



# SUPERINTENDENT ENTRY PLAN

## *Report on Findings*

*Presented by: Superintendent Nan Skiff Murphy*

**DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

February 2024



# Superintendent Entry Plan Introduction & Background

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Over the past six months I have been working through my first year entry plan which will serve as a foundation for my leadership approach and will ensure a smooth and seamless transition as I integrate myself into the Dedham community.

Stepping into this new role, my primary focus has been on meeting, listening and actively familiarizing myself with the district's unique strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

This Report of Findings launches the final phase of my Entry Plan, reporting on what I've learned so far and how this knowledge will be used to help share a strategic plan for the District over the next five years.



*Together, we will build a strong and vibrant learning community that nurtures the potential of every student and prepares them for success in the ever-changing world.*





# *Superintendent Entry Plan* **Introduction & Background**

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## *What is an Entry Plan?*

- Allows incoming administrators the **opportunity to learn** about a district's values, goals, aspirations and challenges.
- A process by which to **learn about the strengths and challenges of the organization.**
- Provides baseline data to **determine and build future work.**

### ***Strategic Leadership***

***WHAT?***

**What** are we doing?

***WHY?***

**Why** are we doing this?

***HOW?***

**How** does it connect to the other things we are doing?

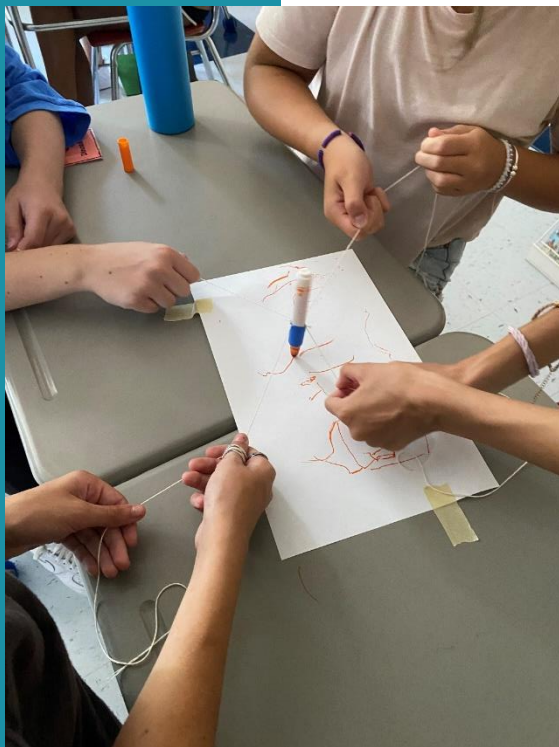
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# *Superintendent Entry Plan* **Objectives & Goals**

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- Create opportunities and events that allow for the community – parents, staff and town administrators to meet, discuss and provide feedback on how they would like to see Dedham Public Schools advance over the next few years.
- Develop a more comprehensive view of the opportunities, strengths, advantages and ways in which Dedham schools excel.
- Gain insights into where we can improve and grow.



## ***FOCUS ON 4 AREAS:***

- Academics & Student Success
  - Operations
  - Culture & Community Connections
  - School Committee Collaboration
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## *Report on Findings* **DPS At A Glance**

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- Approximately 2,699 students from PK -12
- Approximately 473 educators & staff
- 7 schools
- \$23,000 per pupil spending (FY22)
- 11:1 - student to teacher ration SY23





