



**Amherst County  
Public Schools**

**Superintendent's Entry Plan  
William R. Wells, Superintendent of Schools  
July 1, 2022**



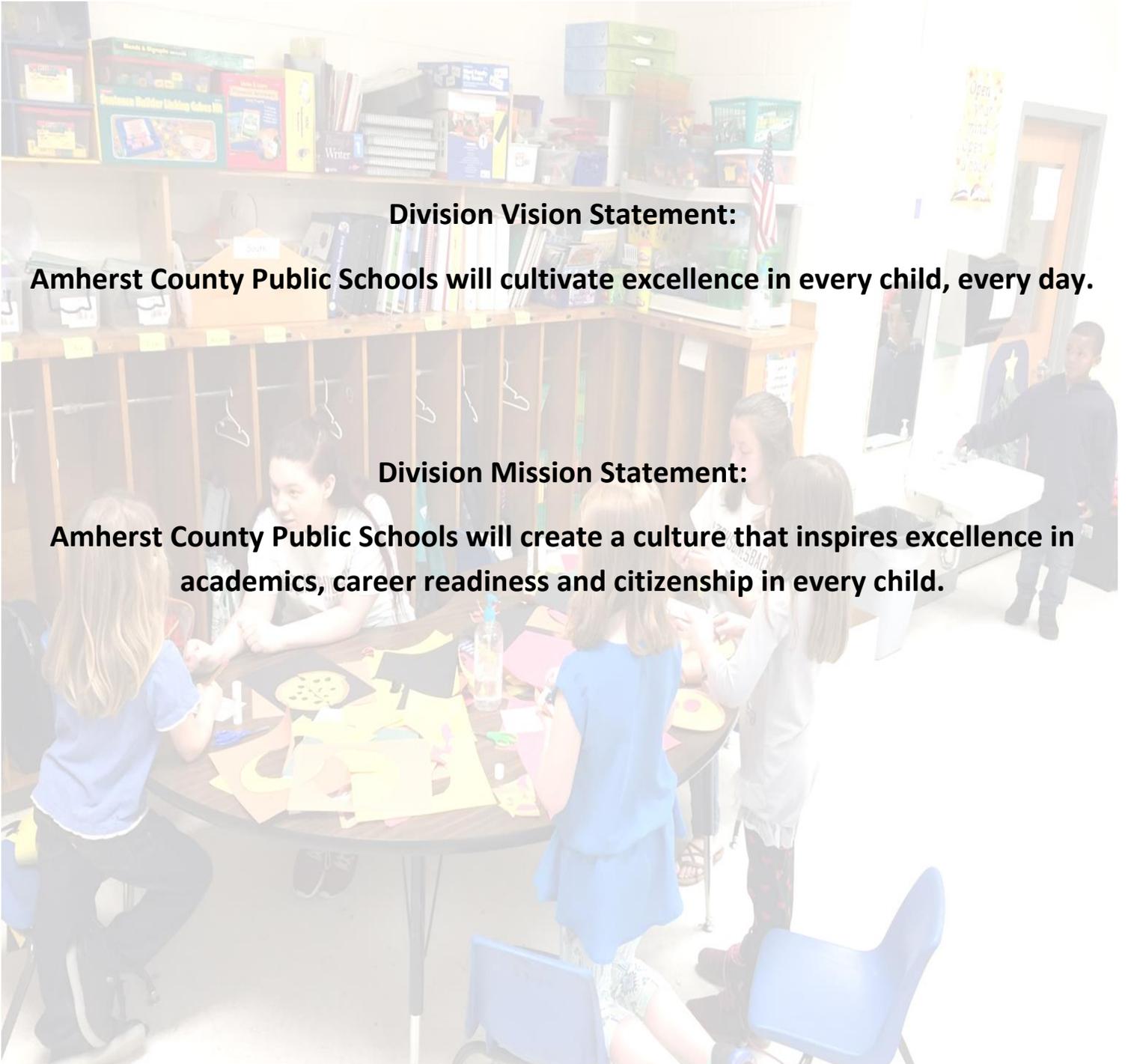
# Amherst County Public Schools

## Division Vision Statement:

**Amherst County Public Schools will cultivate excellence in every child, every day.**

## Division Mission Statement:

**Amherst County Public Schools will create a culture that inspires excellence in academics, career readiness and citizenship in every child.**



## Preface

As I transition from the role of Assistant Superintendent to Superintendent of Amherst County Public Schools, my goal is to gain additional insight into the needs of the school division through the development of an entry plan.

