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 23rd, 2009.

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 - *Each classroom holds 'class meetings' where they share their ideas, concerns, and help each other problem solve. Many teachers include Second Step curriculum at this time, which helps students make better choices. Problem solving strategies are discussed, helpful tools are provided using tools such as the building's 'Problem Solving Wheel' as well as helping students know when to ask adults for assistance. Our Bobcat Ambassadors receive leadership training on how to help other students, what kinds of things they can say to help along with when to go for assistance and help. We also offer student surveys on safety within our schools that we found students feel safe throughout the building and on the campus.*

Middle School - *Our social studies and language arts teachers stress diversity in their curriculum. Some examples include the World Fair, Literature and Current*

Events. I work closely with the leadership class to address student concerns. We have had a large number of our students perform service learning this year and helped people and institutions in our local community. This is an area that we could improve on. I have used peer mediation groups this year to address issues of sexual harassment and racism. I am pleased that we have had minimal issues regarding harassment this year and we have done a good job supporting the victim and educating the bully on appropriate ways to behave.

High School - *We have many programs in place at the high school to promote 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 its curriculum are all 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. One of our building goals this year was to address sexual harassment and respect of diversity. We focus much attention at the beginning of the year on this goal both inside and outside of the classroom with good success. Our incidents of sexual harassment fell dramatically during the second half of the year.*

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 - *Our students know from a variety of assemblies and through Second Step that good decision-making includes being aware of others feelings, behaviors and personal responsibility. Our staff, both certified and classified, help make students aware of such things as 'stranger danger'. We also reward students by recognizing them with Bobcat Tickets (K-3) and Bobcat Bucks (4-5) for good behavior, being responsible, helping others, making good choices, getting work in on time, etc. In 5th grade our students have the MS leadership students present an Anti-drug Awareness Program in each class. They have an opportunity to see what tobacco and some drugs will do to the body and how 'uncool' it is. We also show and discuss with the 5th graders a unit on Human Growth and Development and HIV unit. All this is pre-shown to parents at Curriculum Night with our school nurse presenting the workshop. Parents have a choice to sign a waiver if they don't want their child to participate, but most parents believe it to be tasteful and appropriate.*

Middle School - *Issues regarding drugs and alcohol have been minimal 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 might get access to, their effects and assistance for parents.*

High School - *The biggest impact in our building around respect, compassion and honesty comes from the manner with which we deal with violations of these standards at the administrative level. 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" this 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. The PTO/ ASB parent drug night that just occurred would be another example of an educational opportunity for our students and their parents.*

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, I seek the advice of this class. Cooperative group work is encouraged in most classes. The LCMS Student Survey show that students overall feel that they have a voice in their school. They feel supported by staff and administration.*

High School - *In addition to the curriculum 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.*

Summation – *Our work as a district over the course of this school year to create learning to learn focused classrooms provide many examples of how we are working to support this expectation of students working with and for groups.*

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

Elementary School – *Learning how to work in cooperative learning groups is a great way to help meet this expectation. Teachers work with students on how to work together, facilitate appropriate questions to help them raise the cognitive demand and work with each group to strengthen their discussions and effective working skills. Also, students have to learn how to play fair. It begins in Kindergarten and carries with them throughout their life. The playground is a great place to observe this, as children learn to make friends, how to get along with others, and be flexible. Our staff does a great job of helping children accomplish these goals.*

Middle School – *One of the areas that we have been working on is improving the flow of information in the classroom. Staff design lessons that get more student involvement and motivate students to be more of an advocate for their own learning. This effort includes such strategies as group work, small group discussions and analyzing work together where the teacher plays the role of facilitator. In our many classroom learning walks this year, we have seen students effectively working in groups in all subject areas. Additionally, we have seen a significant increase in teachers having students talk within their groups to discuss and sort through their thoughts instead of training students just to ask the teacher for the answers.*

High School - *Our work 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.*

Summation – *As stated in the summation for #3 above, our focus to create life-long learners (as articulated in Ends 1) has caused us to begin to reinvent learning environments across the district. This reinvention is aimed at raising the cognitive demand of the learning environments. Additionally, we feel the best way to do this is to harness students' natural desire to learn. This energy is most often found within group-focused work that is meaningful and relevant. This type of learning environment requires students to learn and practice skills of an effective team member that is flexible and learning to think focused.*