# Report on Findings DPS Data Points

## 2023-2024 Enrollment

District Type

Public

Number of Schools

7

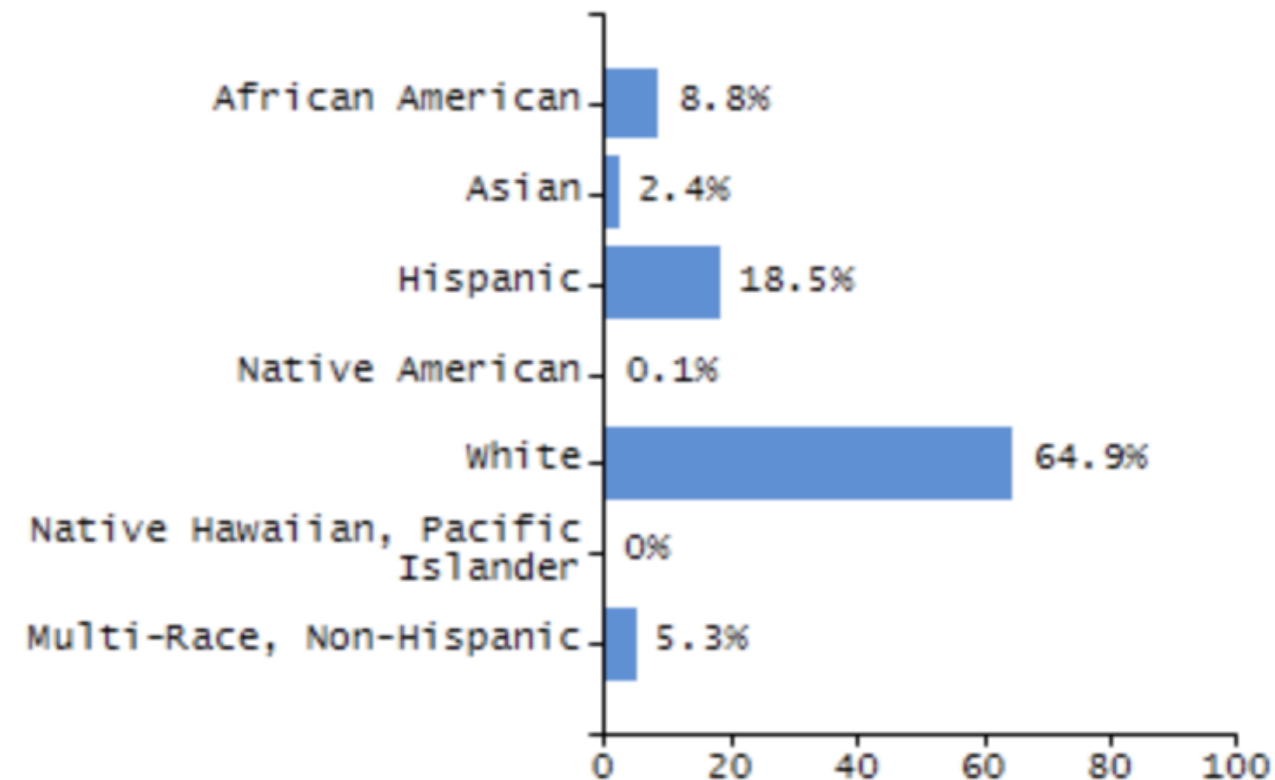
Enrollment

2,699

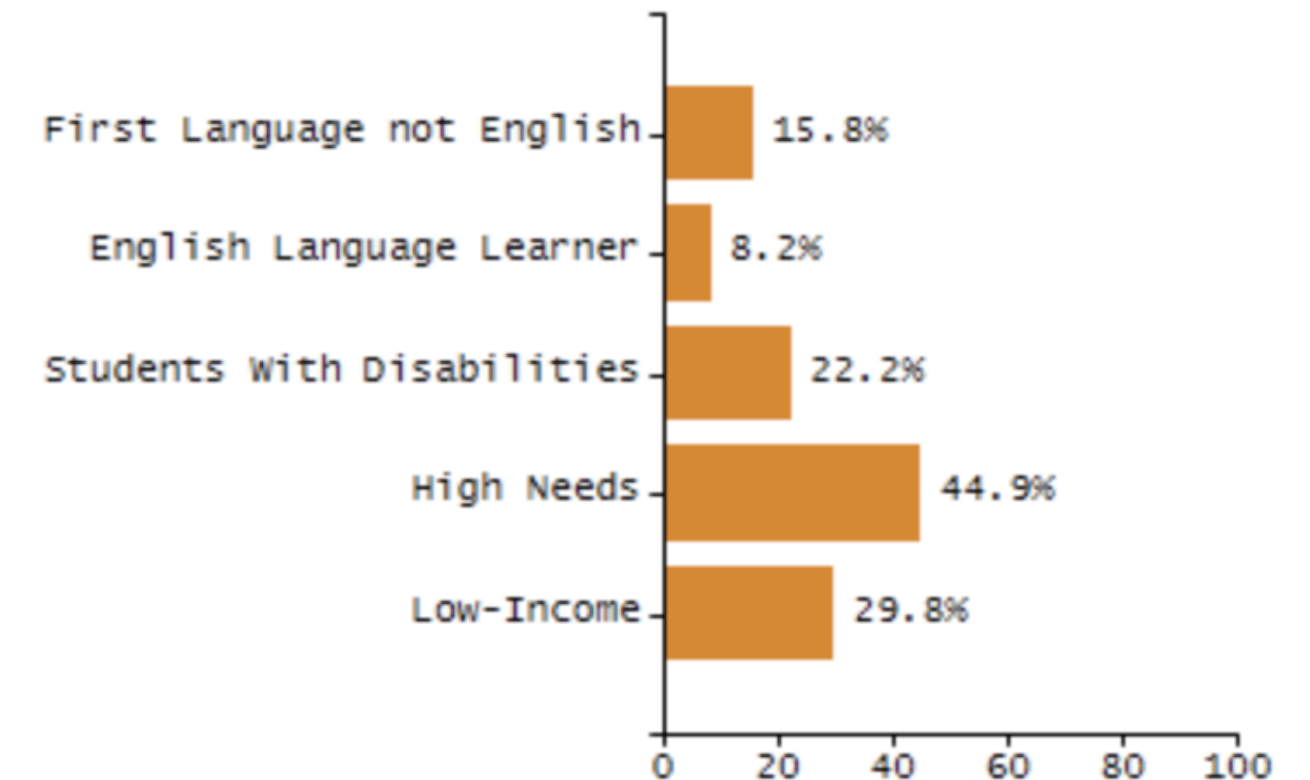
Grades Served

PK - 12

Student Race and Ethnicity



Selected Populations





2023 Progress toward improvement targets													
Indicator		All students (Non-high school grades)			Lowest performing students (Non-high school grades)			All students (High school grades)			Lowest performing students (High school grades)		
		Points earned	Total possible points	Weight %	Points earned	Total possible points	Weight %	Points earned	Total possible points	Weight %	Points earned	Total possible points	Weight %
Achievement	English language arts achievement	2	4	-	2	4	-	4	4	-	-	-	-
	Mathematics achievement	2	4	-	4	4	-	2	4	-	-	-	-
	Science achievement	0	4	-	-	-	-	0	4	-	-	-	-
	Achievement total	4	12	60.0	6	8	67.5	6	12	40.0	-	-	-
Growth	English language arts growth	2	4	-	2	4	-	3	4	-	-	-	-
	Mathematics growth	3	4	-	3	4	-	3	4	-	-	-	-
	Growth total	5	8	20.0	5	8	22.5	6	8	20.0	-	-	-
High school completion	Four-year cohort graduation rate	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-
	Extended engagement rate	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	4	-	-	-	-
	Annual dropout rate	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-
	High school completion total	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	12	20.0	-	-	-
Progress toward attaining English language proficiency	English language proficiency total	3	4	10.0	-	-	-	0	4	10.0	-	-	-
Additional indicators	Chronic absenteeism	4	4	-	4	4	-	0	4	-	-	-	-
	Advanced coursework completion	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-
	Additional indicators total	4	4	10.0	4	4	10.0	4	8	10.0	-	-	-
Weighted total		4.1	9.6	-	5.6	7.6	-	5.0	10.0	-	-	-	-
Percentage of possible points		43%		-	74%		-	50%		-	-		-
Percentage of possible points by gradespan		58% Weight of non-high school results:68%						50% Weight of high school results:32%					
2023 Criterion-referenced target percentage		56%											



