Monitoring Report - Executive Limitations Policy
EL-12, Communications with the Public

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION

The Superintendent shall not fail to prepare and execute a community/public relations plan nor fail to prepare annual school and district progress reports to the public.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitations Policy EL-12 "Communications with the Public" in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true as of November 24th, 2009.

Mark Mansell, Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT'S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY

I interpret the board's expectation regarding communication with the public to mean that the district must make intentional and consistent efforts to communicate effectively with all stakeholders about the performance of the school district and the value it provides. Additionally, this expectation is founded on the board's desire to build upon the trust and the goodwill the district enjoys with the community.

REPORT

There are seven specific areas described in this policy. The following will address each specific area of EL-12 as best as possible. At the time of this report, I believe that the district is in full compliance with six of these Board expectations.

1. ***The superintendent shall not fail to establish and maintain strong links with community support groups and key communicators to ensure they are kept informed and are predisposed to provide support within the community on critical district issues to include bond/levy needs.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
   As a district, we work hard to stay connected to stakeholders, support groups and key communicators. We do this through a variety of sources including personal contact, phone calls, Power School (now Skyward), information meetings, open houses, community service activities and support of community activities.

   As examples of this effort over the past year, district staff has connected to community groups/organizations such as North Clark County Chamber, La Center Lions Club (health screening, Walk-n-Knock food drive, Fall Carnival, etc.), Elementary PTO, Middle School Parent Group, City of La Center, La Center 'Our Days' Festival, Clark County Youth Football, Lewis River Soccer Club, etc. The district's offering of Community Education programs continues to be strong, and makes many positive

connections with students, parents and community members with the district beyond the traditional school day. Each building connects with veterans through their Veterans Day programs in November. We have also held a fall community meeting each of the last five years (2005 – Levy, 2006 – Growth Issues, 2007 – Facilities, 2008 – Graduation Requirements and Growth Issues and 2009 – Fiscal Challenges Caused by State & Federal Budget Reductions) to gather feedback from stakeholders on district programs and seeking advise on direction.

Each building works hard to connect to parents and community in many ways.

ELEMENTARY: They hold open house and curriculum night, have extensive parent-teacher conference efforts, seek parent "brainstorming" sessions for curriculum, library, police station and fire department through walking field trips, Spring Celebration, bulletin boards, Parent Support Nights, completion of their annual report that is available to the community along with a strong commitment to producing an informative weekly newsletter to name some of the many forms of communications and linkages with parents and the community.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: They hold a welcome back BBQ for parents, involve parents in the decision making process, seek feedback and input through surveys, Parent-Teacher night, School Showcases, K-8 reader board, strong communication from the principal (via his newsletter and his parent email list) and through the completion of their annual report.

HIGH SCHOOL: They connect with parents through their Parent Link newsletter, Parent Math Nights, building website, staff websites, extensive use of PowerSchool (and now Skyward) to communicate information to parents, use the connections through Navigation 101 to support students' efforts to learn and choose their educational pathways along with the completion of their annual report.

As superintendent, I have personally met with community groups and worked with many committed community members as part of past bond and levy campaigns. I have also attended city council meetings, participated in community functions and serve as part of the La Center Lions Club. Additionally, I have begun to communicate through a superintendent blog (www.talktothesuper.info) in an attempt to go into the digital arena.

2. ***The superintendent shall not fail to publish and distribute a district newsletter at least twice a year, reserving a column for a "From the Board of Directors" article.***
IN COMPLIANCE
The district has published two newsletters (one in the fall and one in the spring) during the 08/09 school year. The fall newsletter for 2009 is about to go to press. We are simply holding it up until the levy information is finalized. All the newsletters have included space for "From the Board of Directors" article as expected.

3. ***The superintendent shall not fail to use multiple media resources including the district website to connect with the community and provide essential information.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
The district uses many forms of communication to provide information to students, parents and community about school successes, opportunities and future challenges. The website once again continues to serve as a key source of both current information as well as archival information for patrons. We also use traditional methods of communication via newsletters, traditional letters, post card notices and the district's reader board. Additionally, the district continues to use the Connect-ED phone/email system to communicate with parents regarding emergency situations.

In addition to the above-mentioned methods of communication, we have worked hard to provide information to area newspapers (Columbian and Reflector) as requested. Examples of stories La Center has been featured in include our NCLB status from last year's WASL scores and La Center being the first district in the state to approve CORE 24 aligned graduation requirements.

As superintendent, I have consistently made myself available to reporters to answer questions and promote our district.

4. ***The superintendent shall not fail to promote and enhance the role and public profile of the board as the district's principle connection with the community, and the community's voice in governing the district.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**
Throughout the course of my duties, I have the opportunity to represent the district in many different events and various meetings. In many of these meetings, I have had the opportunity to promote the board and detail some of their actions as the governing body for the school district.

As an example of this work, we have received many inquiries about our work with Policy Governance. Furthermore, interest in the district's new graduation requirements has been strong. Finally, I was asked to speak at ESD 112 annual board retreat about professional learning communities. All these examples are rooted in the work of the board as a learning team and the direction it has set to develop life-long learners.

5. ***The superintendent shall not fail to include in the annual progress report student achievement data and graduation rates, disaggregated by gender, ethnic, socioeconomic, disability, and other categories, indicating student progress toward accomplishing the Board's Ends policies*****.** **IN COMPLIANCE**
The district's annual report is available on-line in the community section of the district's website (www.lacenterschools.org). As allowable by law, the information required of the section is included in my Ends-2 policy monitoring report that is available online. Some data only represents a small number of students, and would potentially violate their right to privacy. Therefore, if any information is left out it is only due to this situation.

6. ***The superintendent shall not fail to include in the annual progress report information about school and district strategies intended to address achievement problems and to accomplish the Board's Ends policies*. <u>NOT IN FULL COMPLIANCE</u>**
   We made improvements in our annual report from the district level again this year. I believe it is a better representation of the spectrum of overarching work that occurs at the district level. With that said, our strategy for improvement is a building centered, but district-wide connection effort based on our learning to learn focus. Reflecting on this specific expectation as I write this report, I believe I am not in compliance because of our articulation of specific strategies (i.e. strategic improvement plan) is not included in these reports. Part of this is because I failed to be intentional about this communication, but part of it also is because of the nature of our work. Without question I know this work is occurring and we are working hard in our own learning in support of students. However, I believe I could have been far more intentional about this expectation. Therefore, I am not in compliance for item 6 at this time.

7. ***The superintendent shall not fail to include in the annual progress report revenues, expenditures, and costs of major programs and elements of district and school operations.* <u>IN COMPLIANCE</u>**
   As stated in number 5 above, the district's annual report is available on-line in the community section of the district's website (<u>www.lacenterschools.org</u>). We have also expanded information on the website in many other areas. This past year the district made the Evergreen Freedom Foundation's Honor Roll for Transparency for our information sharing via the website.