SUPERINTENDENTS TRANSITION & ENTRY

5 LESSONS IN ORGANIZING FOR SUCCESS

Josh Starr, CEO PDK International
Mort Sherman, Associate Executive Director AASA, Leadership Services
Lesson 1: Understand the difference between transition and entry

Lesson 2: Implement a thoughtful transition that includes both internal and external stakeholders

Lesson 3: Craft and leverage your public narrative / Make space to build shared stories

Lesson 4: Lead for equity & social justice through courageous and honest conversations

Lesson 5: Adopt a systemic framework to attend to change
LESSON 1: UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRANSITION AND ENTRY

**Transition**

William Bridges, *Managing Transitions*

District is focus

Product is formal report, foundation for budget, strategic plan

Quantitative data, document review, formal analysis

Can cost, is beyond the normal scope of the day

Mix of outside and internal experts

**Entry**

Barry Jentz, *Entry*

Superintendent is focus

Product is relationships and communication of values, mission and stories

Anecdotal and qualitative information

Is built into the regular schedule of the first 100 days

Internally/community focused
LESSON 2: IMPLEMENT A THOUGHTFUL TRANSITION THAT INCLUDES BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

• **Bridges definition:** The main strength of the process is that it focuses on transition, not change. The difference between these is subtle but important. Change is something that happens to people, even if they don’t agree with it. Transition, on the other hand, is internal: it’s what happens in people’s minds as they go through change. Change can happen very quickly, while transition usually occurs more slowly (p. 9).

• Transparent process that instills community confidence in Superintendent
• Relationships built among community members
• Modelling of a new approach to doing the work
• Report with clear analysis and recommendations
Stage 1: Ending, Losing, and Letting Go

People enter this initial stage of transition when you first present them with change. This stage is often marked with resistance and emotional upheaval, because people are being forced to let go of something that they are comfortable with.

At this stage, people may experience these emotions:

Fear.
Denial.
Anger.
STAGE 2: THE NEUTRAL ZONE

In this stage, people affected by the change are often confused, uncertain, and impatient. Depending on how well you're managing the change, they may also experience a higher workload as they get used to new systems and new ways of working.

Think of this phase as the bridge between the old and the new; in some ways, people will still be attached to the old, while they are also trying to adapt to the new.

Here, people might experience:

- Resentment towards the change initiative.
- Low morale and low productivity.
- Anxiety about their role, status or identity.
The last transition stage is a time of acceptance and energy. People have begun to embrace the change initiative. They're building the skills they need to work successfully in the new way, and they're starting to see early wins from their efforts.

At this stage, people are likely to experience:

High energy.

Openness to learning.

Renewed commitment to the group or their role.
LESSON 3: CRAFT AND LEVERAGE YOUR PUBLIC NARRATIVE

3 Parts of Public Narrative

- **Self**: Invites others to be in relationship with you
- **Us**: Invites others to join your community
- **Now**: Invites others to take Action

*Source: Marshall Ganz*
Crafting Your Public Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF:</th>
<th>US:</th>
<th>NOW:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Challenge, Choice, Outcome</td>
<td>*Link individual threads into a common weave</td>
<td>*Anchor in past, presence, future</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Personal Values</td>
<td>*Decide who the “us” is</td>
<td>*Articulate the challenge, urgency of now, the hope &amp; our resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Specific Details, Visuals,</td>
<td>*Shared values → community</td>
<td>*Specific “ask” &amp; call to action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feelings</td>
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LESSON 4: LEAD FOR EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH COURAGEOUS AND HONEST CONVERSATIONS

Source: Singleton, G., & Linton, C.
LESSON 5: ADOPT A SYSTEMIC FRAMEWORK TO ATTEND TO CHANGE

VALUES
What do we believe about students, families, and communities and why?

GOVERNANCE
How do we make decisions? Who’s involved, both formally and informally, and why?

RESOURCES
How do we allocate time, people, and money according to our needs and vision?

CONTENT
What do children need to know and be able to do, and what do adults need to know and be able to do in service of children? How do we measure our progress against our expectations?

TALENT
Who is doing the work, and what do they need to be successful professionals? What are the systems and practices that ensure that people are continuously growing and improving?

CULTURE
How do we interact with each other and our community in service of our goals?
VALUES
What do we believe about students, families, and communities and why?
GOVERNANCE

How do we make decisions? Who’s involved, both formally and informally, and why?
RESOURCES
How do we allocate time, people, and money according to our needs and vision?

Use Your Resources
Effectively
Efficiently
Economically
What do children need to know and be able to do, and what do adults need to know and be able to do in service of children? How do we measure our progress against our expectations?
TALENT

Who is doing the work, and what do they need to be successful professionals? What are the systems and practices that ensure that people are continuously growing and improving?
CULTURE

How do we interact with each other and our community in service of our goals?
PDK/AASA PARTNERSHIP

• Create relationships among other superintendents doing the work
• Provide coaching and guidance
• Support action planning
• Establish reflection and improvement cycles
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WE ARE THE LEADERS WE’VE BEEN WAITING FOR…

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

James Baldwin
**FEEDBACK**

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<th>Next Steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What worked well during the session? What helped your learning?</td>
<td>What do you wish had been different? What would have enhanced your learning?</td>
<td>Where would you like our collective learning to go next?</td>
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