contributors to consequential work.



# A plan with a purpose

The purpose of my plan is to present initial goals that correspond with a successful transition related to Newton County School System's identified priorities.

Additionally, the plan reflects a conscious effort to gather valuable perspective and insights that will allow for a more reliable assessment to be made about the district's strengths and opportunities for growth and improvement.

## Plan Goals:

The activities outlined within this plan will allow me to achieve 4 key goals:

1. Gain familiarity with the district related to standard operations, common procedures, and communications.
2. Gather valuable information about the district, the community, students and personnel.
3. Establish a strong district and community presence.
4. Identify critical challenges and barriers to addressing the Board's priorities.

## Plan Objectives:

1. To clearly communicate the steps that will be taken to ensure a successful transition into the Superintendency of the Newton County School System - organized around the themes of listening, learning, and engaging.
2. To articulate an initial action plan around learning more about the Board of Education's primary areas of interest specific to Academics, Culture, and Operations.





# Culture & Engagement

## BOE Priorities

- Internal Communication
- External/Internal Transparency

Pursuant to the vision of the Board of Education, Newton County Schools will be a district that prizes effective communication, both internal and external. Under my leadership we will aspire to implement a values-based communication strategy – informed by a commitment to accuracy, promptness, transparency and various other qualities that correspond with stakeholder needs. The actions below reflect a systematic approach to assess and enhance the district’s communication methods while addressing safety, value, voice, and retaliation prevention concerns. It sets the foundation for fostering a positive and inclusive educational environment.

## In the first 90 Days, the Executive Team and I will;

- Meet with the school board, key district administrators, and department heads to understand their priorities and concerns.
- Review existing communication policies, procedures, and practices.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the district’s communication methods.
- Identify key stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, support staff, and community members.
- Schedule meetings with representatives from each stakeholder group to gather their perspectives on communication within the district.
- Review safety protocols and procedures related to communication.
- Examine the effectiveness of emergency communication systems.
- Conduct safety drills or simulations to evaluate the communication response during crises.

## Conduct a General Assessment by;

- Analyzing district communication materials, such as newsletters, websites, and social media, to assess how they promote the district’s values and mission.
- Evaluating the alignment of communication efforts with the district’s educational goals and community expectations.

## Assess Stakeholder Voice through;

- Surveying staff, students, parents, and community members to gauge their satisfaction with the district’s communication methods.
- Assessing the transparency of communication, ensuring that voices are heard and concerns are addressed.
- Holding open forums or town hall meetings to encourage open dialogue.

## Assess Employee Experiences by;

- Reviewing the district’s policies and procedures for reporting and addressing grievances.
- Examining the mechanisms in place to foster feedback.
- Interviewing staff members to understand their perceptions.

## Enhance Communication by;

- Exploring improvements in communication methods, including website updates, social media enhancements, and newsletter redesigns.
- Refining, as necessary, communication channels for reporting concerns.

## Create Collaboration and Partnerships through;

- Forging partnerships with local law enforcement, emergency responders, and community organizations to enhance safety communication.

- Collaborating with neighboring school districts to share best practices in communication and safety.

## Monitor and Evaluate Communication Systems by;

- Evaluating current system for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of communication efforts.
- Regularly review data and feedback to measure progress and make necessary adjustments.

## Report Our Findings by;

- Preparing a comprehensive report summarizing the assessment findings, action plan, and progress made during the 90-day period. Present the report to the school board, administrators, stakeholders, and the community.



# Academics

## BOE Priorities

- Literacy
- Achievement Gaps
- Balanced Programmatic Access

The core business of Newton County Schools is educating children. Furthermore, an examination of students' literacy performance is not only foundational to ensuring academic success, it is essential. Additionally, the extent to which all students are positioned to meet their full potential, and subsequently access quality instructional programming, represents a crucial step towards improving educational outcomes. Below, I have provided a comprehensive list of activities that will be undertaken during the first 90 Days of my Administration to assess this priority area.

## In the first 90 Days, the Executive Team and I will;

- Meet with the school board, key district administrators, and department heads to gain clear understanding about their academic priorities, concerns.
- Review recent district reports and data on literacy rates, achievement gaps, and access to advanced programs.
- Schedule meetings with relevant staff to gain insights into the current state of literacy and advanced programs.