As a lifelong resident of Amherst County and a twenty nine year employee of Amherst County Public Schools, I have a general understanding of the state of the school division and community. I intend to use the entry plan process to expand my knowledge of the strengths and opportunities for growth in the school division. I also intend to better understand the concerns, hopes, and desires of the community regarding our school system.

## Introduction

While I have worked as an educator in the school division for twenty-nine years, the roles and responsibilities of the superintendent are far more extensive than my previous roles in the division and an entry plan will be a valuable tool as I work to heighten the work of the school division. Developing professional and transparent relationships with county government leadership and agencies will be a vital component of my entry plan. Another essential aspect of the entry plan will center on conversations with stakeholder groups. I hope to gain a better understanding of the perceptions and desires of the stakeholders in the community by having open dialogue and asking leading questions. I will also review data and documents that will drive the short term and long range goals of the division through the revision of the five year strategic plan.

The information gathered in the entry plan will help me uphold the division vision, convey the mission of Amherst County Public Schools, and ensure our students experience an education that is enjoyable, rewarding, and prepares them to be ready to face the many challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century upon graduation from high school.

The overarching goals of the plan are to:

- Establish an effective, transparent, and professional working relationship with the Amherst County School Board
- Establish an effective, transparent, and professional working relationship with the Amherst County Board of Supervisors and County Administrator
- Build and enhance relationships with school and community stakeholder groups
- Gain a better understanding of the strengths, opportunities for growth, and challenges within Amherst County Public Schools
- Work with the division administrative team to continue to prioritize the most urgent and important needs of the division
- Collaborate with law enforcement and the commonwealth attorney to provide safe and secure school environments

## Timeline

The entry plan will consist of four basic phases:

- Building Relationships with constituents and stakeholder groups and collecting data
- Analysis and sharing of data
- Planning
- Implementation

### **Phase I: Relationship Building and Data Collection (Days 1 – 40)**

The first three overarching goals of my entry plan focused on building relationships with the school board, board of supervisors and county administrator, and school and community stakeholder groups. These three goals were selected as a result of survey data that was generated during the superintendent search. The survey data indicated the desire to have a superintendent who was visible and able to build positive relationships with school personnel and community stakeholder groups. The two remaining goals focus on identifying areas of strength and opportunities within the division. The relationship and data collection phase of my tenure will begin with my appointment as superintendent through the first sixty days in the position. During this phase, I will meet with the school board, board of supervisors, county administrator, school personnel, and constituent groups in the community to begin the relationship building process and to collect data on their perception of the school division. The information derived from these meetings will be used in the development of the entry plan.

- Establish an effective, transparent, and professional working relationship with the Amherst County School Board. This will be conducted by meeting with the members of the school board in group meetings and individually to gain insight into their expectations of the superintendent – school board relationship, as well as to get to know them on a personal level. I will also recommend a school board retreat to review policy, to set norms, and establish standard operating procedures.
- Establish an effective, transparent, and professional working relationship with the Amherst County Board of Supervisors and County Administrator. This will be conducted by meeting with each member of the board of supervisors and the county administrator individually and in a group setting to discuss their perception of the school division and the role the of the superintendent. I will propose a joint meeting of the school board, board of supervisors, and county administrator to begin developing a positive working relationship. I will make it a priority to attend functions with the board of supervisors and county administrator.
- Build and enhance relationships with the school and community stakeholder groups. This will be conducted by meeting with students, teachers, administrators, staff, community groups, local leaders, and state officials.

- Gain a better understanding of the strengths, opportunities for growth, and challenges within Amherst County Public Schools. This will be conducted by meeting with the assistant superintendent, directors, and building level administrators to gain insight into instruction, finance, discipline, and accreditation.
- Work with division administrative team to continue to prioritize the most urgent and important needs of the division. This will be conducted by holding one to one meetings with directors and staff to give each of them an opportunity to discuss their perception of the needs of the division.
- Establish/Enhance the relationships with the Amherst County Sheriff's Office, Town Police, Public Safety, and Commonwealth Attorney's Office with a focus on school safety and community relations. This will be conducted by having regular meetings with the Amherst County Sheriff's Office, Amherst Town Police, Virginia State Police, and Commonwealth Attorney in order to discuss trend data, plan for school safety initiatives, trainings for staff and students, and community outreach partnerships.

