

COURTNEY R. JOHNSON

Professional Growth Plan

GENERAL INFORMATION

Title: Special Assistant

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Education: Educational Technology Leadership (Ed.D.)

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VISION STATEMENT

A global leader is philanthropic, innovative, and transformative while engaging in service minded initiatives to foster positive change and impact.

MISION STATEMENT

To change hearts and minds in providing a world-class educational experience for today's scholars, tomorrow's leaders.

ED. TECHNOLOGY PHILOSOPHY

The purpose of educational technology is to enhance pedagogy and prepare learners to become responsible and responsive citizens in this digital age. Educational technology enriches teaching and learning by creating and using tools to facilitate progressive outcomes. Such outcomes are inclusive of fostering critical thinking, acquiring new knowledge, building perseverance, developing technology literacy, and strengthening efficacy. This instructional platform lends itself to a synergetic approach as educational stakeholders [parents, students,

teachers, leaders, and community partners] are empowered to engage in collective efforts to support organizational goals.

Leaders must manage their staff in engaging and constructive ways, to motivate them to learn and do more. Implementing best practices grant leaders within the educational sector the ability to take scholastic technology to a whole new level (Puckett, 2014). Ipek and Ziatdinov (2017) suggest educational technology facilitates cognitive and constructivist learning theories to obtain a connection between instructional and learning. Its facilitative approach does not control learning environments like one-on-one settings, virtual environments, distance learning, augmented realities, and learning designs. Harold (2016) cites Karen Billings, vice president of the educational technology network for the Software and Information Industry Association, who defines educational technology as a means for students to access peers, experiences, experts, and audiences they could not otherwise reach. Technology thus connects the learner to a broader community to develop skills.

LEADERSHIP STYLE

Transformational leadership ensures vision, collaboration, motivation, empowerment, and support. An effective leader establishes a clear vision, enhances the culture of the organization, addresses the needs of its followers, sets high expectations, encourages creativity, and serves as a role model. This framework is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals; the followers' motives and personal and professional needs are met; transformational leadership encompasses an exceptional form of influence that inspires participants to over achieve (Northouse, 2013).

Transformation leadership possess fluid qualities as implementers can blend other leadership frameworks. Paired with transformational leadership, I exercise servant leadership qualities to demonstrate my personal and professional commitment to the field of education. This leadership style also incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership (Northouse, 2013). I combine elements of servant leadership in my professional practices by simply servicing the district and its neighboring communities. This is evident in my on-going participation in community drives, health fairs, community service initiatives, and fiscal support to local organizations.

ROLE AS SPECIAL ASSISTANT

Leadership

Assists in planning and implementing staff development and transferring skills to principals and teachers.

I lead and plan sessions for the High School Leadership Team (HSLT) meetings for the Principals, Vice Principals, and Department Chairs. Based on guidance from Dr. Ortiz, I meet with the other SAs and Clerk to frame the agenda. Once completed, the agenda is reviewed and revised by Dr. Ortiz. After that process, I meet with each presenter individual or with colleagues to ensure alignment with the [Next Decade](#) and the departmental goals.

Possess knowledge of educational principles, theories, and practices.

As the Senior Special Assistant, the technical assistance and recommendations provided to date aligns with educational theories and practices. To ensure influence, it is critical that shifts progress in the area of transformation leadership from the HSLT. In the beginning much of the approach and style consisted of The Instructional Leader must focus on student improvement

through fostering relationships, personal commitment, and strategic planning. I have led by modeling appropriate interaction with the principals, even during challenging situations. As a result, the team remains focus on priorities to promote positive outcomes.

I am striving to improve in managing the pulling priorities by designing systems between the Special Assistants to ensure systems are in place to track student growth and development. For example, we are creating a coaching tracker to monitor the supports extended to the school leaders. Additionally, making the Next Decade Touchpoint tracker will also help monitor alignment between departmental and district goals.

Establish and maintain effective working relationships with administrative and school site personnel.

While I engage with central office and school based personnel throughout the district, my assigned schools consist of West Side High School, American History High School, University High School, Newark School of Global Studies, Arts High School, Newark Vocational High School, and Technology High School. Ranging from the school clerks, head custodians, technology coordinators, DC, and Principal, I support the school based staff accordingly. My relationships with central office personnel ranges from Office of Safety, Teaching and Learning, Human Resources, Student Support, and Information Technology. Collectively, we plan sessions involving assessments and PLCs, secure data/reports, or assist with requests needed for the state and/or local agencies—CTEs and Dual Enrollment.

I lead the Math Success Initiative (MSI) with NJIT. MSI is a dual enrollment program that offers pre-calculus and calculus courses to students attending Central HS, Technology HS, Science Park HS, West Side HS, and Malcolm X Shabazz HS. I meet weekly with Dr. Alexander and communicate concerns/updates. Currently we are drafting the MOU for SY 2020-21 and

working on recruitment strategies based on observations from the current academic year.

Another component to this program is the staff development that the math teachers attend from each of these five sites. I attend as the district liaison and communicate outcomes with the Principals.

Provides technical assistance to principals and teachers.