# Report on Findings DPS Data Points

2023 Next Gen MCAS

District Name	% Meeting or Exceeding Expectations					Growth average SGP			
	Grades 3-8		Grade 10		Grades 5 and 8	Grades 3-8		Grade 10	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	Science	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
<a href="#">Ashland*</a>	55%	58%	76%	76%	55%	55	60	57	64
<a href="#">Bellingham*</a>	32%	32%	56%	42%	36%	45	44	46	49
<a href="#">Braintree*</a>	52%	56%	71%	72%	56%	51	54	47	56
<a href="#">Dedham*</a>	46%	47%	64%	69%	35%	48	53	57	57
<a href="#">East Longmeadow*</a>	45%	43%	64%	49%	48%	51	48	36	43
<a href="#">Northampton*</a>	47%	38%	76%	67%	41%	49	49	61	67
<a href="#">Norton*</a>	40%	35%	61%	49%	34%	49	43	52	51
<a href="#">Stoneham*</a>	47%	49%	76%	61%	56%	47	49	54	51
<a href="#">Swampscott*</a>	47%	46%	58%	55%	46%	48	50	42	54
<a href="#">Tewksbury*</a>	46%	43%	72%	65%	51%	51	47	38	42
<a href="#">Tyngsborough*</a>	34%	37%	62%	67%	44%	42	48	42	48





## *Listening & Learning*

- What are the things we should be most **proud** of when it comes to Dedham Public Schools?
- What do you believe are some of our **challenges** as a District?
- What are **important considerations** we should be taking into account when **planning the path forward** for Dedham Public Schools?





# *Report on Findings* **Collecting Stakeholder Input**

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- Community / Neighborhood Meet & Greet
- Meetings with local and state leaders
- Family & Staff Survey sent in Nov 2023
- In-Person School Visits
- Faculty Forums
- Half-Day Residency Visits At All 7 Schools
- Community / Family Zoom Meet & Greet
- Community & School Events
- Direct Emails Sent by Families or Staff
- Classroom Visits, Student Group Drop-ins, Student Lunch Visits



