



# LOCKPORT CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## INTRODUCTION: SUPERINTENDENT'S 100 DAY ENTRY PLAN

Mathis Calvin III, Ed. D.

March 15, 2023

Dear Lockport City School District Community,

Let me first start by sharing with all of you that I am honored to be the new Superintendent of the Lockport City School District. As your new Superintendent I am looking forward to partnering with all of you: our students, parents and/or guardians, families, staff, Board of Education members - trustees, elected officials, civic organizations and business - community leaders. My goal is to make certain that we achieve the district's motto which asserts that we will celebrate and demonstrate *"pride in our past and faith in our future."*

Please know, I am deeply committed to our district and excited to learn more about how the districts' vision and mission is being implemented in Lockport City Schools. This is a great time to be part of the Lockport community and I fully embrace this opportunity to lead.

Let me also share that I am grateful for the comprehensive hiring process which was enacted by the Board of Education. Because of this process, I was able to listen to and learn a great deal about the district. To add to this, prior to my hire I invested a great deal of time in becoming familiar with the history of the district. While doing so it became extremely clear to me that Lockport has achieved success on many levels. With that said, please know that I will work diligently to continue the great work that has been occurring in the district while collaborating with all of you on how to best build upon the strong legacy that the district and community have established for our students.

In an effort to make certain that we build upon our strengths, recognize our challenges, and identify the most powerful strategies to address those challenges, during my first 100 days of service I will be utilizing the enclosed entry plan to facilitate my work with district stakeholders. While doing so, my goal is to learn as much as possible about what is working for our students and where there are areas for growth. To add to this, I will also work diligently to hear from you, our community, on how we can better prepare and support our teachers, administrators, and support staff for the critical roles they play in each student's life.

Please know, I look forward to listening, learning and partnering with each of you. Accordingly, I will be asking many of you to meet with me to share feedback and insight about our district. In doing so, it is my belief that I will learn a great deal about the district from each of you which will include strategies that we could employ that will enable us to increase our educational opportunities and outcomes for our students.

With that said, thank you in advance for your willingness to assist me as I enter the district *"listening and learning."* I look forward to connecting with each of you in the near future.

Yours in Education,

**Mathis A. Calvin III, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

# *Vision and Core Beliefs:*

Before I describe the entry plan process, I want to share my vision and some of the core beliefs that have facilitated the work that I've been engaged in as a school leader over the last 23 years of my career. They are as follows:

**Vision** - My vision is to ensure that our educational community provides equitable opportunities for all of its students. By doing so each student will have the opportunity to meet and maximize his or her full potential as individuals and contribute to our society.

**Equity** - I embrace the diversity present in our society, community and schools. We must find equitable solutions that provide the necessary resources and supports to make certain that each Lockport City School District student thrives in a supportive and engaging learning environment.

**Instruction**- Classroom instruction is the most important work in our school system, and classroom teachers need support to meet the needs of each student through effective instructional practices. Our teachers and staff have the closest relationship with our students. We must acknowledge this fact, build upon it, and provide the necessary support which will enhance them to build and maintain positive relationships with our students.

**Teamwork** - An effective team built on trust and strong leadership leads to high-level expectations, accountability and results. Individuals must feel valued and be willing to work together to learn and thrive. We must ensure a district – wide culture and environment that encourages honest conversation, productive problem-solving, effective conflict resolution, and collaborative effort toward meeting the needs of our students while also moving the work of the district forward.

**Continuous Improvement**- Data driven practices lead to reflection and a realization of what is working, what needs to be improved, and what we need to do next. Learning from both our successes and challenges is essential to identify and prioritize practices that will produce positive results across our organization.



# Goals:

This entry plan focuses on learning as much as possible about our schools and community so that we can build on our strengths and continue to improve. By listening, learning, and applying what we learn, we will be in a great position to define common goals, align resources, and take strategic action.

**Goal #1:** Learn about the direction of the Lockport City School District as much as possible in order to gain insight into its: strengths, challenges, and areas of improvement so we can best serve our students.

**Goal #2:** Learn how the district's initiatives and priorities are being implemented in our schools by our dedicated staff.

**Goal #3:** Learn about the values, norms, and expectations of our supportive community to best serve our students.

**Goal #4:** Gain a better appreciation of how the district's initiatives and priorities are publicized and understood in our community.

**Goal #5:** Utilize the information gathered to: create a transparent and reciprocal process with school and community members that is based on mutual trust and commitment in order to understand and address the district's strengths and challenges; and develop a plan of strategic actions and/or refinement that considers the districts' current strategic plans which are in place.





# Phases of Entry Plan:

## Phase 1: “Listening and Learning”

March 2023  April 2023

### Phase 1 - Overview:

This phase will consist of meetings with district staff and community members. The goal of this phase is to discuss district goals and initiatives in order to learn about the strengths, challenges, and areas of improvement for Lockport City Schools. It should be noted, this is an important phase which involves listening and learning from students, district staff, parents, and community members. By listening to and learning from stakeholders I will be better able to ascertain how our district staff and community members perceive the efforts of our schools as we work towards achieving our mission and vision.

