

MONITORING REPORT
E-3, EL-8, EL-10
PREPARED FOR THE GUFFEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS
By Pam Moore, School Administrator
February 2016 Meeting
www.guffeyschool.org

E-3 Students will create and direct their own lives.

3.1 Students will:

3.1.1 Create places for themselves in the community

3.1.2 Effectively set personal goals

3.1.3 Have a strong sense of self

3.1.4 Work independently

3.1.5 Effectively evaluate their own learning

3.1.6 Reflect on their own growth and learning

3.1.7 Create a personal environment of emotional and physical safety

3.1.8 Develop and practice self-discipline

3.1.9 Organize their personal space and time

Pam writes:

Teachers Lynda MacDonald, (3-5) Jenny Hartman (K-2) and Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch (6-8) have written to this policy as evidence supporting the work that we are doing to stay in compliance with this policy.

Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, 6-8th grade teacher writes:

3.1.1. Create a place for themselves in the community

If there is one wonderful observation I have made in my time at Guffey, it is that one can count on the community to be supportive of Guffey Community School and our students are supportive of our community. Once a Guffey elementary student moves into middle school, a new and more independent connection is created. For our graduating 8th graders, this is demonstrated by:

- 8th grade students reaching out to community members to become a part of their graduation team.*
- 8th grade students reach out locally and offering community service projects*
- 8th grade student fundraisers i.e. Spaghetti Dinner*
- 8th grade students make community phone calls on behalf of school events*
- 8th grade student's Christmas Toy Drive for the community*

Throughout our school, we endeavor to reach out to our community through:

- Plays and musical productions, like the Veteran's Day concert, Holiday Play and the Pie Palooza Play*
- Community experts sharing in curriculum support such as math (Ms. Jude) and science (Mr. Peterson)*
- Library involvement — this year one of our 8th grader is offering service at the Library.*
- Various school-wide events like the Halloween Parade and Pie Palooza*
- Angel Fund — we have had families in need and donations are made anonymously to care for those within our community*

Jenny Hartman, K-2 grade teacher writes:

3.1.2 Effectively set personal goals

In the K-2 class, there are multiple ways in which the students set their own personal goals. One of the most obvious ways that they set their own goals is in our Reading Rocks at-home reading program. This program was designed to encourage reading outside of school. Before initiating this program, I struggled to get my students to read as little as 30 minutes a month at home. Now, I have students reading well over 3,000 minutes in each 3-month term. This is because it is 100% up to the STUDENTS to set their own goals and decide if/how much they want to read each night. The students could choose to read nothing ever (which none of my students have chosen), or they could choose to read an hour each night, or anything in between. For every 10 minutes, they get to put a star on the sticker chart, and they receive one of several types of possible rewards for every 60(ish) minutes read. The students can see they might only have 10 more minutes to go until they receive a reward, and it is up to them to decide if they want to obtain it or not. The sticker chart is also a visual representation for the students to see how much they have read over the term. A couple of my students have voluntarily entered into a friendly competition to see who can out-read the other by the end of the term. They have also self-created a goal to get to the end of the sticker chart. This has actually been problem for me (good problem, but still a problem!). I created the sticker chart to go out to a certain number of possible minutes, which I honestly thought no one would meet....but they keep meeting the end number and I keep having to extend the chart and I am running out of wall space! I am extremely pleased with the goals that my students have set for themselves. The goals that they set for themselves are far superior to what I ever would have expected for them to set themselves.

Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, 6-8th grade teacher writes:

3.1.3. Have a strong sense of self

It is a tricky balance of parenting and teaching that creates a child who has a sense of self (confidence) and not a sense of arrogance. As we raise the 'Me-Me' generation, we battle that sense of entitlement that has befallen upon our society. Guffey School has a wonderful way to deal with entitlement — we call it accountability.

On the first day of class I announce that I never give an 'F' — the class is super excited with this revelation! Then I follow it up by stating I never give an 'A'. Cue the dumbfounded expressions. Then I announce that they will earn every grade.

The sighs are audible and you can see the sense of self emerge. The students are empowered by the fact that they are in charge of their academic destiny. I reassure them that they are safe to make mistakes as long as they learn from those mistakes. After all, we are in school to be challenged academically and expand our former limitations. Grasping this concept in middle school prepares them for their high school years.

