

**BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION**

The Superintendent shall not fail to establish a school environment that is safe, civil, supportive, conducive to effective teaching and learning, and free from unnecessary disruption.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitations Policy EL-17 “Student Conduct and Discipline” in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true as of February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Mark Mansell, Superintendent

**SUPERINTENDENT’S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY**

I interpret the board’s expectation regarding student conduct and discipline to mean that the district must make intentional and consistent efforts to create and enforce student behavior standards that are conducive to a high quality learning environment and supports the accomplishment of the board’s Ends policies. I further interpret this expectation to mean that if the behavior of a student is inappropriate, district staff must design and implement discipline action(s) aimed at changing student behavior in a manner that quickly refocus the student back onto their responsibility as a learner.

**REPORT**

There are two broad expectations with a total of thirteen specific sub-areas described in this policy. The following will address each area of EL-17 as best as possible. At the time of this report, I believe that the district is in compliance with each of these Board expectations.

***1. The Superintendent may not fail to adopt an age-appropriate, written, student conduct and discipline code that complies with state and federal laws, nor fail to:***

***a. Consult with staff, students, and the community in developing the code. IN***

**COMPLIANCE**

Each building works with staff on a consistent basis to discuss student discipline and conduct issues. This occurs through staff and site council meetings, as well as special meetings if needed. On an every-other year or every three-year basis (depending on the need), student and parent surveys are used to gather feedback and perspectives about student discipline and conduct. These ideas are incorporated with regular staff input to update/revise the student handbooks that map out the code of conduct for students.

- b. Establish procedures to prohibit the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school buses. IN COMPLIANCE***

The current code of conduct in the student handbook delineates clearly the expectation that school buildings and grounds are drug-free, alcohol-free and tobacco-free zones. Also, as per state law, all school facilities are marked with appropriate signage displaying this expectation. The district also has written policy (district policies 3240, 3240P and 4215) detailing this expectation as per state law.

- c. Establish procedures to prohibit the presence of firearms or other dangerous weapons on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school buses. IN COMPLIANCE***

The current code of conduct in the student handbook delineates clearly the expectation that the school building and grounds are gun-free and weapon-free zones. Also, as per state law, all school facilities are marked with appropriate signage displaying this expectation. As stated above, the district also has a written policy (district policy 4210) detailing this expectation as per state law.

- d. Establish an appropriate dress code that is enforced. IN COMPLIANCE***

The student handbook for each building clearly describes the appropriate school dress. Staff annually reviews the dress code for each building. It is my observation that staff and administrators do a good job of being aware of the dress code and work quickly and effectively with those who go beyond the approved limits.

- e. Establish procedures to afford students, parents, and school personnel equitable treatment and due process with regard to student conduct and discipline issues. IN COMPLIANCE***

Discipline, when needed, follows a clear progression of actions that are designed to change student behavior. Appeals beyond the principal are rare. I believe this is a testament to the good work the principals do. However, the few appeals that have moved to my office have been resolved using informal processes. I believe this is attributed to strong parental support for following fair rules, but also for the effective communication and relationships staff and administrators have with students and parents. In each case I have observed or participated in, due process was followed and efforts were expended to work together to support the student making the right choices.

- f. Establish procedures for student interrogations, searches, and arrests. IN COMPLIANCE***

Administrators follow good practices that are both consistently firm and focused, but also fair for the student. Good practices are used in situations such as investigations and searches. An example of this is to have two or more adults present (with at least one being of the gender of the student) during searches. Students usually are very cooperative, which again is a reflection of the relationship staff and administrators have with students. For those times when students are less than cooperative, the skills of administrators usually find the inconsistencies in stories through non-intrusive ways

to get the story correct and determine the appropriate actions to solve the problem. Because of a strong law enforcement partnership with the La Center Police Department and Clark County Sheriff's department, administrators bring them in promptly when appropriate.

***g. Establish procedures for written appeal to the Board from a decision to expel, suspend, or deny admission to a student. IN COMPLIANCE***

District policy (3241) details the process for appealing a decision to expel, suspend, or deny admission to a student. Even though there is an explicitly articulated process, the La Center way of doing business keeps the need for this type of action to a minimum. Most issues are handled at the building level and rarely even get to my office.

***h. Distribute the conduct and discipline code to each student. IN COMPLIANCE***

All students are given copies of the student handbook at the start of the year (or when they enroll as a new student during the school year). For high school students, the handbook is part of their required planners.

***i. Distribute to each student copies of any significant changes in the code, to include changes at the school level. IN COMPLIANCE***

In the event of a mid-year change in the conduct and discipline code, notification through the appropriate means of communication (official letters, newsletters, announcements, etc.) are used depending on the type and severity of the change.

***2. The Superintendent may not fail ensure that the code is enforced, nor fail to:***

***a. Take appropriate measures to eliminate student behavior that is deemed to be habitually disruptive of school operations or the learning process. IN COMPLIANCE***

District staff work hard to develop strategies for helping students make choices that support their responsibility as a learner. The one size fits all model of discipline often employed by large districts is not how we like to do business. District administrators work with each student to customize discipline actions in an effort to change inappropriate behavior. What I have seen is that discipline is focused on doing something for students instead of to students. I believe that is why we have so few appeals beyond the principal's office as stated in item 1(g) above.

***b. Identify students at risk of failure due to their conduct, and to provide for support services which may help them avoid such failure. IN COMPLIANCE***

As part of a building intervention team, administrators, counseling staff and teaching staff work together within each building to proactively address the needs of the student facing these types of challenges. Beyond this, a specifically created at-risk team is formed to further study the situation and design specific strategies to help the student fulfill their responsibilities as a learner.

*c. Discipline a special education student in accordance with the student's IEP. **IN COMPLIANCE***

Special education staff is brought into the process right away any time a student on an IEP is involved in a discipline situation. This is a critical step of supporting the student along their educational plan. Working with specialists who know the student best educationally helps administrators design discipline actions that are appropriate to change the student behavior. This is another example of doing something for students instead of to students.

*d. Ensure that appropriate disciplinary information is communicated to staff members who have direct contact with the student being disciplined. **IN COMPLIANCE***

For those staff members needing to know about discipline actions beyond student intervention teams or at-risk teams, a variety of methods of communications with staff are used as needed including email, staff meetings and/or individual conferences.