In addition, I will begin to analyze district data (i.e. student learning outcomes, fiscal – operational data, audit reports, Office of the State Comptroller reports, special education outcomes - data, legal briefings, district contracts, community survey data, etc.) from the 2018-2019, 2019 – 2020, 2020 – 2021, 2021 -2022 and 2022 - 2023 school years, -- as it becomes available. While doing so my goal is to learn as much information about the district that I can which will assist me with understanding how the district is doing with reaching district goals and obligations at this time.

**Meetings** - During this phase of this entry plan I plan to meet with the following community members in the following manner:

### One-On-One Meetings

- **School Board Members - Trustees** - Leslie Tobin (President), John Linderman (Vice President), Kristina Schutt, Sterling Pierce, Jr., Dr. Martha Kershaw, Heather Hare, Michael Ferraro, Renee Cheatham and Tracy Caruso
- **Orleans – Niagara BOCES District Superintendent and Administrative Team** - Clark Godshall (District Superintendent), Dr. Michael Weyrauch (Director of CTE and Instructional Services), Dr. Ronald Barstys (Director of Special Programs), Melanie Conley (Director of Business Services), Wayne Van Vleet (Director of Labor Relations – School Attorney), Melissa Kathan, (Director of Labor Relations – School Attorney), Dan Connolly ( Director of Facilities), Michael Mann (Career and Technical Coordinator / Principal), Nicole Goyette (Career and Technical Coordinator / Principal), Robert Robinson ( Career and Tech Coordinator), Elizabeth Mastromatteo (Career and Tech Coordinator), Maureen Bartlett ( Career and Tech Coordinator & Adult/Continuing Education Coordinator), Paulette Hamilton-Koehler (Special Education Coordinator), Shannon Baccari (Special Education Coordinator), Krista Macomber ( Special Education Coordinator), Roger Broeker (Special Education Coordinator), Michelle Kulbago (Special Education Coordinator), Lorrina Kostuk-Madonia (Special Education Coordinator) and Holly Fortier (Special Education Coordinator)
- **Interim Superintendent of Schools** – Mr. Michael Bonnewell
- **All Collective Bargaining Presidents** – The Lockport Education Association (LEA), The Lockport Administrators and Supervisors Association (LASA), The Lockport School Employees Association (LSEA), and The Lockport Substitute Employees Union (LSTU)

- **City of Lockport and Niagara County Elected Officials** – Mayor Michelle Roman, Common Council Members: Paul M. Beakman, Jr. (Council President – 1<sup>st</sup> Ward), Luke D. Kantor (2<sup>nd</sup> Ward), Mark S. Devine (3<sup>rd</sup> Ward), Kathryn “Kitty” Fogle (4<sup>th</sup> Ward), Margaret Lupo (5<sup>th</sup> Ward), Lisa Swanson-Gellerson (Alderman at Large)
- **Niagara County Legislature Representatives** - Rebecca J. Wydysh (Chairman), Anthony J. Nemi (Vice Chairman), Randy R. Bradt (Majority Leader), Michael A. Hill (First Deputy), David E. Godfrey (Second Deputy), Christopher Robins (Minority Leader), Mark J. Grozio (First Deputy) and Jeffrey Elder (Second Deputy)
- **Local College and/or University Representatives** - Niagara Community College (NCC), Niagara University (NU), Syracuse University (SUPA) and Howard University (HU)
- **Business Leaders** – All local business leaders from the Lockport community
- **Community Faith Leaders** – Clergy of local churches, parishes and religious organizations
- **Central Office Administrators** – Deborah A. Coder (Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Management Services), Lisa M. Schrader (Assistant Superintendent for Personnel), Holly Dickinson (Director of Grants & District/Community Programs), Dr. Robert LiPuma (Director of Technology, Data Security & Communications), Marianne Currie-Hall (Executive Director of Educational Services), Mike Sobieraski (Director of Athletics and Physical Education), Erik Vohlwinkel (Director of Special Education), Amanda Bennett (Director of Student Services), Heather Scharping (Assistant Director of Health and Wellness), Jennifer Reardon (Director of UPK), Timothy Parker (Director of Facilities), Kevin Guay (Maintenance Supervisor), James Kerrison (Custodial Supervisor), Aaron Bevill (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusivity Director)
- **Building Administrators** – Jennifer Gilson (Principal - Charles A. Upson Elementary School), Deanna Schmitt (Principal - George Southard Elementary School), Patricia McMahon (Principal - Anna Merritt Elementary School), Dr. Camille Pontrello (Principal - Emmet Belknap Intermediate School), Heather Walton (Principal, Roy B. Kelley Elementary School), Dr. Bernadette Smith (Principal Aaron Mossell Junior High School), Dawn Wylke (Principal, Lockport High School) and Russell Buckley (Lockport High School West at Charlotte Cross & Director of Alternative Education)

