

MONITORING REPORT
May 2016
EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS POLICIES #5 & # 6
ENDS POLICY #6
PREPARED FOR THE GUFFEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
By Pam Moore, School Administrator

Pam writes: The teachers and I have shared in the writing of these policies. Evidence of compliance with this policy follows:

Ends Policy 6 School Community Connection

The school and the community will work together to accomplish the following:

- 6.1 Student work is intellectually powerful, embedded in the local setting, holds personal meaning and is authentic - related to "real life".
- 6.2 Community expectations for schools and students include a large focus on the local environment, work outside of school, long-term projects, active learning and public performance of academic work.
- 6.3 School and community interactions are rich, complex, varied and natural.
- 6.4 Schools and communities actively collaborate in seeking to make the local environment a good place in which to live and work. 6.5 Students value their local places and see them as having the potential to sustain a life of quality.
- 6.6 School decision-making is responsibly and democratically determined by the people the school serves for the benefit of the entire community.
- 6.7 All students, regardless of circumstances (economic, cultural, linguistic, geographic, etc.) have access to and participate in high quality educational experiences.

6.1 Student work is intellectually powerful, embedded in the local setting, holds personal meaning and is authentic – related to “real life”

Jenny Hartman, K-2 teacher writes:

All of the work in the K-2 class is intellectually powerful. We strive to challenge all students to reach higher academic standards. I personally feel that if the ‘bar’ is set higher, the students will work even harder to reach that bar. For example, earlier this year the 2nd graders asked when they can stop taking their math fact timed tests. This is a math test in which the students try to answer 90 math problems in 5 minutes. I set a very high goal stating that if they successfully get 100% on five tests in a row, they can ‘test out’ and stop taking the timed tests. Not surprisingly, I recently had one student complete her goal and she no longer has to take the timed test!

We also do our best to relate what we are learning to real life. One way that we can best relate what we are learning to real life is by taking field trips! One of Guffey School’s many great qualities is the ability for us to frequently take meaningful field trips that relate to the curriculum we are teaching. In Social Studies, we are learning about the market-place/economics. We are learning about the meaning of producers and consumers, goods and services, trade with other countries, and how goods come from a factory to you. The students understand what it means for

a product or resource to be scarce, and how that might affect the price. In order show the students how this unit relates to real life, we are taking a field trip in mid-May to sum up what we have learned. We will be going to see two different factories. First, we will go to Colorado Springs to Patsy's Candies – a candy factory (which the students are SO excited about!) and learn how various types of candy are made. We will see how the candy shop uses various machines and conveyor belts to aid in each step of the candy-making and packaging process. Next, we will head over to Companion Habitats, where they make animal habitats/cages for smaller pets. This is a different type 'factory' that uses stations as opposed to conveyer belts for each step of the process. We will see the mill where the wood, glass, and plastic is cut, the assembly where the habitats are put together, and finally the packaging area where the habitats are packed and shipped to the buyers.

6.2 Community expectations for schools and students include a large focus on the local environment, work outside of school, long-term projects, active learning and public performances of academic work.

Lynda MacDonald, 3-5 teacher writes:

Our school is fortunate in our ability to take students off campus to explore opportunities outside of the classroom. This year we were able to take a variety of trips. We spent a day canoeing at Eleven Mile Reservoir. We went to Manitou Springs to learn about the natural springs there. This fall we went to a Beaver Pond environmental center. We went to see an orchestra performance at the Pikes Peak theater. This spring we are hoping to take the Cripple Creek train ride as well as go to South Park in Fairplay as part of our studies of the 1800's.

Our school also prides itself in our expectations for students to give public performances. Our 8th grade students are getting ready to present their yearlong student initiated projects. These are one hour presentations that the students work on all year. Students are also currently getting ready for their spring program which will be performed in a week. This year the focus is a Tribute to Disney. We are so fortunate to have a music/theater specialist who is more than willing to use her expertise is teaching our students how to sing and perform. This year we put on a Veteran's Day performance that was very well received by the community. We also performed The Velveteen Rabbit for our winter program. And of course, I would be remiss if I did not mention the annual Pie Palooza which brings a huge turnout and is a highlight of the year for one and all.