Another confidence building tool we develop is that of public speaking. While many schools across the country have eliminated speech communication classes to focus on math, science, and language arts curriculum in this competitive test-driven education trend, we have continued to reinforce it by integrating it into the curriculum.

Middle school students assume lead roles in plays. In class, they research and develop presentations in all subjects throughout the year to teach their class. As the years progress, I can see their confidence grow, so by the time students are in 8th grade they are reasonably confident to stand in front of the evaluation team panel and their peers and give their 8th grade presentation.

**On a side note: one of the joys we get to experience is when former students return to visit GCCS after*

the first few weeks of high school and express how prepared they were.

Lynda MacDonald, 3-5th grade teachers writes:

3.1.4 Students will work independently

I always begin the year by modeling my expectations for written work. This helps to bring the third graders up to speed and is a good review for my older students. This modeling is used extensively to demonstrate how to write answers using complete sentences that include the question. How to use specific spelling strategies and tools because "spelling is important." How to indent as well as use proper capitals and punctuation. This modeling also includes how to write a proper paragraph with an introduction sentence that states the main idea, detail sentences to support it, and a conclusion that does not start with "that is why". I also model the importance of editing our work before turning it in. We have a variety of reading and writing assignments across the curriculum where these expectations are modeled and practiced over and over again. I emphasize that quality work is more important than quantity work.

By the middle of the year, I expect my students to be able to demonstrate these skills consistently independently. I know that every student is capable of working up to these expectations. However, there is the occasional student who does not always put in the effort. In these cases, the work is handed back and they get to try again. I strongly encourage and expect my students to independently work up to the ability that I know they have the skills to do.

Jenny Hartman, K-2 grade teacher writes:

3.1.5 Effectively evaluate and reflect upon their own growth and learning

It is always exciting to see the students recognize how much they have improved over the year! This year our class has been diligently practicing handwriting every day. We started by doing simple alphabet pages where we learned how to correctly form each letter. After the 26 letters, we moved on to the "Draw-Write-Now!" handwriting books. These books are focused on a general topic that lasts for about a month each (farm animals, the arctic habitat, Native Americans, etc). We project each page onto the white board and the students must copy the 3-4 sentence paragraph in their best handwriting, then draw the picture that is with it. The pictures are broken down step-by-step to show the students how to draw the pictures. Recently, we were cleaning out our cubbies and the students were looking at their old handwriting papers. They were so excited to show each other the difference between their handwriting from earlier in the year to what their handwriting looks like now. They have all shown a HUGE improvement! I have very high standards when it comes to handwriting, and surprisingly my students sincerely appreciate receiving constructive feedback and being told to re-do letters/words that look 'sloppy'. My students beg me to sit next to them while they are doing their handwriting so that I can critique them as they go. Now, my students like to tell me that they are 'being picky' with themselves, and I constantly hear them saying they are going to erase something to make it better - without me having even seen what they wrote first! They know what their best work is, and if they see that they did not do what they consider to be their own best work, they will chose to fix it themselves.

Lynda MacDonald, 3-5th grade teachers writes:

3.1.6 Students will create a personal environment of emotional and physical safety.

I always encourage students to report any incident that they are not comfortable with as soon as it occurs. I also keep my eyes and ears open for any tensions throughout the class to be able to nip anything before it gets any bigger. If an issue does come up, we get the people involved together and work it out. For the most part, I would say as a class, we have no major issues that cannot be solved on the spot. My classroom is built around an atmosphere of trust that values kindness toward one another.

I encourage students to support one another. Many of the activities in my class involve working with partners. I mix these partners up so students have the opportunity to work in some capacity with every student in the classroom. I model for the older students how to be a good coach for my younger students. I believe working together helps students to understand and respect one another.

Jenny Hartman, K-2 grade teacher writes:

3.1.7 Develop and practice self-discipline

Self-discipline is a difficult thing to master at the K-2 level, but my students are definitely showing self-discipline. In writing, we are working on writing our 2nd non-fiction piece. They each chose a habitat that they wanted to research and write a paper on. They are given 30-45 minutes at the end of each day to work on this paper. One of my students is in the Pie Palooza play and has missed every single writing block dedicated to working on this paper. She has needed to have the self-discipline to choose other times throughout the day when she finished something early to work on her paper - - and she is not behind at all! She has shown extreme dedication and self-discipline and has kept up with everyone else. The others who have a dedicated time each day have also shown a huge amount of self-discipline for their age. In this project, they were each given library books on their topics, which they have had to independently read and find facts from. They have then had to write down facts in their own words on note cards (yes, they do know what the word plagiarism means already!). They are required to write at least 13 note cards with 2 sentences on each card, and 5 of which need to have a specific type of detail. These details must 1. Show a comparison; 2. Give an example; 3. Give a definition; 4. Use adjectives; and 5. Use adverbs. After their note cards are written, they will organize their notecards in an order that makes sense/flows, then they will begin their rough draft. For a 2nd grader to be able to sort through the books, find interesting information, and include details and facts in a research paper requires an incredible amount of self-discipline!

Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, 6-8th grade teacher writes:

3.1.8 organize their personal space and time

Middle School Organizational Tools:

- *Academic and event planners*
- *Lockers*
- *Desks filled with subject notebooks and pocket folders*
- *In-Class File System for work completed for each subject*

So how are we doing with those organizational skills? For the most part, we are doing quite well! The Middle School students are understanding the demand of multiple curriculum contents within the day; 6th graders have not only gotten used to the demands, they now take pride in their organizational skills and ask to clean out their lockers and desks on a weekly basis to make certain they are on task.

For review: every day I write the plans for the day on the designated whiteboard. Students copy these plans into their planner under categories: Subject, assignment, and extra notes. Throughout the day, they continue to update it with homework assignments or check off completed tasks.

The in-class file system. These are kept for conferences and to begin the process of collecting a representation of their best work of their graduation portfolio.

My goal last fall — getting everyone in class to do this automatically!

GOAL ACHIEVED! (with the occasional exception)

Policy Number: EL-8

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: Financial Administration

With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of the school's financial health, the Administrator shall not cause or allow a material deviation from the budget policy adopted by the Board or any fiscal condition that is inconsistent with achieving the Board's ends, that disregards the Board's ultimate authority to determine financial matters or places the long term financial health of the school in jeopardy.

Pam writes, evidence of my compliance is as follows:

Accordingly, the Administrator may not:

1. Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date through use of reserves or unless revenues are made available through other legal means.

Our school is fiscally responsible by never spending more money than what we have as cash available in our school's bank accounts. I am conscience of our school's responsibilities to cover our liabilities. Examples of these are: employee sick pay, vested employee retirement which is due after an employee departs from our school. Our school's board will receive a proposed budget in the spring for the 2016-2017 school year. The projected income is largely based on the estimated number of students who could be enrolled in our school in the fall. Of course there is fluctuation as we weather the "ebb and flow" of our school's expenses, our biggest being in employment and instructional costs. The details of the school's assets, liabilities and net assets can be found in the annual Financial Report (which is audited), in all of our school's financial statements and are on the school's website. The monthly monitoring of the school's Ends Policies, over the course of any school year, offers the details of how what we are spending is used in our classrooms and school's campus to meet the goals of our school.

2. Fail to comply with state law regarding financial accounting.

I interpret this policy to mean that our school's budget policies and procedures must follow Colorado State Law and the Governmental Accounting Standard Board. Evidence of policy compliance is in the monthly consent agenda and in our school's independent financial audit report. Copies of the audit and all school financial statements are on the school's website.

3. Expend any contingency reserves.

The policy called Contingency Reserve (C.R.S. 22-54-117) states: The Colorado State Board of Education is authorized to approve emergency supplemental payments to assist school districts. Such payments must meet applicable statutory guidelines, are made at the discretion of the Board and are subject to the availability of funds. Colorado State law repealed this statute requiring a school to designate a budget line item for a "contingency reserve". Guffey School does not have one. Suggest that our board remove this from policy? (see page 568 of the Colorado School Laws 2015)

4. Transfer unencumbered moneys from one fund to another.

Guffey School funds are secured in the Sunflower Bank, where we have two business checking accounts. We also maintain three accounts with the Colotrust, which we use as a savings account and holding accounts for restricted funds and our sustainability account. At Sunflower Bank, the accounts are as follows:

The FUND, is used for all operational transactions.

The FOUNDATION, is used for only fund raising activities.

The main Colotrust account is set up to receive at least two of the three electronic PPF (Per Pupil

Funding) payments from the school district.

This is where the school's sustainability funding is held along with the restricted liabilities account which includes long-term employee benefits like employee retirement funds, sick pay owed, etc.

As needed, the school's bookkeeper, Kim McAlear, and I confer on when to transfer funds from Colotrust, into our operational checking account at Sunflower Bank.

