PIA DURKIN. Ph.D.

SUPERINTENDENT

**NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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*"We are committed to developing a community of learners who are academically proficient, demonstrate strong character and exhibit self-confidence.”*

JASON DeFALCO

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

HEATHER EMSLEY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN CAPITAL SERVICES

KIMBERLI A . BETTENCOURT

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF

SPECIAL EDUCATION & STUDENT SERVICES

BARRY RABINOVITCH, Ph.D.

INTERIM BUSINESS MANAGER

SONIA WALMSLEY ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS & FAMILY WELCOME CENTER MANAGER

January 11, 2015

Mitchell D. Chester,Commissioner Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148

Dear Commissioner Chester,

As we noted in our recent progress report for the Parker Elementary School, Turnaround Manager Deb Letendre resigned from her position effective December 4, 2015. The Parker's Level 5 turnaround plan states that a *Turnaround Manager will oversee the school's rapid improvement by closely tracking the turnaround plan, ensuring the plan's components are implemented with fidelity; and closely monitoring teacher quality and student learning with the*

*principal, Superintendent, and Chief Academic Officer. (page 3}* and the original plan was to

have this position in place for the duration of the Parker's new turnaround plan. However, after much consideration,I have decided not to rehire for the position, given the level of deep involvement that I, as Superintendent/Receiver and the Chief Academic Officer, Jason DeFalco have in Parker's turnaround efforts. Beginning last spring, we have re-set several key

conditions for the Parker School based on a deep analysis of last year's student and school data. The new Principal has restructured the school day to provide additional and intensive supports to all Parker Scholars and we have developed a more time-dated schedule of progress monitoring that allows for quick mid-course correction in classroom practice and procedures. We believe that the ongoing coaching, supervision, and monitoring of the academic and social­ emotional support structures provides us the necessary tools to enact the robust turnaround plan for Parker without the need for a designated turnaround manager position. My presence at the school once-twice a week supplemented by Mr. DeFalco's ongoing conversations with

the Principal ensures that implementation. Jen Ferland is assisting with the necessary reporting of the progress of our actions.

*The New Bedford Public Schools do* not *discriminat e* on *the basis of age. gender. race. color. religion , ethnicity.*

*national* origin, *disability. sexual orient ation. ancestry. homelessness. gender* identity *or gender expression.*

Therefore, the responsibilities of the Turnaround Manager outlined in the Parker's plan will be shared among three of us in the central office- my Chief Academic Officer Jason DeFalco, Director of Supplementary Services, and me - as outlined in the chart attached.

I am happy to discuss this further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Pia Durkin, PhD

Superintendent/Receiver

Cc: Jason DeFalco,Chief Academic Officer, New Bedford Public Schools

Jen Ferland, Director of Supplementary Services, New Bedford Public Schools Russell Johnston,Senior Associate Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Andrea Condit, District Assistance Liaison, Department of Elementary and Secondary

Education

Lise Zeig, Associate Commissioner,Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Joan Tuttle, Director,Office of District and School Turnaround, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Reassignment of the Turnaround Manager Responsibilities**

**Outlined in the Parker Elementary School's level 5 Turnaround Plan**

**From the Turnaround Plan:**

• Turnaround Manager will oversee the school's rapid improvement by closely tracking the turnaround plan, ensuring the plan's components are implemented with fidelity; and closely monitoring teacher quality and student learning with the principal, Superintendent, and Chief Academic Officer (page 3)

• Strategy 1.3: Superintendent will hire a turnaround manager to ensure that the turnaround plan's strategies lead to improvements in student learning. (page 10- specific responsibilities outlined below)

• Position will be in place for the duration of the Parker turnaround plan. *This strategy is informed by*

*Local Stakeholder Group recommendation E-4. (Page 11)*

New approach as of December 4, 2015: Moving forward, the Turnaround Manager's responsibilities will be shared among the Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer (CAO), and Director of Supplemental Services, given the deep involvement of these three roles as well as a resetting of key conditions that allow for both the explicit monitoring and ongoing adjustment of the academic and social-emotional structures that are inherent in the Parker turnaround plan. These key conditions include a major restructuring of the schedule of the school day and a more time-dated system of progress monitoring to

review goals and efforts. The ongoing coaching, supervision, and monitoring of this work provides us with

the necessary tools to enact and the plan without the need for a designated turnaround manager. The Superintendent/Receiver's presence in the school on a once-twice weekly basis and ongoing communication between the CAO and the Principal ensures strong implementation of the plan.

**Specific responsibilities outlined in the Parker level 5 turnaround plan:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Turnaround manager will:** | **Reassigned to:** |
| Strategy 1.2: Use level 5 authorities to increase the amount of focused and accountable professional development for teachers on delivering effective, engaging,and rigorous reading and math instruction in Tiers I, II, and Ill during and beyond the core block. (Responsibility shared with principal; page 8) | Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, Principal |
| Manage implementation of the school's turnaround plan and organize and coordinate resources to ensure plan is implemented. (Page 10) | Director of Supplemental Services |
| Coordinate professional development with principal, Chief Academic Officer, andSuperintendent and assess impact of professional development on classroom instruction (page10)0 Help principal coordinate job embedded PD by literacy coach (p. 21, 3.3) | Superintendent, Principal, Director of Supplemental Services |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Help school develop data management systems and ongoing assessments (page 10)Strategy 3.1Create a coherent system for organizing student data, communicating data to students and teachers, and acting on data.0 Collect the data: Create a coherent system for collecting and organizing common formative assessment (CFA) data.0 Identify an external partner to assist in this work0 Communicate the data: Create a student data "dashboard" system to provide the principal and teachers with timely views of all students' academic profiles and non- academic profiles for students who are at-risk (see Priority Area 4).0 Share data with students: Help students understand their own performance data, set goals, and identify strategies for improvement.0 Create tools to use the data: Improve existing tools and create new tools to helpteachers and the principal analyze data (e.g., spreadsheets for reviewing CFA data school wide, TCT toolkit, etc.) Provide appropriate PO in the use of these data tools.0 Using existing data, conduct a "root cause" analysis to identify why students struggle to meet grade-level goals and expectations.0 This analysis will inform the schedule and topics for professional development needs addressed in Priority Area 1.*This strategy is informed by Local Stakeholder Group recommendation A-2. (p. 20}*0 With the support of the principal and the turnaround manager,create banks of rigorous assessment questions aligned with the current curriculum standards for teachers to use in their CFAs. Share questions with other elementary schools. (p. 20, 3.2) | Superintendent, and theManager ofCurriculum, Data and Assessment |
| Share lessons learned and best practices from other district and school leaders with principal(page 10) | Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer |
| Report to Superintendent directly to ensure that progress is being made and recommend mid- course corrections if progress is not on track (page 10-11) | Chief Academic Officer; Manager of Curriculum, Data and Assessment; and Principal |
| Provide general support for Tiers I, II, and Ill, including training for core teachers, summer institute, targeted PO (p. 8-9) | Chief Academic Officer and Principal |
| Provide growth-producing feedback to teachers | Superintendent and Principal |
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