

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION

With respect to interactions with district staff, the Superintendent shall not fail to ensure an organized, mission focused and empowering culture exists for all employees in the service of students.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitations Policy EL-3 “Staff Relationships” in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true as of August 25th, 2015.

Dr. Mark Mansell, Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT’S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

I interpret this expectation regarding staff relationships to mean the board believes the district must interact, support and communicate with the staff of the district in a positive and supportive manner. In general, using the district’s learning model to engage the learning energy of staff in a similar way that we expect staff to use it for students. Operating in this way will increase the likelihood that a positive and supportive learning culture will be developed for students and therefore maximize the opportunity for students to accomplish the expectations set forth in the Board’s Ends Policies.

REPORT

There are nine specific areas described in this policy. The following will address each specific area of EL-3 as best as possible. At the time of this report, I believe that the district is in compliance with the Board’s expectations.

- 1. The superintendent shall not fail in having a long-term plan for the district that has gained the support of all stakeholders and is approved by the Board. IN***

COMPLIANCE

Our planning is very organic in nature and is customized to the teams of learners that comprise the organization. The foundation of our plans, whether they are at the classroom, building or district level, has at its foundation the Board’s Ends and Limitations policies. But the fiber that runs through them all is the District’s Learning Model that shapes our ongoing learning culture. Six broad areas of focus are as follows:

- A) High Cognitive Demand Learning Environments;
- B) Personal Learning Technologies;
- C) Family Support and Engagement Services;
- D) Safe Schools;
- E) Flexible Learning Experiences; and
- F) Data Driven Decision-making.

Examples of our efforts in each of these areas are numerous, but the following are a few highlights:

- High Cognitive Learning Environments – Our district learning model is founded on this expectation. Over the past decade of developing and implementing this model, it has been incorporated into virtually everything we do. From lesson design, to student activities; from professional practices to principal and teacher evaluations, HCD learning is the foundation of our work and professional practices within the district.
- Personal Learning Technologies – We continue to move forward in our efforts to provide a learning environment that supports the increased use of personal learning technologies. Each year we have expanded our use of portable electronic devices (district owned as well as learner owned) within the classroom. This coming year we will make two additional leaps forward in this area by expanding device access within the middle school (full classroom sets of devices in all core academic areas) as well as a significant leap forward with an increased internet connection from the district out to the internet. Additionally, we will fully implement our state Smarter Balanced Testing via digital devices this next year as well as in support of helping learners customize their experiences using technology as they pursue the Board’s Ends.
- Family support and Engagement Services – We continue to expand support for students and families through our Family-Community Resource Centers (FCRC) across the district. This past year we expanded the FCRC program from the K-8 campus to now include the high school. Part of this effort included the addition of the Wildcat Care Closet, which provides food, school supplies and other essential for students in need. Beyond all this, our Jump-start Backpack program, counseling supports, resource connections, partnership expansions and food assistance programs continued to grow this past year to support student learning.
- Safe Schools – Our staff continue to work hard to prepare for emergency situations at school. We have also enhanced the safety situations on the K-8 parking lot again last year. Additionally, we are working to expand our security camera systems by adding new network cabling to handle the demands of the new camera options available today. The cameras and recording technology will be added in the coming year as funding is secured.
- Flexible Learning Experiences – We started the Home School Academy two years ago and added the LINX program last year. Both programs are enjoying good success. Furthermore, we have added additional online credit recovery programs to help students succeed regardless of their circumstances. We have also strengthened our Running-Start supports and oversight, expanded our Advanced Placement options and added several College in the High School opportunities for students through partnerships with an area community college. Finally, we are adding a new after school extended learning option for students on the K-8, which will include extra transportation supports to assist students with that particular need.
- Data Driven Decision-making – We continue to enhance our data based decision making by adding new tools such as HOMEROOM to obtain the most accurate

information regarding student success. These data points are linked to the district's Learner Success Indicators (LSIs), which highlight critical markers of student success. These data points have guided us to implement our new after school extended learning program, enhanced our summer school options as well as many other flexible learning options available to students.

All of these efforts were generated through a process of continually analyzing the needs of learners over time. Whether this was through Linkage meetings or our on-the-ground conversations with stakeholders – we are continually learning what our stakeholders need in support of their efforts to achieve the Board's Ends. Therefore, I am very confident that stakeholders have had countless opportunities to provide input to the direction of the district.

2. *The superintendent shall not fail to provide positive, mission focused professional development opportunities for all staff.* IN COMPLIANCE

It simply doesn't make any sense to expect our teachers to create learning environments for students that are internally motivating, yet at the same time treat them in a top-down professional learning environment. Therefore, over the years we have worked very diligently to create, support and develop a learning culture that is aligned with the district's mission for all learners (students and adults).

All of our professional learning opportunities are based on our learning model, which in turn sets the tempo for the types of learning environments we expect our teachers to create for students. This includes professional development events such as our Fall and Spring teacher learning days where staff have multiple options from which to choose for their PD. Rarely do we hold all staff, one option experiences for our teachers. Additionally, this past year via the new FLEX time opportunity, teachers work in small teams on various topics of interest focused on improving their professional practice. We also held learning experiences for all of our new staff that immerses them in the district's Learning Model by allowing them to experience it personally. This sets the stage for them to create the same experience for their own students they serve.

