Monitoring Report - Ends Policy
E-4, Social Skill Development

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION
The Board expects each student to acquire the necessary social skills needed to be successful in a complex and rapidly changing world.

CERTIFICATION
I hereby present my monitoring report on Ends Policy E-4 "Social 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 June 22nd, 2010.

Mark Mansell, Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT'S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY
I interpret Social Skill Development to mean the board expects each student to graduate with the social 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 four 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-4 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 four specific areas described in this policy. The following will address each specific area of Ends-4 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 four areas of this policy.

1. *Be able to share, negotiate solutions to problems, respect diversity and act assertively in an appropriate manner*. IN COMPLIANCE

Elementary School – *There are numerous ways staff develop and give students experiences in each of these areas. Our use of Second Step in each grade level is supportive of students' learning in the given areas. It focuses a great deal on developing empathy skills and problem solving skills. Our staff also strives to consistently support students' learning in Second Step by utilizing and supporting what has been learned through Second Step in such places as the playground. One example is that of how we have painted a problem-solving wheel on the blacktop and playground teachers guide students in using it when needed. Many times students can be seen going to the wheel to use it on their own. The mentioned skills are also developed through our social studies curriculum and individualized extension efforts by our classroom teachers. Though we feel our efforts thus far have been helpful, we do see the need for more consistent and*

effective support K-5. For this reason we are revitalizing and enhancing our efforts school-wide for the 2010-2011 school year. Our overarching school theme for next year will be "Pawsitive Community". Under this broad theme, staff will have ten sub themes, one for each month. These will include such topics as being a self-directed learner and a problem-solver. Each will be worked on intensively throughout the whole school. These efforts will also support our content area efforts.

Middle School – *Staff continue to work hard to encourage student voice in their classrooms and in regards to issues concerning their school. We continue to have a strong student leadership group of over 60 kids who address school concerns. Staff has also developed a successful bully intervention program, which has helped to educate the bully and prevent further incidences. I meet with the leadership group on a regular basis. Our social studies and language arts teachers stress diversity in their Curriculum through the curriculum developed and subsequent discussions.*

High School - *We have many programs in place at the high school that promotes skill development around negotiation, sharing and personal relationship skills. Our psychology class houses our peer mediator team that is made up of approximately 12 trained students that work with their peers all year on just these skills. Our ropes course and the curriculum used there are designed to meet these same goals. Most all of our discipline situations with students are processed in a manner that allows the student to negotiate solutions to correct issues. Overall the goals that we now share to create learning environments that improve student to student flow of information shapes student activities that promote teamwork and improving skills in this area.*

Summation - *Each building addresses the need to provide knowledge and awareness of these important social skills in their own unique way. By the very nature of the way education in this district is delivered, there are numerous ways for students to learn these important skills. Everything from Knowledge Bowl to Bobcat Ambassadors; from National Honor Society to athletics, our students experience learning opportunities in this area that are very powerful. I believe our staff do a great job of teaching and modeling tolerance, acceptance of differences and being strong enough to stand up for what is right.*

2. *Have knowledge of factors that should guide their decisions when making responsible individual choices: drug use, sexuality, respect, compassion and honesty.*
IN COMPLIANCE

Elementary School - *We currently have experiences in social studies and other efforts focused at the appropriate developmental levels for supporting students in these areas. I also feel that our strong efforts being developed for next year will support our students as a whole to make better choices on their own. Some of those efforts are referred to in expectation #1 above.*

Middle School - *We have not had one drug, alcohol or smoking incident on campus this year. The Students Against Destructive Decisions group was very successful as the students involved had a strong influence among all peer groups.*

This year we had a health fair which focused on the dangers of drugs and alcohol as well as ways to live a healthy lifestyle. In June a presentation was given to students and parents about the types of drugs that our students may get access to, their effects and assistance for parents.

High School - *The biggest impact in the building this year around respect, compassion and honesty continues to come from the manner with which staff and administrators deal with violations of these standards. Both the Principal and Assistant Principal work with students to make disciplinary encounters learning opportunities before they are punishment events. Students respond well and learn from their mistakes. Our counselors created a new "community and building resource wall" last year to disseminate information on drug use, sexual activity and teen suicide among other things. Both counselors have gone to classrooms to do group presentations on these topics as well. We now have a functioning Alateen group in our school that meets bi-weekly with former teacher Nancy Stupfel and overseen by Paula Tell. This program is designed to support students who live in homes that have challenges with alcohol related issues.*

Summation – *During board linkage meetings with students and staff, there were many examples provided about the work in this area. We clearly have more work to do, but I believe progress continues to be made around this expectation.*

3. ***Be capable of making decisions in and for groups.*** **IN COMPLIANCE**

Elementary School - *Leadership skills are being taught within all grades. Students are made aware of the need for personal responsibility and how to make good choice throughout their time at the elementary. We really work on 'Life and Learning Skills', which is reflected on each child's report card. Classroom goals are established at the start of every school year in each classroom. Additionally, all 4th and 5th grade students can apply for the Bobcat Ambassadors (elementary leadership group).*

Middle School - *The Leadership Class plays a major role in addressing school issues. With any significant school decisions, the principal seeks the advice of this class. Cooperative group work is encouraged in most classes.*

High School - *In addition to the curriculum delivered on our ropes course, which gets to the heart of this goal, our entire high school curriculum in each area uses and promotes group work and learning. There is much evidence of group presentations, shared responsibilities, use of large and small group presentations and discussions. Our math curriculum is heavily reliant on group work as is our social studies curriculum. Again, our continued pursuit of quadrant 1 learning environments supports this goal.*

Summation – *As stated previously, the Board's linkage meetings with students can serve as one example of how we are meeting this expectation. Students are more involved then ever before about improving their educational and overall school experience. From food services to curriculum/instructional material selection, students are learning first hand how to make decisions in and for groups as required by this policy.*

4. *Be highly skilled, a flexible thinker and an effective team member.* IN COMPLIANCE

Elementary School – *This year teachers are becoming more aware of the importance of posting Learning Targets in the classroom. Teachers refer to the learning targets throughout the lessons, asking students open-ended questions. This raises the cognitive demand that helps students explore their learning within their cooperative learning groups rather than be filled up with content knowledge. I believe our students have had many more opportunities they past year to meet this goal.*

Middle School – *One of the areas that we have been working on is improving the flow of information in the classroom. Staff designs lessons to get more student involvement and be an advocate for their own learning such as group work, small group discussions and analyzing work together where the teacher plays the role of facilitator. In a recent survey among students a significant percentage said that they benefited from working with their peers. They also said that their teachers encouraged them to solve problems using their peers. In my classroom visits over the past year, I have seen students effectively working in groups in all subject areas. Teachers constantly remind students to talk in their groups to discuss their thoughts instead of simply asking the teacher to give them the answers.*

High School - *Our work again this year around increasing cognitive demand, getting student ownership and involvement in the learning environment goes to the core of this goal. As we continue to improve the cognitive demand and student ownership of their learning we will create flexible and critical thinkers that are able to learn in a group environment. I'm starting to see much more conversation and questioning around meta-cognition and creating lessons that promote this student skill.*

Summation – *Our work over the past year has continued to transform the learning topography for both students and staff in this area. If we truly want to create high cognitive demanding learning environments for students, it must first start with us as adults. The primary example of this work is the evidence from the Lab Classroom Project teams themselves when they made separate presentations to the board over the course of the past year. I am very proud of their accomplishments and even more pleased with how that work is changing the expectations for students away from low level, memorizing type work to challenging and more real-life learning our students are working on today. As always, we have a long way to go, but steady progress continues.*