Monitoring Report - Ends Policy
E-1, District Mission

BOARD POLICY EXPECTATION
The mission of the La Center School District is to create a supportive learning environment that empowers students to reach their fullest potential. We will do this in partnership with families, the community, staff and students to develop confident and self-reliant life-long learners who can thrive in a rapidly changing, more technologically advanced and diverse society.

CERTIFICATION
I hereby present my monitoring report on Ends Policy E-1 "District Mission" in accordance with the monitoring schedule set forth in board policy. I certify that the information contained in this report is true as of August 28th, 2012.

Mark Mansell, Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT'S INTERPRETATION OF POLICY
I interpret the district mission to serve as a written description of the overarching purpose of the organization as well as the manner in which district personnel will operate in the process of accomplishing this stated purpose. The results are to be derived from the creation and/or maintenance of a supportive learning environment for students, which connects and harnesses the energy of the adults around the students (staff, parents and community members) in a way that garners a broad based effort to prepare students for a future where their ability to learn will be more valued than their accumulated knowledge.

REPORT – IN COMPLIANCE
There are no specific delineated requirements with this Ends policy as there are with all the others. However, to fully give a report on this expectation I would like to discuss the two major sections within this expectation that I believe serve as the twin pillars of our work as an educational team. Broadly stated, these relate to a *partnership with stakeholders* in achieving the central focus of our work which is to develop *confident, self-reliant, life-long learners*.

Working in *partnership with stakeholders* is the cornerstone of the La Center Way of doing the primary work of developing confident, self-reliant, lifelong learners. I truly believe our actions match up with our words in this area consistently. You can see this in how we reach out to students, staff, parents and community members to seek their perspectives consistently and in meaningful ways. Examples of this would be our annual linkage meetings with all the stakeholder groups, principal chats with parents, regular surveys of stakeholders to students and parents on meaningful topics (almost always aimed at learning topics) as well as consistent openness at all levels of the organization to listen to needs and perspectives of stakeholders. A simple, but powerful piece of evidence that we listen well as an

organization to our stakeholders is the consistent lack of issues being brought up by the public at Board meetings. What we often hear shared are positive perspectives. By what I hear from my colleagues in other districts across the state, this is not the norm. I know as Board members you too have heard similar stories from other Board members from around the state at the annual WSSDA conferences we have attended in past years. This consistency I believe is rooted in our sincere desire to listen, learn and work with stakeholders throughout the district at all levels.

The second pillar of this expectation is the stated mandate to *develop confident, self-reliant, lifelong learners*. As you know, this is the backbone of all our work and this effort is not simply aimed at students. We believe in order to really achieve this expectation it must start with us as adults too. Simply put, this part of the mission will never be achieved if we as educators operate from a "Do as I say, not as I do" mindset relative to learning. To be a confident, self-reliant, lifelong learner ourselves around our practice as educators and as humans is essential to the creation of effective learning environments for students aimed at helping them develop the skills to do the same thing. That is why everything we do must be built on learning. How we connect with stakeholders as stated above is a key example of this. If we only work with stakeholders because we have to by simply going through the motions, we are failing to learn and would be hypocritical if we expected students to do any different to us as their teachers. By contrast, we see stakeholder connects at all levels as a rich opportunity to learn and improve our own practice; A practice that is in the service of our students.

To help us in this work of creating powerful learning environments for all humans part of our schools, we have been working for many years to develop a learning model that helps us engage the natural human energy in all of us. Last year as part of our learning progression in this work, we developed what we called Core Competencies in order to be more specific in what learner skills students needed to work on to become *confident, self-reliant, lifelong learners*. This articulation was a work in progress, and still is. With that said, over the course of this past year we have continued to modify and enhance these competencies. Additionally, we have changed the name of this from "Core Competencies" to "Learner Competencies" for two reasons. The first reason is we feel this better communicates what we are trying to achieve (e.g. "Learning" and not "Core"). Secondly, the state is working to roll out what they call "Common Core State Standards" (CCSS) as part of a nationwide push for a national curriculum. The word "Core" in the CCSS has caused some confusion in staff so the name change clearly has become evident to us.

With all this in mind, below is our current articulation of the Learner Competencies that we developed over this past year and will be using in our work to achieve the expectations of this policy during the coming year.

La Center School District's Learner Competencies

Within each of the three learning conditions of the district's learning model, the following learner competencies are to be practiced in every learning environment throughout the district. This is in support of the Board's Ends-1 policy expectation to develop confident, self-reliant life-long learners.

1. Flow of Information

Confident self-reliant lifelong learners are effective consumers and producers of information. To do this they can…

A. Use a five-step problem-solving process: 1) identify variables; 2) locate facts; 3) analyze and evaluate information; 4) create solutions/opinions; and 5) test solutions/opinions.
B. Conduct, produce and present research (i.e. locate and organize information, write, support and present thinking in diverse mediums) in a variety of forums.
C. Use multiple forms of information such as charts, graphs, tables, manipulatives, equipment, models and other resources within the problem-solving process.
D. Implement the technical skills necessary to:
   - Read/write with skill and present with confidence (e.g. instructions, charts, thank you letters, letters of request, letters of response, proposals, lab reports, research reports, technical documents, summaries and graphs).
   - Use multiple types of technology (e.g. word processing, database, Internet, AV production and CNC machine tools).

2. Cognitive Demand

Confident self-reliant lifelong learners are able to thrive in uncertain and rapidly changing environments. To do this they can…

A. Initiate high-level thinking processes (e.g. analyze, evaluate, classify, predict, decide, estimate, generalize, solve, compare, simplify, design, and cause/effect) to solve problems and/or develop appropriate new strategies.
B. Continually use a self-evaluation/reflection process to enhance their learning.
C. Create goals and effectively work to achieve them (e.g. brainstorm, envision, research, plan, organize and persist).
D. Implement a continuous improvement process (i.e. plan, draft, analyze, and revise) when creating products.

3. Learning Trust

Confident self-reliant lifelong learners can create and use effective learning support

networks. To do this they can…

A. Use their interpersonal skills in order to:
   - Establish communication linkages with other learners.
   - Use effective listening strategies in a variety of settings.
   - Resolve conflicts that disrupt communications.
   - Develop positive learning feedback connections with other learners.
B. Communicate their thinking with clarity and precision to test their ideas/strategies.
C. Effectively provide constructive feedback to other learners within their network.
D. Consistently demonstrate their strong learning confidence in a variety of different settings