I provide technical assistance to Principals, VPs, DCs, support staff, and teachers. Most recently, technical assistance included demonstrating how to run the Demand Report via SchoolMint and Transitional Grade Report via Tableau. These details are needed to support each school with their respective enrollment recruitment strategies. It is imperative that schools fill the seats allocated for their site. Some schools have exceeded their capacity while others have not. In this case, I provided them with the list of the 8th grade students (approximately 20%) who have not applied to any of the high schools. From there the school can invite the student and their family to attend a virtual session to learn more about the high school and register for the upcoming school year. Additionally, I shared the report with each principal consist of the first choice commitments as it is critical that the school maintains contact to ensure that the student remains with the school. Students have until the end of January to switch school rankings. This can become problematic for high schools that are challenged in this area. Prior to this, outreach I worked along with the Office of Student Life (Supervisor of School Counselors and Supervisor Social Workers) to plan and track the number of presentations the Principals completed to promote their sites to the 8th grade students.

Service Oriented

Communicates information between schools and school leadership teams.

Through use of the HSLT Google Classroom, information is pushed out to the Principals and appointed staff in the following areas: management and coaching of instructional staff, organizational leadership, transformational leadership, curriculum, assessment, and instruction, and student and family support. I share communications between external and internal agencies in this shared platform. In addition, posts and assignments are monitored to minimize duplication of requests, increase productivity and streamlining. This was a huge undertaking in August to create this method of communication which the HSLT launched in September.

Facilitates obtaining resources from Central Office.

This encompasses completion of work orders, securing a project manager to oversee large projects at a high school, delivery of Chromebooks or hotspots, and materials needed for opening day. For example, I lead eight walkthroughs between September and October to assess whether or not the high school sites were ready to receive students in-person. There were materials lacking as well as operational systems that were not put into place. This required a great deal of follow-up to yield results. In September 1 out of 4 schools were ready for openings. In October 4 out of 4 schools were recommended for reopening.

Assists in assessing the educational, financial and managerial needs of the schools.

I review and provide guidance regarding budget transfer requests and requisitions. Previous projects concerning this area of focus have included drafting MOUs with external partners to ensure alignment with district pricing. Finally, preparing and drafting a modeled budget presentation for the Principals to access in preparation of the upcoming budget presentation. In regards to the managerial aspects, I have assist with the recruitment and selection of the two principals of the new high schools opening in the fall.

Quality of Work

Perform other duties as assigned.

Prepare clear, concise correspondence and reports containing findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the Superintendent and Deputy's Office.

Computer and technical skills result in managing the virtual sessions held with an audience consisting of 20-98 participants via Webex.

Oversee the submission of request to internal stakeholders. Once published on the Principal Point's Newsletter, I will reach out to the requester to secure the submissions and work closely with the Principal so that the high school network is in compliance. This approach was established following routine challenges with some leaders submitting paperwork on time

PROFESSIONAL GOALS

SHORT TERM GOALS

- Integrate educational technology studies into my current position as a Special Assistant of the High School Leadership Team with the Newark Board of Education.

Throughout the NJCU Summer Institute, I have revised my academic plans to integrate educational technology into Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and school-based mentoring. I look forward to working collectively with educational leaders, instructors, policymakers, and investors in creating a sound SEL curriculum that is inclusive of technology education (July 1, 2021).

- Work collectively with the Office of Student Support Services, university partners, and MENTOR Nationals to ensure that students know that they are loved and come to school daily. This is driven by Love, Inspiration, Focus, Excellence (August 1, 2021)
- Explore technology and how it may be applied to improve the SEL curriculum in the school district. Each week potential vendors and agencies meet with my colleagues and

I to discuss partnerships. I am amazed by the number of organizations that wish to work with NBOE. As an administrator, I will have to make informed decisions that will aid the district in advancing goals which are outlined in the Next Decade Strategic Plan (June 1, 2021)

LONG TERM GOALS

- Complete the Educational Technology Leadership Ed.D. Program with Cohort Seven members. This degree will be dedicated to Catherine D. Johnson and Kevin D. Hopson, my heavenly angels. I am embracing the notion that this journey is shared with close friends, family, and mentors (May, 2022)
- Recruited as the of Director of Technology in Newark, NJ. It is my desire to work in the public school sector. As a product of the Newark Public Schools district, I am committed to the work featured in this emerging yet historical city. I am impressed by the accolades awarded to the Essex County Schools of Technology. I recall when the Donald Payne campus was being constructed. Granted the opportunity to join a team of leaders that promote cutting edge technology in the classroom setting while challenging learners in a state of the art facility is tremendous. (July 1, 2022)
- Expand local networks for Catherine's Closet by partnering with agencies to support the non-profit throughout the year. With over 16,000 girls in the New York/New Jersey areas have benefited from the generosity of Catherine Closet, Inc., a non-profit organization that was responsible for dressing girls in designer [Armani, Ralph Lauren, and Jessica McClintock] gowns for their prom (Kessler, 2017). The impact of this organization named after my late twin sister is remarkable. In Catherine's college

admission essay, she wrote, “people will know my name not for fame or fortune or out of Vanity, but they will know me because I have helped someone”(Kessler, 2017).

(October 12, 2022)

References

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