Superintendent’s Entry Plan

I am honored and excited to be the new Superintendent of West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) and to partner with students, educators, families, community, and business partners to ensure we are meeting the district's mission to prepare students for post-secondary education and to be responsible, thinking contributing members of our global society. I am deeply committed to this charge, and I am excited to learn more about how our mission is being implemented. I am grateful to be part of this community, and I fully embrace this opportunity to lead.

I am grateful for the comprehensive hiring process the WCCUSD community has engaged in over the past several months. Because of your thoughtful Thought Exchange process and surveys, I was able to listen to the voices of the WCCUSD community – students, parents, teachers, principals, administrators, staff, union leaders, trustees, residents, business partners, and civic leaders. Here's some of what I have heard.

You Desire a Superintendent Who

- Is visionary and will unify the community around a vision of equity, access, and inclusion
- Addresses systems, processes and structures that adversely affects the education of students
- Is a strong instructional leader, and will grow academic achievement for all students
- Will keep the academic and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) success of all students as its primary focus
- Has a vision around dual language immersion
- Understands the diversity in the community
- Will provide a safe, welcoming, and uplifting environment for all
- Has strong relational, listening, collaboration, and communication skills
- Enjoys working with people
- Will work collaboratively with the board and strengthen partnerships
- Values consensus and uses democratic decision making
- Is accessible, visible, responsive, and approachable
- Is inspirational, motivating, and supportive
- Has integrity, a sense of humor, is humble, modest, transparent, empathetic, and will build relational trust
- Is passionate about public education and will take a stand to protect our neighborhood schools
- Is a lifelong learner
- Is accountable and holds others accountable
- Is financially astute
As your next superintendent, I will work together to make sure we build upon our strengths, recognize our challenges, and identify the most powerful strategies to address those challenges. My first 100 days of service will include the following structured entry plan to guide our work. I want to learn as much as possible about the great things happening in WCCUSD, what’s working for students, and determine our areas for growth. I also want to hear how we could better prepare and support the WCCUSD community in our movement toward accomplishing the WCCUSD mission and the critical roles each person plays in students' lives.

I look forward to this opportunity to listen, learn, serve, and partner with you. Together, we can increase educational opportunities, learning, and academic achievement for all WCCUSD students in our quest to ensure every student is prepared to participate and compete in our global society.

Sincerely,
Kenneth “Chris” Hurst Sr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
Vision and Core Values

Vision

My vision is to create systems of equity for all students and to ensure that each student has the opportunity to meet and maximize their full potential as individuals and contribute to our larger 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 ensure each 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 with effective instructional practices. Our teachers have the closest relationship with our students. We must acknowledge this fact, build upon it, and provide the necessary support to enhance that relationship.

Team

An effective team built on relational 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. An environment that encourages honest conversation, productive problem-solving, effective conflict resolution, and collaborative effort will move the work of the team 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.
Learn about the direction of WCCUSD as fully as possible in order to gain insight into its strengths, challenges, and areas of improvement so we can best serve our students.

Learn how the district’s initiatives and priorities are being implemented in our schools by our dedicated staff.

Learn about the values, norms, and expectations of our supportive community to best serve our students.

Gain a better appreciation of how the district’s initiatives and priorities are publicized and understood in our community.

Utilize the information gathered to:

1. 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.
2. Develop a plan of strategic actions or refinement for the school district.
Phase 1
Listening and Learning

May 2021

This phase will consist of meetings with district staff, school staff, student, parents, community members and business partners to discuss our district goals and initiatives in order to learn about the strengths, challenges, and areas of improvement for WCCUSD. This is an important phase to listen and learn from all stakeholders. Through the different perspectives, we would learn how our stakeholders perceive the efforts of our schools in order to meet our vision and mission.

In addition, I will analyze trend data from the 2016-21 school years to learn about trends at each school and district wide to determine whether we have reached our goals.

July 2021

Key Questions

1. What should Dr. Hurst know about the WCCUSD community?

2. What are the strengths of WCCUSD that should be sustained?

3. What are the challenges facing WCCUSD?

4. What are some of the opportunities that WCCUSD needs to explore further or develop?

5. Is there anything else you want Dr. Hurst to know about WCCUSD and our communities?

Meetings

One-on-one meetings with:
School Board Members, Elected Officials, Associate Superintendents, Directors

Meetings with each central office team

Meetings with key stakeholders including:
Principals, Assistant Principals, Teachers, Focus Groups, Union Leaders, Parents, Parent Organizations, Students, Student Leadership Groups, Community Organizations, Business Leaders, University Partners, Legislature

Meetings are not limited to the individuals or groups listed above.
Phase 2
Analyzing, Planning, and Reporting

Aug 2021

I will use the data that is gathered during the listening and learning phase to develop a summary report and presentation. This information will outline my findings and observations, and identify next steps. The summary information will serve as another resource to help inform the school board on the district's goals, strategic focus areas, and planning. Information from Phase I will be shared with staff members and published online.

Oct 2021

Summarize
The information gathered will be used to create a summary report and findings. This resource will help guide the school board, district staff, and school staff in strategic thinking and planning to better support school leaders and teachers.

Work Session
A work session with the school board will be held to study results of the Listening and Learning Phase.

Review & Adjust
At a retreat or workshop, the school board and I will review and adjust (if necessary) current goals, initiatives and priorities.
In the Armed Services, there is a phrase, “Esprit de Corps,” which carries the feeling of pride, fellowship, family, and a common loyalty shared by members of a particular group. As I listened to your voices speak during this selection process, this Esprit de Corps was evident. I can only say that I am honored to be joining the WCCUSD family and become part of a community working together to do great things for students. I look forward to potentially working with you and supporting you in creating an equitable system and bright future for every student.

Kenneth “Chris” Hurst Sr., Ed.D.