The following questions will be used (not a complete list) to frame discussion regarding the school division:

- What are you most proud of in Amherst County Public Schools?
- What are the greatest successes of Amherst County Public Schools?
- What are the areas in need of attention in Amherst County Public Schools?
- What in the Amherst County Public Schools must be preserved at all cost?
- What do you think should be the number one goal of the school division?
- I believe that communication is central to establishing a productive partnership in support of Amherst County Public Schools. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the level of communication you receive from the school division.
- What are your hopes for me as the new Superintendent of Amherst County Public Schools?

## **Phase II: Data Analyses and Sharing of Information (Days 40-60)**

As I enter this phase of the entry plan, I will have completed the initial phase of implementing my six overarching goals. I will begin to analyze the data to identify trends and themes that are similar among the stakeholders. These findings will drive the development of the planning and implementation phases of my entry plan. The initial findings of the data will be shared with the school board, school personnel, parent organizations, and other stakeholders in the community. I will emphasize the strengths as well as the challenges facing Amherst County Public Schools.

## **Phase III: Planning (Days 60-90)**

The third phase in this entry plan is to map out the goals for Amherst County Public Schools based on the analysis of data. The goals will focus the five year strategic plan for the division. The goals for the division will be developed collaboratively and will drive every aspect of the workings within the division, including superintendent, administrator, and educator goals; school improvement plans; and financial considerations. This will result in a shared focus among all stakeholders for the vision of the school division.

## **Phase IV: Implementation (Days 90+)**

This is the final step of the Entry Plan. The school administration will center on advancing the strategic plan of the school division. This strategic plan will include goals that have been developed through the findings of the Entry Plan process.

## **Conclusion**

Smooth transitions of leadership are vital to the success of the organization. This entry plan is designed to provide me an opportunity to develop positive relationships with the school board, board of supervisors, and county administrator, to gain insight into the strengths and opportunities of the school division, and work with community leaders to identify the needs of the community. The entry plan will be a valuable tool as the leadership of the division undergoes this transition process, I work to enhance the performance of the school division, and I ensure the division lives up the motto of Every Child, Every Day.

Table: Objectives, Strategies, and Progress Measurement

	Objectives	Strategies/Deadlines	Progress
1	Build effective, transparent, and professional working relationships with all members of the Amherst County School Board	Hold individual meetings with Board members. Review Entry Plan objectives and progress at 3, 6, 12 months and ongoing.	
2	Build effective, transparent, and professional working relationships with all members of the Amherst County Board of Supervisors and County Administrator	Hold individual meetings with Board members and County Administrator. Hold quarterly joint board meetings. Attend BOS meetings as appropriate. Ongoing conversations. Initial meetings with Board members held by August 1, 2022. Meet with County Administrator by August 1, 2022. Attend Joint Board meeting in July 2022.	
3	Build and enhance relationships with school stakeholder groups (parents, staff, students, PTO, Education Association, Education Foundation, etc)	Individual and group meetings with stakeholders. Hold open house/meet and greet events at local schools and school admin building. Complete meetings by August 30, 2022.	
4	Build and enhance relationships with community stakeholder groups (Chamber of Commerce, EDA, local civic organizations, churches, etc.)	Individual and group meetings with stakeholders. Attend organizational meetings and community events. Ongoing	
5	Determine effectiveness of school programs as related to student outcomes.	Review standardized test and SOL results. Review recent / future plans for staff and curriculum development. MAP, PALs, etc – July 31; SOL reviewed upon release by VDOE. Initial review of staff and curriculum development July 31	
6	Work with division and school administrative teams to continue to prioritize the most urgent and important needs at the division and at the individual school level.	Weekly senior staff and leadership meetings to discuss data and determination of needs. Initial – July 31 Ongoing	
7	Build and enhance relationships with Sheriff's Office, Town Police, Public Safety, and Commonwealth Attorney's Office with a focus on school safety and community relations.	Meet with Sheriff Viar, Chief Shifflett, Sam Bryant, and Lyle Carver in July. Establish quarterly meetings thereafter. Ongoing	