### Conduct a General Assessment by;

- Forming a working group dedicated to data analysis.
- Conducting a deep dive into existing data sources, identifying trends and disparities in literacy rates and program access.
- Collaborating with the Instructional Leadership Teams to gather additional qualitative and quantitative data where needed.

### Solicit Stakeholder Engagement through;

- Organizing meetings and focus groups with parents, students, and community members to gather input and understand their concerns.

### Assess Academic Access and Opportunities;

- Visit classrooms, talk with administrators, teachers, and instructional support personnel around systems and practices in place around student access to programming
- Review district and school-based practices (schedule analysis, course enrollment patterns, course and program equity across all schools, etc.)

### Assess Literacy Programs through;

- Reviews of curriculum materials and instructional strategies to assess their alignment with literacy goals.
- Examination of professional development opportunities for teachers related to literacy instruction.

### Assess Advanced Programs by;

- Evaluating the current selection and eligibility criteria for advanced programs.
- Assessing the availability of advanced placement courses and signature academic programs in each school.
- Identifying barriers to access and success in advanced programs.

### Review Policies and Resources through;

- Review of district policies related to literacy and advanced programs to ensure alignment with best practices.
- Assessment of the allocation of resources (e.g., funding, staffing) for supporting literacy initiatives and advanced programs.

### Document Our Findings by;

- Collaborating with teachers and district leaders to prioritize strategies for improving literacy and access to advanced programs.

### Report Our Findings and Engage the Community through;

- Developing a cadence of executive report-outs to update the school board and the community administrators on findings and the district's response to findings.
- Preparing a comprehensive final report summarizing the 90-day plan's outcomes, lessons learned, and future recommendations.





# Operations

## BOE Priorities

- Project Management Accountability
- Leadership and Structure
- Organizational Structure

As a large and complex school district, it is vitally important that the Newton County School System achieve operational excellence. In order to meet this objective, a premium must be placed on making certain that the appropriate resources (human and fiscal) are in place, and that investments made by the district are adequately aligned to stated priorities. Under my leadership, we will implement a collaborative process that explores the Board's areas of interest, which will involve consultations with the appropriate divisions – namely, human resources, operations, and finance, while also assessing the current organizational structure.

## In the first 90 Days, the Executive Team and I will;

- Meet with the school board, key district administrators, and department heads to more deeply understand their priorities regarding operations and other related matters.

### Address Project Management and Accountability (Tech, Curriculum, Construction, etc.) by;

- Consulting with related division heads to be briefed on ongoing construction projects, tech inventory, and curriculum materials.
- Consulting with the Chief Operations Officer to develop a comprehensive project management strategy for all construction projects, including timelines, budgets, and key milestones.
- Meeting with teachers, principals, instructional specialists, and district personnel to review curriculum materials and identify gaps or opportunities for improvement in alignment with the academic goals that are in place (e.g. The Newton County Schools Strategic Plan)

### Analyze Leadership and Structure by;

- Meeting with key stakeholders, including school board members, athletic directors, coaches, and parent groups to understand their perspectives and priorities regarding high school athletic facilities.
- Seeking input from student-athletes and their parents through surveys or focus groups to understand their needs and desires.
- Conducting surveys or interviews with Athletic Directors to gather feedback on their current responsibilities, challenges, and needs to ensure competitiveness.
- Reviewing best practices and benchmarks from other large school districts to understand how they structure their Athletic Director roles and departments.

- Identifying potential areas for improvement, including the need for additional staff, resources, or other essential changes.

### Seek Out Effective Leadership and Executive Leadership Team Structure through;

- Meetings with key stakeholders, including school board members, current members of the executive leadership team, and other relevant personnel to understand their needs from the Executive Leadership team.
- Evaluating the current leadership structure for opportunities to maximize direct supports for schools.
- Conduct meetings and organizational analysis to identify barriers to organizational efficiency and coherence.
- Reviewing existing organizational charts, job descriptions, and roles and responsibilities for the leadership team.
- Gathering data on the performance and accomplishments of the current leadership team, including key initiatives they have led and challenges they have faced.
- Identifying any immediate concerns or areas that may require attention within the leadership structure.
- Analyzing best practices and benchmark data from other school districts to understand how they structure their leadership and executive teams.