5. Access funds from the Sustainability Fund except according to the requirements set forth in GP-15.

I understand that as the school's administrator, I cannot use these funds without the board's approval. If access to these funds would be necessary, it would be my policy to provide detailed documentation that justified the necessity and outlined how these funds would be expended.

6. Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.

Our school's payroll is deposited electronically to staff members no later than 4:00 PM, on the 20th of each month, (or the last work day before the 20th). In addition, all of our payroll liabilities are paid timely as well. We continue to use the professional payroll service Intuit. In terms of debt, I interpret this policy to mean that all accounts receivable will be paid within 30 days of the time an invoice is received. Our school does not have any debts, or loans due.

7. Allow reports or filings required by any state or federal agency to be overdue or inaccurately filed.

There are not any overdue or inaccurate state or federal reports.

8. Fail to arrange for the annual audit of all school funds and accounts following the close of the fiscal year.

Our school files our financial reports with state and federal agencies according to state law. Our auditing firm, McMahan & Associates, Certified Public Accountants and Consultants, file these reports with the Colorado Department of Education on our school's behalf. This year, due to our school district's book keeper turn over, each of the schools in the district had to file for an extension with the state since the deadline could not be met and we all need to file under the school district's umbrella.

9. Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.

Our school does not have any outstanding receivables.

10. Fail to keep complete and accurate financial records by funds and accounts in accordance with generally recognized principles of governmental accounting.

Our school retains complete and accurate financial reports by fund and by account as guided by the school's certified external auditing firm.

11. Enter into any contact with any of the Board members or with a firm or corporation in which Board a member has a financial interest unless one or more of the following apply:

a. The contract is awarded to the lowest responsible bidder based on competitive bidding procedures.

I seek bids for products and services where a competitive bidding process makes the most sense.

b. The merchandise is sold to the highest bidder at a public auction.

The Pie Palooza, which is on Thursday February 11, is the only public auction hosted by our school. I can assure you that all pies were sold to the highest bidder and that our auctioneer has the best interest (\$\$\$) of the school in mind at all times.

c. The transaction involves investing or depositing money in a financial institution, which is in the business of loaning money or receiving money.

Sunflower Bank and Colotrust are the only two financial institutions that our school places funds in. Both of these institutions are in the business of loaning, managing, and receiving money.

d. If, because of geographic restrictions, the school could not otherwise reasonably afford the contract because the additional cost to the school would be greater than 10 percent of the contract with the interested member or if the contract is for services that must be performed within a limited time period and no other contractor can perform the services.

The school has contracted Chris Peterson for technical support. This was noted in the September, 2015 Consent Agenda.

e. If the contract is one in which the Board member has disclosed a personal interest and is one on which the member has not voted or has voted as allowed in state law following disclosure to the secretary of state and to the Board.

Board members who have an agreement to work for the school and are compensated have been reported to this board in the monthly Consent Agenda.

f. Except as described herein, a Board member shall not be a purchaser at any sale of school-owned property or a vendor for any purchase made by the school.

There has not been anything to purchase.

12. Fail to provide a financial condition statement quarterly to the charter Board and annually to the district board.

Our school is funded like other Colorado public schools and we are subject to the same financial operating rules and public disclosure requirements of any public school as outlined in the Public School Financial Transparency Act. All of this information is current and can be found on the school's website.

Policy Number: EL-10

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: Communications and Counsel to the Board

With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the Administrator shall not fail to give the Board as much information as necessary to allow Board members to be adequately informed.

Accordingly, the Administrator may not:

Pam writes, evidence of compliance is as follows:

1. Fail to submit monitoring data required by the Board (see policy B/SR-5—Monitoring Administrator Performance) in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the Board policies being monitored.

The school's board members receive the consent agenda, monitoring report, accountability agenda and minutes (when available), and school financial statements each month prior to the board meeting. All additional support materials that might be of value are in the board's box which is in the administration office. I have always made any additional information available upon request.

2. Fail to submit to the Board monitoring data required by the State Board of Education regarding accreditation and accountability.

