

### **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-8 “Student Safety, Attendance, 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 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

Dave Holmes, Superintendent

### **SUPERINTENDENT’S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY**

I interpret the board’s expectation regarding student safety, attendance, conduct and discipline to mean that the district must make intentional and consistent efforts to ensure students have a safe learning environment, provide supports and encouragement to students to attend school as well as create and enforce student behavior standards that are conducive to a high quality learning environment. The behavior of a minority of students or a single individual should not impede the learning of their peers. I therefore interpret this expectation to mean that if the behavior of a student is inappropriate, district staff must quickly design and implement discipline action(s) aimed at changing student behavior in a manner that refocuses the student back onto their responsibility as a learner.

### **REPORT**

There are four specific areas described in this policy. The following will address each specific area of EL-8 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 to have in place comprehensive school safety plans and hold regularly scheduled safety drills and trainings to prepare for anticipated situations. IN COMPLIANCE***

The district continues to have a successful record of training, preparing for and responding appropriately in emergency situations. This is a credit to our staff and students taking emergency preparations seriously and working together to practice and test our readiness. Lauri Landerholm, our district safety administrator, has received certification as a School Safety Officer by the Washington State Patrol, Criminal Division. The district continues to meet with our local police and fire departments to maintain optimal communication as we work together to ensure the safety of our schools. We have a “table top” exercise planned next month that will involve all of the area support agencies and our administrators. We will work through a scenario that is

designed to test our knowledge of our safety plans and exercise judgments in a fast paced environment. As usual, our schools have completed lockdown drills, an earthquake drill as well as a shelter in place drill in addition to the usual fire drills as required by state law. Finally, we have updated all of our safety plans to include the new county-wide nomenclature and symbols of *Lock In*, *Lock Out* and *Shelter In Place*. This information was detailed for you on the colored sheets that you received at last month's board meeting. More information on this can be found at the I Love You Guys Foundation website ([www.iloveguys.org](http://www.iloveguys.org)).

**2. *The superintendent shall not fail to develop an age-appropriate student attendance plan and regularly monitor attendance patterns in order to maintain high student attendance rates.* IN COMPLIANCE**

Our staff continues to work hard to both monitor and address any attendance issues with students. When a student is absent, personal phone calls go home for students in grades K-5 the morning of their absence. In grades 6-12, administrators use our automated School Messenger to call home to parents and inform them of an absence. This way parents are kept informed of absences. When absences become severe (10 or more absences) or chronic (18 or more), additional steps are taken to encourage better attendance. We have continued our efforts to seek legal actions through the courts (BECCA Law) to seek support for those students with chronic absenteeism. To cite some data that supports our work; the state average for chronic absenteeism (+18 absences) is 16.0%. Over the last three years, Woodland has averaged 14.3%, Kalama has averaged 16.36%, Ridgefield has averaged 18.36% and La Center has averaged 10.83%. Our efforts are definitely paying off.

**3. *The superintendent shall not fail to adopt an age-appropriate, written student conduct and discipline code that complies with state and federal laws.* IN COMPLIANCE**

Our principals continue to be diligent in keeping their student handbooks current and on target with changing needs. As you know, those handbooks are presented to the board each spring so that the board can review and approve them for distribution. Once approved, the handbooks are posted on all websites, made available to all students via their planners and reviewed at the classroom level across the district at the beginning of the school year. The installation of the new camera system is both a great deterrent and a wonderful resource when an incident takes place outside of the classroom. The old adage of an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure comes to mind here.

**4. *The superintendent shall not fail to ensure that the code is enforced.* IN COMPLIANCE**

It is my belief that a principal can measure the success around student discipline by the number of times they hear the phrase "that's not fair"! Students utter this phrase frequently when expectations are not clearly communicated and implementation or application of rules or policies are not enforced equally. Students have a keen sense of "fairness" and it should be every principal's goal to never hear those words when working with a student around a discipline issue. I believe our principals do a wonderful job of both enforcing the student conduct code and enforcing it fairly. I've heard only one appeal in the first half of the year. This indicates to me that principals are working

with students and families in a fair and equitable manner. For the entire district, year-to-date, we've only had 39 suspensions involving 30 students. These numbers are a significant reduction in the rate from previous years. While the goal will always be to have zero suspensions, our recidivism rate is only 15%.