6.3 School and community interactions are rich, complex, varied and natural.

Jenny Hartman, K-2 teacher writes:

Guffey students are very lucky to have such a caring and supportive community that surrounds them. We have numerous volunteers who enjoy spending their free time with our students. In the K-2 class alone, we have 6 regular volunteers who each provide different services for our children. Our school is so blessed to have these volunteers that our students benefit from, and our school would not be the same without them. On Mondays and Tuesdays, Cheri volunteers to help the kindergarten students with reading while I work with the 2nd grade students, and on Wednesdays and Thursdays, Kathie volunteers to help the 2nd grade students with reading while I work with the kindergarteners. These two volunteers are absolutely crucial in our classroom and allow us to have very small, differentiated 1hour and 15 minute reading groups led by an

adult every day. I sincerely believe that one of the main reasons that every student in my classroom is above grade level in reading is because of the help of these volunteers. In addition to Cheri and Kathie, we have other volunteers who provide extra-curricular classes (that are not my area of expertise ☺) Lani provides a movement class every Tuesday, and currently they are working on choreographing a dance for our spring program. Dana and Heather provide an art class for our class on 2 Thursdays each month, which allows our students to show their creativity and artistic abilities. We also have Barb who leads an arts and crafts class once per month. In addition to our 'regular' volunteers, my class get to benefit from other volunteers who sporadically drop in, like Paula and Denise who are helping us with our gardens.

6.4 School and communities actively collaborate in seeking to make the local environment a good place to live and work.

Lynda MacDonald, 3-5 teacher writes:

For this End, I would definitely like to take the opportunity to thank the classroom volunteers. The year each of our classrooms has had a myriad of volunteers working with our students in a variety of capacities. I have three volunteers each coming one morning a week to assist with third grade students. They have made such a difference in helping these students with reading and helping them to keep up with the rest of the class in science and social studies. I have another volunteer coming every single afternoon to assist with third grade math. This volunteer is invaluable as she is able to help me be more efficient in covering the content of all the grade levels. Because of her, the third graders get individualized attention while I can focus on more in depth instruction with the 4th and 5th graders. I also have a community volunteer coming on once a week to help a student with homework after school. This person is able to give this student guided one-on-one assistance to help him be successful, get immediate feedback, and learn strategies to become more independent. We have two volunteers who come in to do art with the k - 2nd grade class twice a month as well as the 3rd - 5th grade class twice a month. This gives the students exposure to art concepts from real artists and gives the teachers a much needed planning period. We have a community volunteer who comes in once a month to teach crafts to the k - 2nd grade class and also to the 3rd - 5th grade class. She puts a lot of work and energy into preparing for these crafts and the students really look forward to what she brings each time. There is a community volunteer who comes in once a week for the k - 2 class and once a month to the 3rd - 5th grade class to teach movement with the kids. The k - 2nd grade class also has daily volunteers in the morning to assist with reading groups. This is critical to help Ms. Hartman also be efficient in teaching reading to all of her grade levels. In the middle school classroom, we have a community volunteer coming in regularly to assist the students in math. They also have a science expert coming in twice a week to teach and share his expertise in all fields of science. These past couple of years we have also had volunteers coming in to help the students put together a community garden and a bird habitat.

Our community is wonderful. This list of volunteers is just the tip of the iceberg. We have had so much community involvement in our school. Whenever there is a need, community members come out to volunteer their time and help with in-kind donations that support whatever needs there are. We are truly a community school.

6.5 Students value their local places and see them as having the potential to sustain a life of quality.

Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, middle school teacher writes:

This year it was exciting to see how many middle school students at Guffey Community Charter School are deeply involved in the local community, understand the value our businesses and experience how they impact our quality of life.

One great community example is Ms. Dana and her excellent artistic and baking skills. Our students have observed the time and the hard work it takes to build as business as they have watched when she purchased the property next door, began the renovations, listened to the process of building a business and even are participating with their artistic skills in creating a Jackson Pollack-ish floor!

Community volunteers come into the school to support the classroom teachers, tutor students with specific needs, teach a variety of skills, give special presentations, etc. I am consistently amazed by the number of offers from community members with no apparent connection to the school, to volunteer in the classrooms or to help out when special needs of our school families arise. They are involved in everything from serving on the school board to mentoring students and providing support for those “extra needs” a small school inevitably has throughout the year. The students give back to the community by doing services in the area, our concerts and plays, showing appreciation to community members, like our annual Veteran’s Day Concert, and exhibiting social-conscious attitudes and manners during community interactions.

When asked about future plans in this area, many students have shared their interest in teaching, ranching and veterinary medicine. The students who come from larger cities to Guffey have not only adjusted beautifully, they thrive in the more person to person community where, like Cheers, everyone knows your name.”

6.6 School decision-making is responsibly and democratically determined by the people the school serves for the benefit of the entire community.

Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, middle school teacher writes:

Decisions are made in a most democratic way with the best interest of the students, staff, and community in mind. The teachers, who are in the classroom every day, are consistently being invited to voice our opinion about policy and curriculum. This is really the best way schools become the most effective to those they serve. Guffey’s policies respect us, both as professional teachers and experts in our fields.

Our regular Thursday staff meetings provide us with the opportunity to share responses list of standing items from building, campus and computer issues to curriculum and community linkage.

I really appreciate the community members are invited to sit in on the Accountability Committee meetings. Opinions and options are welcomed and listened to. This year we are focusing on school-wide social studies curriculum.

We continue to incorporate community experts throughout the school– as is already exemplified through art, math, reading and science classes. Personally, having Jude Loiselle in my math class, her expertise continues to reaffirm decisions I have been making on curriculum.

Under Ms. Moore's community-focused leadership, Guffey Charter School continues to be focused upon our families and those we serve.

6.7 All students, regardless of circumstances (economic, cultural, linguistic, geographic, etc.) have access to and participate in high quality educational experiences.

Pam writes: *Guffey School students and their families, regardless of their economic, cultural, linguistic, or geographical circumstances, have access to quality educational experiences. Our school does not knowingly discriminate against our students or their families. One example is that we provide FREE breakfast, school lunch, and snacks to any student who needs to be fed. In addition, anyone who cannot afford to pay for their field-trip is taken care of by our school. This school year, we had several of our families who paid additional field-trip funds to help cover any students whose families are financially strapped. And, throughout the year, we have several school friends who donate grocery store gift cards, Walmart shopping cards, etc. for our school families. Many of our economically challenged families are given these cards to assist them with their food, clothing and health needs, thus helping to alleviate some of the possible stress related to being financially stretched. At Christmas time, we have several "angels" who provide very generous Walmart gift cards to help all school families. We also have a community member who gifts our school's students with \$7 gift cards so that they can make their own purchases. Often the students tell me that they bought things for their siblings or parents. These examples help to level our students' educational experiences because they don't feel any peer pressure if their family struggles to make ends meet. Guffey kids seem open to the varied lifestyles of their classmates, and really don't make that big of a deal about where someone lives, who lives under their roof, or what the family unit is.*

EL 5 Staff Compensation

With respect to employment compensation and benefits for employees, the Administrator shall not cause or knowingly allow jeopardy to the fiscal integrity or public image of the school.

Accordingly, the Administrator may not:

Pam writes: *Evidence of compliance of this policy is as follows:*

1. Change his or her own compensation and benefits.

I have not in any way altered my compensation or benefits. I understand that only our school board can alter my compensation.

2. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

I have not promised or implied that anyone's employment at the school is permanent. Our school's three teachers are on a one year only contract, which is offered in April and signed by the board in May. The terms of the school's bookkeeper's contract is July 1 until June 30 of the next year. All school support personnel, who currently are: maintenance, food service, bus driver, technology coordinator, school nurse, speech language consultant, and classroom assistant, are on an annual hourly memo agreement and do not receive benefits, but do participate in PERA. Copies of our school's contracts and agreements are kept in the personnel files found in the administration office. The board is made aware of any changes in personnel via the monthly consent agenda.

3. Create obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected, in no event longer than one year.

As mentioned in 5.2, I have not committed to compensate a teacher or staff member longer than the school year we are funded for.

4. Fail to develop and implement salary schedules and pay plans for employees that:

a. Compensate the school's personnel commensurate with education and prior experience

b. Condition salary increments upon evidence of continued professional growth.

The school's contracted teachers are compensated based on salary step schedule. The pay scale "steps" are based on the following educational degrees, such as: BA, BA+10, BA+20, MA+10, etc. This step salary schedule is a guideline and does not guarantee compensation increases each year. Due to annual operating constraints, and based on student count, there could be times when our school cannot afford a year's step increase. The current teacher salary schedule is found on the school's website.

