

Monitoring Report - Ends Policy
E-3, Personal Skill Development

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION

The Board expects each student to develop the personal skills to be a confident and self-reliant learner in a complex and rapidly changing world.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby present my monitoring report on Ends Policy E-3 “Personal Skill Development” in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true as of October 28th, 2014.

Mark Mansell, Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT’S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

I interpret Personal Skill Development to mean the board expects each student to graduate with the personal skills and knowledge that will support their effort for effective life-long learning. This will be met by students having access to a wide range of experiences and opportunities that will provide the necessary learning opportunities for each of the following seven areas. As a measure of student success in accomplishing these Ends expectations, objective data (survey’s, awards, participation data, etc.), anecdotal descriptions as well as direct observations will be used to demonstrate effort towards and accomplishment of Ends-3 expectations. Each of the following areas provides a short narrative reflective of each building’s work to meet these expectations along with a summary statement.

REPORT

There are seven specific areas described in this policy. The following will address each specific area of Ends-3 as best as possible. Even though we can and will do better than what we are currently achieving, I believe at this time the district is meeting the intent of all the expectations of this policy.

1. *Integrate current technology as part of their learning efforts.* IN COMPLIANCE

In our district learning is a systemic way of being for all (students and staff) rather than simply a student endeavor. This is clearly seen in our collective efforts to integrate current technology into our learning efforts.

This past year we have continued to expand both our infrastructure capability and accessibility to support students learning. We have added additional devices and carts across the district and I see how staff is regularly and consistently integrating these learning tools into their classrooms. Additionally we have added technology classes in the middle school as an elective to increase the specific learning experiences in technology for students as a way to expand their skills set. Whether it is connected to a specific class or woven into a student’s regular learning experience, our staff is working hard to create the opportunities of students to use technology as a valuable part of their learning efforts.

All these efforts where enhanced by the implementation of the iCarts and iPads into the learning environments across the district. To say that the iPad has had an impact within our district is an

understatement. To me this past year we have made tremendous strides forward in not only helping our students achieve this Board expectation, I believe it has accelerated our work to rethink and redesign the learning environments we as teachers create for our students.

2. *Incorporate perspectives from other cultures in a manner that allows deep exploration of global and economic issues.* IN COMPLIANCE

The foundation of our social studies offerings is awareness of social, cultural and economic issues and differences. With that said, I will again point out that it is important to note that cultural differences is more than just skin color. Cultures are more than a people's race as well and our staff continues to work hard at analyzing what makes up a culture. Finally, it is important to realize that when we learn about diversity, it isn't about what divides us that we focus on, but rather that the differences we have creates a strength that brings us together.

3. *Experience personal pursuits such as music, art, drama, sports and/or service learning.* IN COMPLIANCE

We continue to provide our students a wide variety of experiences to support their broader development as a person. Our program offerings and consistency of programs is something I am specifically very proud of despite very challenging fiscal constraints we have experienced over the years. From the traditional activities we usually think of in schools (band, basketball, volleyball, football, drama, etc.) to less common opportunities such as Equestrian, Chess, science club and Imagine Tomorrow, we offer our students lots of experiences that meeting the expectations in this policy.

New this year is the added expectation of the need to provide service learning opportunities. To meet this expectation, we are in the process of adding a service experience for our middle school and high school students. It is called LEOS (Leadership, Education, Opportunity, Service), which is the youth program as part of Lions International. There has been a group that was formed in the middle school two years ago and it has now grown to more than 30 students. They have taken on many different projects such as food drives, building a garden in the empty court yard at the middle school and creating cards, placemats and decorations for our weekly senior citizen meals at the community center. The students are very dedicated and are taking full advantage of the opportunity to serve others through this new program.

4. *Gain a financial awareness and understand the importance of personal fiscal responsibility.* IN COMPLIANCE

Students at the high school have the option to take one of three classes on personal finance. These classes are offered in the afternoon to minimize the number of conflicts in student schedules (i.e. Skills Center). In addition to this, we continue to weave personal financial responsibility into the learning experience wherever we can. This goes beyond our set class on personal finances, but goes into virtually every part of learning experiences we provide students. As an example, middle school social studies students have done projects where they determine how to use personal budgeting as part of a virtual vacation to a region in order to explore the history of specific areas of our country. Beyond these formal classes and integrated personal finance experiences, we also talk about educational budgets and financial choices within Navigation advisories across the district.

5. *Participate in school and non-school community service activities that model selfless citizenship.* IN COMPLIANCE

Students have opportunities for many different forms of community service activities available to them. Some opportunities are planned and some are thrust upon us. Examples of planned opportunities are when students volunteer for events within the community such as various fundraisers for those in our community who need assistance (i.e. Dorenbecher, food drives, backpack program, annual Christmas tree sharing, etc.).

Examples of unplanned activities where students selflessly step up to help others is the case of when a student dies and the impact occurs. It is unfortunate that in the past few years we have had several students pass away due to various reasons (i.e. car accident, significant health issue, etc.). Each time we have had the need to face these life-impacting events, our students have stepped up to support each other, family, staff and community members. The Cody memorial in the middle school courtyard was a way for not only the students to help heal from his death, but also for family, friends and school staff.

All of these examples point to the many opportunities students have to see how they can be part of the solution within their schools and community.

6. *Connect how health, nutrition and physical fitness are essential to their efforts of life-long learning and to thrive personally.* IN COMPLIANCE

As stated in examples associated with the above expectations, our efforts to meet students' needs allows us to move away from the one-size-fits-all learning model to see how many different and personal experiences can help provide more meaningful opportunities for students to meet this expectation. One type of experience would be through our athletic programs where experts on nutrition and fitness beyond the sport have provided students with knowledge on health, nutrition and fitness. Staff have also customized opportunities for students to learn in this area through support groups such as Alateen, which is a group designed to help students whose lives have been impacted by alcoholism in their families or group activities to wrestle with crisis (i.e. death, divorce, drug use, etc.). Then there are the examples of how experiences are being developed to help students get more active such as the recent Bicycle Fair put on for elementary students last spring and again this fall. This and other opportunities are ways we assist our students in learning personal fitness is a way of life not just a class.

7. *Create appropriate learning support networks in a variety of settings.* IN COMPLIANCE

This expectation is an integral part of the district's Learning Model and an essential part of the students' expected Learner Competencies. To truly become a confident, self-reliant learning, students need to have the confidence and skill set to function well in a variety of settings. To accomplish this goal, students need to feel encouraged and supported to solve their own challenges. In a recent survey of middle school students, several questions were asked that shed some light into how students feel about their opportunity and comfort with reaching out to others for learning help.

63% of students felt they often worked with other students to solve problems often or always.

60% of students often or always felt comfortable talking to their teacher.

92% of students felt their teacher expected them to do their best often or always.

Having a supportive learning environment where they can reach out to teachers and other learners is critical to the creation of an appropriate learning support network. Our students consistently feel their school is doing just that.