The ownership of all these learning experiences by our staff (as learners themselves) provides a deep and broad awareness of the mission of the district and how their work as educators every day plays a vital role in its achievement. In short, to best “develop confident, self-reliant life-long learners”, staff need to have the opportunity to serve in an environment that fosters (and expects) that in themselves. I am confident our professional development opportunities provide this for all of our staff.

3. *The superintendent shall not fail to treat staff with respect, dignity and concern for their well-being.* IN COMPLIANCE

This is a fairly broad expectation and any number of examples could be used to demonstrate my respect and support of our staff. Examples could be clearly visible in my motivation to maintain/provide quality learning spaces for teachers and support staff in which to work (e.g. carpet in the HS, portable renovations, etc.). Other examples that as a Board you know about which could include how I have worked to provide significant, yet sustainable compensation improvements for staff. With all that said, it is the daily

interactions and encouragement I believe I bring to our team in my role as superintendent that represents my heart for supporting our staff. All combined, I personally believe my actions and words are well aligned with my understanding of this expectation.

4. *The superintendent shall not fail to handle personnel matters in a fair, appropriate and impartial manner.* IN COMPLIANCE

Having served as your superintendent for the past ten years, there have been a fair number of staff issues, collective bargaining agreement negotiations, organizational challenges and numerous changes that have created countless personnel matters that needed to be handled/managed. Despite recent upset regarding the Board's Choice resolution, I remain proud to report that we continue to enjoy strong relationships with our staff and believe the Board has ample direct evidence to support this. This is a result of fair, honest, dependable and proactive steps to be fair, appropriate and impartial with personnel matters.

5. *The superintendent shall not fail to appropriately and effectively delegate decision making to the appropriate level in a manner that empowers distributed decision-making.* IN COMPLIANCE

The district learning model serves to guide our actions in meeting the Ends policies of the Board. A key focus of our model is to help learners (students or adults) to become increasingly confident and independent in their ability to navigate a dynamic world. This is a key requirement for successful implementation of a decision delegation expectation. Grounding our decisions in the Ends policies and guided by the Executive and Administrative limitations helps build this collective confidence to make decisions yet at the same time remain a cohesive team. I feel very confident that this expectation is being met everyday with our administrators, teachers, support staff and especially with students.

6. *The superintendent shall not fail to recognize the good work that staff achieves on behalf of students.* IN COMPLIANCE

Recognition of staff can occur in many ways. Some individuals are comfortable with a range of statements of appreciation for special achievements, while others are more private and find certain recognition too uncomfortable. Striking a balance is a challenge at times and unquestionably this work can be tricky to navigate at times. One of the greatest attributes of having a very stable staff over time is we really get to know them pretty well. So we work hard at trying to adjust our district appreciation efforts to the specific desires of the recipients. For examples of recognition efforts we have done I would point to a personal thank you (either in notes or directly), certificates, stories/photos on our website, recognitions at meetings, presentation of awards/plaques, etc. Therefore, based on our staff and community, I feel we are meeting this expectation well.

7. *The superintendent shall not fail to recruit the best staff possible to achieve the mission of the district.* IN COMPLIANCE

This past year has significantly tested our efforts to recruit and hire the best educators and support staff possible. With the return of providing our special education services within

the district (not contracted out to the ESD), as well as filling other open positions due to three retirements and two staff departures, we have brought into our system more than 45 new employees into our payroll and HR systems. This does not include any coaches and/or advisors, which also required job postings, application screenings, candidate interviews, and required reference checks before hiring. Even though we lost a lot of experience with the staff who left our district, I am very proud to share that I believe our new team is an overall stronger group than our team was last year. This is a direct result of our collective efforts at recruiting and hiring high quality personnel to serve our students as required in this executive limitation.

In addition to the above work, we have implemented a strategy to “grow our own” leaders within the district. Since our learning model requires a shift of mind to implement, we have begun a process that trains and promotes people from within the district who have shown exceptional skills in leadership and are committed to creating the types of learning environments that are essential to meeting the Board’s End policies. Overall, as a small school district connected to a larger urban area, I believe we are doing quite well attracting and retaining high-quality instructional and support staff to the district.

8. *The superintendent shall not fail to effectively manage employee union negotiations with minimal impact on district services to students. IN COMPLIANCE*

This year we have worked hard to implement the newly negotiated collective bargaining agreement we have with our teachers (LCEA). I believe this work has served to strengthen our relationship with the LCEA leadership as well as the membership as a whole. We have also begun the work to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement with our classified employees. Even though the negotiation process has been elongated due to their reaction to the Board’s Choice Resolution, I feel confident our relationship with the classified staff overall is positive and headed in an even more positive direction.

9. *The superintendent shall not fail to implement a process for calendar development that allows stakeholder input. IN COMPLIANCE*

We have followed a very similar process over the years to develop an effective and appropriate calendar that supports the mission of the district and works most effectively for the broadest group of stakeholders. Additionally, we have continued our practice of implementing a two-year calendar process that supports long-term planning. I am confident this process continues to meet the requirements of this expectation.