

# Dr. Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent of Schools

## Entry Plan

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### Introduction

To ensure a successful and productive entry into Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), this entry plan has been created for Dr. Joshua P. Starr. Dr. Starr's entry work coincides with the work of his transition team, which is working to produce a transition report that will inform Dr. Starr of the key issues that will need his attention during the initial months of his tenure as superintendent of schools. The transition report, which will be available in September, will inform decision making and help prioritize issues for his consideration, while the entry work is intended to assist Dr. Starr in getting to know the community. The entry plan provides the structure to support Dr. Starr's transition as superintendent as he listens to students, staff, families and community stakeholders about their observations of and aspirations for MCPS.

The entry work will extend throughout the remainder of 2011 and into early 2012 and will encompass a multipronged approach that includes individual and group meetings, public events, and numerous opportunities for the public to interact with Dr. Starr. The schedule of public events will be announced in late August.

The goals of the Dr. Starr's entry work include:

- Provide an opportunity for Dr. Starr to meet and interact with a broad variety of stakeholders and community leaders to listen to their opinions and perspectives about Montgomery County Public Schools.
- Demonstrate to the community that Dr. Starr is a committed leader who listens to multiple perspectives, learns, and makes informed decisions that will help Montgomery County Public Schools reach the next level of success.
- Foster a new level and spirit of community engagement and support for Montgomery County Public Schools.

### Outcomes

At the conclusion of the entry work, MCPS will produce a brief summary report of the observations and key findings. This along with the transition plan will inform and guide the work going forward.

## Overview of Entry Plan Activities

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**Listen and Learn Community Events** – The purpose of these 10 events will be to give Dr. Starr an opportunity to introduce himself to community members and invite their questions and comments about the current state of MCPS and what they envision for the future for the school system. Each of these events will be 1.5 hours in length and occur from 7 to 8:30 p.m. to enable parents and community members to attend after the work day. Notes will be taken at the events and used to find common themes among the sessions to inform the work going forward. Members of the executive staff will attend the sessions along with the Department of Family and Community Partnerships to respond to individual cases that may arise at the session.

**Tentative Locations for Listen and Learn Sessions:** Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS, Wheaton HS, Sherwood HS, Springbrook HS, Northwest HS, Wootton HS, Einstein HS, Long Branch Community Center, Watkins Mill HS, Damascus HS. (Note this is not the order of the events, simply the location. Dates and times will be announced in late August.)

Outreach—These events will be widely publicized through multiple communications methods to ensure that as many community members as possible are made aware of the events. They will also be promoted as part of the MCPS Parent Academy. Childcare and translation services will be provided for each session.

**Listen and Learn Staff Events** – Staff will be invited to attend six Listen and Learn sessions across the county. One event will occur in each of the six quad/quint clusters supervised by the community superintendents. Each event will be 1.5 hours in length and occur from 4 to 5:30 p.m. to enable staff to come following their duty day. The locations of the events will coincide with the location of the public evening sessions.

**Tentative Locations for Staff sessions:** Einstein HS, Wootton HS, Watkins Mill HS, Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS, Northwest HS, Springbrook HS.

Outreach—Staff will be invited to attend these sessions through normal internal communications channels. In addition, each community superintendent will promote these sessions within his/her quad/quint cluster to ensure that all employees are informed of the events.

**Superintendent's Book Club** – Dr. Starr will conduct three book clubs over the course of the year, beginning with the first session in late October, followed by sessions in January and April. Dr. Starr will select books that will inform the community of his educational philosophy and further their understanding of his approach to managing MCPS. The first book Dr. Starr has chosen is Carol Dweck's book, *"Mindset: The New Psychology of Success"*. The clubs will be conducted at CESC and live via webinar to allow people to participate from their homes, if they wish.

Outreach – The community will be informed of the book titles and format of the sessions via the normal communications structures MCPS has in place.

**Individual and Group Meetings** – Since July 1, 2011, Dr. Starr has been meeting with staff and community members to get to know them, listen to their observations about MCPS, and to share his vision. These meetings include community and business leaders, advocacy groups, elected state and local officials, senior level staff and the employee associations. These meetings will continue throughout the fall and spring. In addition, Dr. Starr will attend selected advisory committee meetings this fall to introduce himself and learn about the work of these groups.

**School Visits** – Dr. Starr’s goal is to visit at least five schools a week during the school year. This will enable him to get to know the principals personally and observe the instructional program. Importantly, he will spend the first week of school visiting 4 or 5 schools per day accompanied by the community superintendent who oversees that school. Various board members will join Dr. Starr on these first-week visits, schedules permitting.

**Office and Operations Visits** – Dr. Starr will also visit many offices to meet with employees and learn about their work to support the schools. His visits will include maintenance and transportation depots, as well as food service operations. He is also visiting school construction sites to see some of the many projects that are under way to add capacity to meet enrollment growth and to modernize facilities.

**Student Internet Town Hall Meetings** – To listen to the voice of the students, two Town Hall-style meetings will be held for students to share their perspectives with Dr. Starr. Students will be able to submit their questions in advance using twitter or email. The tentative plan is to hold these events at two high schools during lunch time and stream the meetings live on the Internet.

**Ask the Superintendent Call in Show** – Dr. Starr will participate in two live television Call In shows to enable people who might have been unable to attend one of the Listen and Learn sessions. The show will have a studio audience as well. Dr. Starr will alternate between answering questions via telephone calls, twitter, email and from people in the audience.