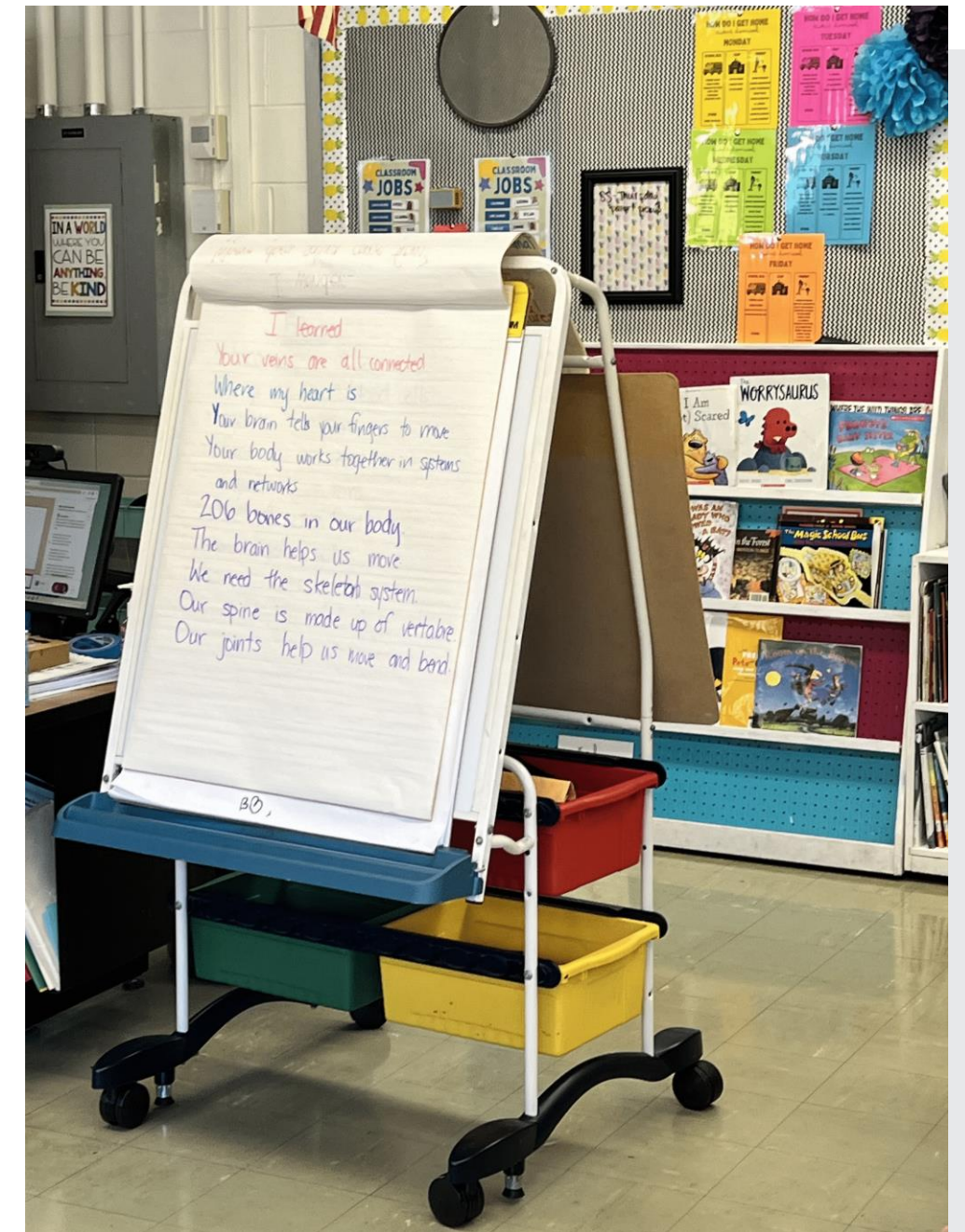
# Report on Findings Stakeholder Conversations

## Overview

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### Four Common Themes Surfaced:

- Confidence in Educators and School Leadership
- Desire to Increase Academic Achievement
- Concern for Aging School Facilities
- Inequities Across Schools







# *Report on Findings* **Sources of Pride**

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- **High Quality, Committed Faculty & Staff**
  - Dedication, passion for their work, commitment to students and academic success
  - Strength of leadership team – high levels of confidence in school principals
- **Strength of School Community**
  - Strong parent support, interest, engagement
  - Community support and investment in the schools
  - Increased diversity of student body
- **Student Care, Social Emotional Supports & Strong Special Ed Programs**
  - Commitment to ensuring students have strong, supportive & caring learning spaces
  - Successful, strong supports for high-needs students
- **Sense of Legacy & Tradition**
  - Generational connections for staff and student families
- **Positive Sense of Place, Connection to Colleagues**
  - Educators dedicated to students, schools and colleagues





## Quotable Quotes Sources of Pride

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“

*Our teachers! They are so amazing and really the heart and soul of our schools. I am a new parent to the school district but have only heard great things about teachers - especially in elementary schools.*

“

*I am super proud of <our school> community. They are inclusive, they welcome everyone and our principal is fantastic.*

“

*Another thing is just how much teachers and staff here care for our students; both their well-being and making lessons fun and engaging.*

”

“

*....We love how outwardly happy the teachers and staff are each day! It reflects on their passion for their work, and overall fulfillment and this translates into a phenomenal and impactful learning environment for the students!*

”





# *Report on Findings* **Challenges Facing Our District**

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- **Strength of Academics & Student Success**

- Perception and concerns that Dedham isn't performing as well academically as it had been
- Lack of focus at all grade levels for ongoing academic improvements, opportunities and supports
- Teachers are fatigued, pulled in many directions, looking for meaningful support

- **Lack of Defined Vision, Future Planning**

- Lack of understanding on District focus, purpose, improvement plans or overall vision
- Alignment needed to bring all the positives together in a cohesive, focused way towards a common goal/purpose.