Colorado's system of accountability is made up of the Colorado Department of Education, The Colorado State Board of Education, Local School Boards, District Leaders, School Leaders, and School Accountability Committees. Guffey School, along with Lake George Charter, are member

schools of the Park RE2 school district. The district and both charter schools have their own governing board and school accountability committees. But, by law, all state and federal submission requirements are reported by our school district. The largest piece of this comes from the collection of data from the annual state testing, this year called: PARCC- Performance Based Assessment for English Language Arts and Math and CMAS for Science and Social Studies. The tests' outcomes are publicly reported by our school district, but because of our school's small class size, these are not publicly reported for reasons of protecting our students' confidentiality. Our school's teachers monitor each of our student's growth by using a computer-based program called Alpine Achievement Systems. Another part of accreditation and accountability is the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) which is written by the school district's accountability committee (DAC) and headed up by Superintendent Minnis. Guffey School's staff, coordinated by Lynda MacDonald, provides the school district with the narrative as it relates to what our school is doing. We've just learned from Becky Minnis that again, writing and math will remain the areas of the plan's focus.

3. Fail to advise the Board in a timely manner of relevant trends, facts and information.

Our school's board members receive a monthly monitoring report prior to each board meeting. These reports include: Executive Limitation monitoring, Ends Policy monitoring, Consent Agenda, and School Accountability Meeting agenda and minutes. When additional communication seems necessary, it has been my policy to consult with the board president, who may contact the rest of the board members.

4. Fail to advise the Board of significant transfers of moneys within funds or other changes substantially affecting the school's financial condition.

The Board would be informed of changes that would considerably affect the school's financial condition. For example, this month our board's president joined me for my monthly meeting with the district superintendent where one of the topics discussed was the lack of school funding amounts and state equalization payments from CDE to our school's district. In our school's case, we are being over paid since the funding formula currently being used is based on last year's October count of 38 students, a record high for our school. As noted in past monitoring reports, changes in school enrollment impact the school's budget as well, both up and down. For example, while last year's higher than expected enrollment added a slight boost in our income, this year's lower enrollment, once sorted out by the state, will balance out throughout the school year because of the careful eye that I'm keeping on our school's balance sheet. The method of which the board is kept informed of all money transfers, income and expenses is included in our school's consent agenda.

5. Fail to advise the Board of changes in information upon which Board policy has been established.

I am not aware of any significant changes in district or state policies that would have an impact on our existing board policies.

6. Fail to provide for the Board as many staff and external points of view and opinions as needed for fully informed Board choices.

I understand the board's need to receive factual, accurate, timely information and have provided that on an as-needed basis.

7. Fail to advise the Board of anticipated significant media coverage.

The Guffey School has enjoyed positive press about the many activities that our school is doing, as well as providing community information about our school's events. The three local newspapers, Ute Country News, Gold Camp, and The Flume have all reported positive press about our school. Examples of media coverage this year are: the monthly school board meetings, the Veterans Day

program, our Winter Program, and the Pie Palooza. If I know of any advance media coverage that would NOT be viewed as anything other than positive, it's been my policy to contact the Board President so that the Board is not blind-sided.

8. Fail to advise the Board if, in the Administrator's opinion, the Board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Staff Relations.

I interpret this to mean that it is the Administrator's responsibility to advise the Board if I felt that the Board was not in compliance with its own policies.

9. Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form.

I have not overwhelmed this board with any unnecessary information and hope that the board feels that my communications are clear, timely and to the point.

10. Fail to provide mechanism for official Board, officer or committee communications as specified by the board.

Communications between the board and myself are open and ongoing without any formal mechanism for additional communication needed at this time. I have no indication from our past monthly meetings and the monitoring reports that this board feels otherwise.

11. Fail to work with the Board as a whole on Board policy issues except when

a. Fulfilling individual requests for information as long as such requests do not require a material amount of staff time or resources or are not disruptive.

Requests from board members to date have not required additional time or use of school resources.

b. Working with officers or committees duly charged by the Board.

At this time, we do not have any board committees.

c. Communicating with the president.

I believe that the working relationship I have with Board President Ruvo works because we respect, trust, and share the school's vision. We both are dedicated and strive to keep our students' needs first. We clearly understand each other's role as School Administrator and Guffey Board President.

12. Fail to report in a timely manner any actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Board Ends or Executive Limitations policy.

Our school does not have any actual or anticipated noncompliance issues to report.

13. Fail to supply for the consent agenda all items delegated to the Administrator that are required by law or contract to be Board-approved, along with the minimum amount of supporting data necessary to keep the Board informed.

The monthly consent agenda contains the following components: Financial Information for both our school's Fund and Foundation, Personnel, School Calendar and Bus Route.