5. Fail to develop and implement plans to attract and maintain top quality staff.

One of the hallmarks to our success has been the stability to maintain our school's staff, myself included. I believe that our school is an excellent place to work and here are a few reasons why:

- Our school's board, community and school families who are supportive of the work that our teachers are doing for all Guffey students.*
- Our teachers are dedicated, organized, qualified, accountable and flexible.*
- Our small class sizes and family atmosphere offer teachers opportunities to make immediate classroom adjustments to meet the unique needs of their students.*
- Our teachers and support staff are empowered to do whatever it takes to support our school's students.*
- The opportunity to teach the same group of students over the course of several years, making it easier to observe improvements in students' social and academic accomplishments which gives them a sense of gratification in their work.*
- The teachers play an active role in virtually every aspect of our students' social and emotional needs, as well as in their instruction.*
- Guffey teachers don't experience the same frustration that some teachers might feel around the outcomes of their students' standardized test scores or parental pressure for student achievement.*
- Guffey teachers meet each child where they are and work for individual achievement.*
- Professional development opportunities are made available to our classroom teachers. For example, this spring, I attended a workshop called, The Cost of Caring, which was about taking care of your own mental health while caring for others. Middle School teacher Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch attended the Imagination Celebration Teachers Institute where she learned about ways to explore the arts and the Creative Process of Teaching and plans to do this again this summer.*

EL-6 Staff Evaluation

With respect to evaluation of employees, the Administrator shall not cause or allow an evaluation system that does not link employee performance with the school's mission statement and belief system, that does not comply with state law and that does not measure employee performance in terms of achieving the Board's Ends policies.

***Pam writes:** Evidence of compliance of this policy is as follows:*

Accordingly, the Administrator may not:

Fail to develop and administer an evaluation system for personnel that is designed to:

1. Improve instruction.

Our school's teacher effectiveness (evaluation) of licensed personnel (teachers) complies with the intent of the provisions of S.B. 10-191, the Great Teachers and Leaders Act, of 2011. Guffey School has a history of continuing to improve the quality of education teachers offer in part because our teachers meet each student where they are on their educational path. Having classrooms with fewer students makes this possible along with clear Board Ends policies which are monitored by our teachers and myself on a regular basis. I believe that our school's use of multiple methods for evaluation, makes the system that we are using reliable, valid, and fair, and our teachers agree. This year we are returning to our original evaluation format and have added some minor improvements, specifically the documentation of our students' academic growth. If you would like a copy of the current teacher evaluation worksheet, please let me know.

2. Enhance the implementation of curricular programs.

One of the successful ways that we enhance our school's curricular programs is to welcome community mentors who bring valuable insights or real life expertise in a given subject matter which supports what we are doing in the classroom. This year, in our middle school classroom, joining us is Jude Loiselle for math, and Chris Peterson for science. And, bringing her reading expertise to the K-5 classrooms for the second half of the school year is Paula Bennett. We have other regular volunteers, (Cheri Moehle, Linda Parrish, Cindy Stride, Carol Stewart, Denise Taylor, Kathie Bouchers, and Kelly McConnell) all who work one-on-one or in small groups with our students during and after school. This year, weekly art mentors for the K-5 are Dana Peters and Heather Poitrowski weekly and Barb Felton for grades K-5th at the Guffey Library twice a month. Lani Gossett does a movement class for K-2 and has started doing a movement class at the Guffey Community Center with our 3-5 graders.

3. Measure professional growth, development and performance.

The specific performance criteria for our school's evaluation reflects each teacher's knowledge and the quality of their work, cooperation, communications, and judgement. This happens near the end of each school year. For example, teachers score themselves in each of the performance criteria by levels, which are 1-4, and during the face-to-face meeting. Together we discuss each area of their performance for the school year.

4. Document unsatisfactory performance.

Employees who present an unsatisfactory performance are subject to a written incident report and/or a meeting with the appropriate parties involved. This documentation is placed in the

employee's personnel file which is in the school's administration office. Employees at our school are always offered time and opportunities to improve their performance.

5. Link staff performance with multiple measures of student performance.

Our school's multiple measures of student performance are measured by classroom observation, the staff/student compliance or working towards compliance of our ends policies, and the formal standardized testing that we do throughout the school year. Since standardized state testing (PARCC and CMAS) results are not available until the next school year, our school will be using MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) as our student growth model. Students who are on an IEP, ILP or READ Plan are subject to additional evaluations which are guided by their disability and the work of their support team. Our school's small class size and low student teacher ratio make classroom observations a powerful tool that many larger schools could not offer.

6. Assure that scheduled instructional time is used to students' maximum advantage.

Guffey School's instruction is targeted to meet the students where they are both academically and socially. The amount of instructional material that the teacher is able to cover is based on each student's individual needs. The multi-age environment allows a student to continue to work at his/her own abilities, whether below or above grade level. Because of our school's size, we have the flexibility to move through instructional material at whatever speed our students dictate.

7. Assess staff understanding of the Ends policies, and effectiveness of performance in achieving those Ends policies.

Examples of the staff's understanding of our school's Ends policies can be found in the monthly monitoring reports that have been written by them throughout the school year.