

Head of School Entry Plan
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Preface:

This Entry Plan is a living document, to be adapted and developed on an ongoing basis. My most important initial aim is to provide as many opportunities as possible to listen to and learn about DVFS from all constituencies. It is essential that I gain a solid and inclusive understanding of the school's strengths, challenges, culture, history and opportunities. Once that goal is largely achieved, I will initiate a strategic planning process that involves representatives of all key constituencies of the school. – Kirk, July 2015

Part 1: Summer & Fall 2015

Timeline	Steps	Action Plan	Status
July & August	1. Establish strong head/board relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meet with each board member individually to learn about their connection to the school, why they serve on the board, their hopes for the school's fulfillment of its mission, and how they might be accomplished ➤ Center conversations on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What brought you to serve on the board and what motivates you to continue to serve? ○ What do you see as the school's core values and primary challenges? ○ Tell me about a time when you were most proud of being part of the DV community. ➤ Forge a strong working partnership with the board clerk and the Head Support Committee, with focus on schedule of meetings and means of communication ➤ Work with the board clerk to set the head's goals for the 2015-16 school year ➤ Work with the board and committee clerks to establish the board and committee goals for the 2015-16 school year 	Ongoing
	2. Begin to understand the school's finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meet with the CFO to review budget procedures, philosophy and control systems 	Ongoing
	3. Review school's documents and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partial list of documents: Faculty/Staff Handbook, Student/Family Handbook, By-Laws, PAIS Self-Study & Visiting Committee Report, Admissions & Marketing materials, Crisis Management Plan, 2014 Parent Survey, and Board documents 	Ongoing
	4. Begin entry conversations with faculty, staff, and administrators to build relationships and trust with the new head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meet with people in their primary workspace, when possible ➤ Center conversations on the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What initially brought you to DVFS and why do you choose to continue to work for the school? ○ What do you see as the school's core values and primary challenges? ○ Tell me about a time when you were most proud of being part of the DV community. ➤ Record feedback/trends for reflection back to the community 	Ongoing

	5. Begin to establish a voice through written communications and the website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Publish and share Entry Plan ➤ Write summer letter to faculty and staff ➤ Write head's welcome to the website ➤ Write summer letter to families in preparation for students' return to school 	Completed
	6. Conduct search for new development director and establish organization for the development office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluate the merits and expense of enlisting a search firm ➤ Post position with appropriate, targeted organizations ➤ Identify and interview applicant pool ➤ Vet most promising applicants with clerk and others on the board, senior administrators and others directly involved with the school's advancement program 	Completed
	7. Conduct administrative retreat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on team building and setting a tone for the interactions of the leadership group ➤ Identify and prioritize items for examination and potential initiatives, with an emphasis on a 30,000 ft. perspective rather than focusing on the weeds 	Completed
	8. Orient new trustees to the board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with the clerk and associate head to educate new trustees about the school, its mission and current strategic directions ➤ Present new trustees with packet containing information from Friends Council and NAIS about best practices in governance and trustee roles ➤ Host dinner for new trustees and board leadership ➤ Attend ADVIS fall trustee training and clerk/head partnership programs 	Ongoing
FALL	Continue entry conversations		Ongoing
	9. Gain a deeper understanding of the school's admissions and marketing programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Learn more about the school's admissions procedures ➤ Refine understanding of the school's admitted student profile, including a review of rejected applications ➤ Continue to refine and clarify the school's central vision, voice and brand 	Ongoing
	10. Establish technology committee to provide strategic, coordinated direction and implementation, and tie Edu-Tech and DVFS initiatives together seamlessly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine the appropriate composition of the technology committee ➤ Identify initial list of priorities for the year ➤ Identify longer-term initiatives and goals 	Ongoing

	11. Begin establishing relationships with DVFS students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participate in the Ice Cream Social and Back to School Picnic ➤ Hold lunches with pods, to enable small group discussions and individual connections ➤ Attend Gathering as often as possible ➤ Attend Meeting for Worship when possible ➤ Attend at least one game for each fall sport ➤ Meet with the Student Quaker, Government and Executive Committees 	Ongoing
	12. Begin to forge strong presence with DVFS families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attend all grade dinners throughout the fall ➤ Assess the need for a parents' association, including the demand among current and former families, as well as potential goals and role for such a group 	Ongoing
	13. Begin systematic, non-evaluative visits to classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with head's assistant to create a schedule of visits to individual teachers' classrooms ➤ Ensure that every teacher is observed at least once during the first semester 	Ongoing
	14. Solidify head's goals and establish effective communication model with the board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Re-visit goals set in the summer with the Head of School Support Committee of the board ➤ Share the goals with the full board during its October meeting ➤ Share initial results of entry conversations' learnings 	Ongoing
	15. Begin to establish strong presence with DVFS alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participate in the activities of Founders Day ➤ Work with alumni affairs and community relations coordinator and others to identify and implement additional ways to interface with alumni 	Ongoing
	16. Build connections within the Philadelphia area, state, regional and national mainstream and LD educational communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attend NAIS Institute for New Heads ➤ Meet with individual local heads of school ➤ Meet with leadership of ADVIS, PAIS, PBIDA, Friends Council, IDA and others ➤ Forge relationship with LD Sister Schools ➤ Become an active member of the "Club14", heads of Delaware Valley area independent schools ➤ Attend conferences of: NAIS, IDA and Friends Council on Education ➤ Attend annual Headmaster's Retreat for LD schools 	Completed Ongoing
	17. Reach out to, and foster relationships with community organizations, government officials, and other civic leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attend Paoli Blues Fest, Dragon Boat Festival, and other events ➤ Meet local legislators, community leaders and business leaders 	Ongoing
	18. Evaluate and adapt (as necessary) the school's existing organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clarify the roles of the administrative, academic and student support groups, and adapt effective coordination and communication among them ➤ Clarify reporting and direct supervision lines 	Ongoing

	19. Begin the process to build preliminary 2016-17 budget	➤ Work with CFO and clerk of the Finance Committee to build the next year's budget including an articulation of its guiding philosophy, to foster transparent planning.	Ongoing
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Part 2: Winter & Spring 2015

Points for inclusion in Part 2:

- Lay groundwork for strategic planning the following or early fall, involving all constituencies.
- Examine the school's schedule.
- Financial aid policy review.
- Review of academic program.
- Design and conduct Board Retreat.
- Design and conduct Administrators Retreat.