- **School Building Conditions & Upkeep**

- Missing a comprehensive, defined plan for ongoing school building maintenance, improvements.
- Aging buildings are considered unsafe, inaccessible, and unhealthy
- School experiences and learning environments vary greatly in new vs old buildings

- **Ensuring Student Equity & Opportunity**

- Distinct school cultures and supports creating imbalance of staff / student experience and enrichments
- No deliberate inclusion, equity or belonging work happening across District

- **Inconsistent Communication**

- Lack of clear, accessible and meaningful information at classroom, school and district levels





## Quotable Quotes Challenges Facing Our District

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“

*Building confidence ... in terms of the overall educational experience and ability to foster learning and development that maximizes each student to their fullest potential*

“

*There seems to be a disconnect between upper administration and what is really happening in our classrooms and what teachers really need for support.*

“

*...complete transparency with the taxpayers on the dire state of our facilities, how it impacts learning and what it will take to bring us to an acceptable state.*

“

*I have felt that there is not enough accountability within the district. This includes addressing behavior issues within the district, not being open to opinions of others and educators who are allowed to get by with barely doing the minimum required.*

”





# *Report on Findings* **Considerations For Future Plans**

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- **Creating & Communicating A Vision, District Mission and Goals**
  - Defining who we are, what we are doing as a District.
  - Aligning efforts, educator training, and initiatives to achieve this defined vision
- **Elevating Academics, Student Outcomes & Opportunities**
  - Aligning materials, resources and efforts across grade-levels and schools
  - Providing high-quality professional development and support for educators
  - Creating new, modern and impactful student opportunities at all levels
- **School Building Planning**
  - Clearly outlining what is needed, what it will take and how we will fix the issues in our aging school buildings
  - More actively communicate and partner with community to understand what is needed and why
- **Leveraging Legacy Without Sacrificing Potential**
  - Build on pride without allowing it to hold students and systems back from future potential





## Quotable Quotes Considerations For Future Plans

*Our district is both cheap and nostalgic and many believe that what was good enough 30 years ago is good enough now too. I know that you were in a tough position coming in with many decisions made, but I believe that we need a clear directive from the superintendent about the best path forward to fix and maintain functional school buildings.*

*Set goals for greatness and hold everyone accountable who fall short of measurable goals. This includes students, faculty and staff in all areas of the district. If you create a culture where everyone expects the best, then you will see everyone thrive. In my experience over the past decade there has not been that accountability and the result has been a lack of pride within the district*





# Report on Findings Takeaways & Next Steps

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## STRATEGY & FOCUS

- Gather a team of community stakeholders to develop 5-year strategic plan for District
- Update District mission, vision, core values and key initiatives
- Define priorities then work with educators to focus and align professional development, student programming and operational systems

## EQUITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Work with educators, parent organizations and schools to look more closely at inequities and how to address them
- Establish a defined, district-wide approach to address inclusion & belonging

## FACILITIES

- Engage with Facilities subcommittee to finalize feasibility studies, complete planning efforts for long-term school building efforts
- Address and develop capital facilities plan to manage current school conditions

## COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

- Create or improve communication methods to families – ensuring consistent, updated materials and information on classroom, school and district information
- Offer more in-person access and opportunity for engagement.
- Create Superintendent Student Advisory
- Create Superintendent Faculty Advisory







Listen  
Learn  
Align  
Connect  
**Inspire**