#### Key Stakeholders Meetings (these are group meetings)

- **Students Leaders** - Student Government and club - organization leaders from all schools
- **Department Heads & Teacher Leaders** - District Department Heads – Teacher Leaders from throughout the district
- **Teachers** – All teaching staff, K-12, will be invited to take part in forums and/or small group meetings. All athletic coaches will also be invited to participate in these meetings.
- **District Support Staff** – All Teacher Assistants and Aides, Clerical Staff, Instructional Technology Staff, Custodial and Maintenance and Transportation Staff will be invited to take part in forums and/or small group meetings.
- **Parents** – Parent Forums will be held at all schools. Parent – Teacher Organization leaders will be invited to take part in forums and/or small group meetings.
- **Community Organizations** - Public Library Directors, Rotary and Lions Club Leaders and other civic groups, Lockport City Schools Foundation, YMCA Directors, Director of Youth - Recreation for City of Lockport and County of Niagara, Lockport Fire Chief and Chief of Police - Sheriff, City and County of Niagara Mental – Behavioral Health Organizations, City of Lockport Chamber of Commerce Leaders, business leaders, local colleges and university partners will all be invited to take part in forums and/or small group meetings.

It should be noted, these meetings are not limited to the individuals or groups listed above. If additional community stakeholders are interested in participating, they can contact the Superintendent's office at (716) 478-4838 to arrange for a meeting.

### **School, Facilities and Departmental Visits**

I will also visit every school, department and district owned facility. While doing so, my goal will be to become familiar with and learn as much as possible about the district's schools, departmental operations and facilities.

## **Phase 2: "Analyzing, Planning and Reporting"**

April 2023  June 2023

During this phase of this plan I will continue to review and analyze district data (both qualitative and quantitative) that has been gathered and/or observed. Some of the types of additional data that will be gathered and reviewed include but are not limited to:

- School Aid Reports & Documents (i.e. building aid, transportation aid, textbook aid, BOCES aid, high costs aid, etc.)
- Capital Construction Project – Plans
- District transportation information – including district fleet data
- School aid reports
- District grants
- District pilot agreements
- BOCES services reports
- Office of State Comptroller reports
- Last three – five school years - fiscal audit documentation -reports (internal, external, extra-curricular, etc.)
- Procurement procedures
- Budget calendars
- District Reserve Plan and reports
- District long term fiscal advisory plan
- District debt service information
- District Building Condition Survey
- All Title, 611 and 619, ARP, ESSR grant information
- My Brother's Keeper's grant and plans
- District Technology Plan
- District Smart School Bond Act plans - information
- Professional Development Plans
- Human Resources – documentation and reports
- Collective bargaining agreements
- Lockport City School District Employee Handbook
- Health Insurance Plans
- District Security Plan
- Onboarding documentation and procedures for new staff
- NYSED Indicator Reports for Special Education
- NYSED Grade 3-8 ELA, Math, Science and Regents and Graduation data
- APPR Plans and Evaluation Information (Evaluation tools used for all staff, etc.)
- School district policies

- Health and safety – data Information
- School Lead Testing results
- District Strategic Plan
- 504 procedures, reports and information
- DASA plans and reported data
- School suspension data
- Parent survey data reports

Once all data - information has been compiled I will use it along with information from Phase I of this entry plan to develop a summary report and presentation for the Lockport City School District Community. This report will outline my findings and observations and identify “next steps” - recommendations that we can collaboratively work on to better our district. This summary report will serve as another resource to help inform the community on district goal setting, strategic focus areas, and future planning.

Please be advised, because I am committed to operating in a transparent manner with all stakeholder’s, information from both Phase I and Phase II will be shared with all Board of Education Members, Lockport City School District staff members and the entire school community. Accordingly, this information will also be published online.



# Conclusion:

We are at a unique point in time for the Lockport City School District and our community. It is a time of great challenges, but also a time of great opportunities! It is a time to listen, learn, collaborate, and trust one another. It is a time to reach common understandings about the culture of Lockport City Schools, and how we can work together to meet our mission and vision.

Please know that I plan to truly use this time of learning wisely. My goal is to make sure that we are doing everything possible so that every student succeeds in our community. As we reflect on our successes, let us also embrace the future with confidence, purpose, and optimism.

I look forward to meeting with each of you and working together to ensure that we continue to grow our district while meeting the needs of our students. With that said, thank you all in advance for your support of this entry plan.

Yours in Education,

**Mathis Calvin III, Ed. D.**  
Superintendent of Schools





Anna Merritt  
Elementary School



Charles A.  
Upson  
Elementary  
School



George M.  
Southard



Roy B. Kelley



Emmet Belknap  
Intermediate  
School



Aaron Mossell  
Junior High  
School



Lockport High  
School



Lockport High School –  
West



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**Submitted by: Dr. Mathis Calvin**