

MONITORING REPORT  
ENDS POLICY #4 AND EXECUTIVE LIMITATION POLICY #11  
PREPARED FOR THE GUFFEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS November 2016  
By Pam Moore, School Administrator  
www.guffeyschool.org

**Policy Number: E-4**

**Policy Type: Ends**

**Policy Title: Social Skills**

Students will be productive citizens participating actively in their community.

4.1 Students will:

- 4.1.1 Possess good interpersonal communication skills;
- 4.1.2 Be aware of the world around them and their place in it;
- 4.1.3 Honor diverse attitudes, values, beliefs and abilities;
- 4.1.4 Work cooperatively in groups;
- 4.1.5 Create an environment of emotional and physical safety for themselves and others;
- 4.1.6 Celebrate each other's growth and learning.

***Pam Moore writes:***

*As evidenced by the policy reports from our school's teachers, I am in compliance with this policy.*

**Written by Lynda MacDonald, 3-5 teacher**

4.1.1 Students will possess interpersonal communication skills

In our classroom, we have many opportunities to practice interpersonal communication skills. This includes speaking, listening, and writing:

- working with a partner - how to be helpful in a respectful/patient way
- being an attentive listener (eyes, ears, hands) – being an active learner involves critically thinking about what is being said, not just passively "hearing" it
- following directions – listening, reading, thinking
- when not to interrupt the teacher – raising your hand when you have a question and waiting until he/she is done speaking before raising your hand (this is more challenging than you might think!)
- being polite (saying please and thank you)
- working with community members
- writing thank you cards and letters (quality counts)
- writing is often your first impression so spelling, capitals and punctuation are IMPORTANT
- writing with thought and effort is important
- oral presentations – we practice adjusting our fluency, using expression, and using eye contact performances – our whole body expression is just as important as our voice (watching an expressionless robot is not fun to listen to)

### **Written by Jenny Hartman, K-2 teacher**

#### 4.1.2 *Be aware of the world around them and their place in it.*

The students in the K-2 class are currently learning about the world around them and their place in it. To them, this means learning more about their community and participating in community events. Our classroom has about 9 different volunteers that come each week. The students are learning how we are privileged to have volunteers choose to take time out of their week to work with us, and that it is not a requirement for them to come into our classroom. They have learned that if we are respectful and kind people, our volunteers will continue to want to come back; and if the children act with disrespect or unruly, the volunteers may choose not to come back. This has helped the young students to decide what type of children they would like to be in our community and how they should act with those outside of our immediate classroom. The students have also had the opportunity to see what some of our volunteers do outside of our classroom. For example, they have seen the progression of Dana's bakery, Strictly Guffey. They saw her transform an empty building into an operating business. They go to Dana's shop for an art class twice per month. Recently, the Guffey students have been able to see numerous community members at our Halloween parade. They visited the library parking lot, the Rolling Thundercloud Café, the Bull Moose, The Freshwater Grill, and Strictly Guffey. They learned that their place in the world right now is to be children who are polite and respectful.

### **Written by Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, Middle School**

#### 4.1.3 HONOR DIVERSE ATTITUDE, VALUES, BELIEFS AND ABILITIES

Tolerance is a word thrown around a lot these days with little consideration about honoring those you disagree with. We all want people to be tolerant of us – but draw the line when someone voices an opinion – even a seemingly intolerant one – and still must allow each of them the freedom of speech we are guaranteed in our constitution.

As we begin study the constitution, my middle school students have been examining the rights guaranteed in the First Amendment – regarding freedom of speech, freedom of the press, religious freedom, freedom of assembly, and right to petition. In this study, we have had lots of discussions about what defines real tolerance and understanding our differences are often our strengths.

One of the most thought-provoking journals I is to have the students write on the following rhyme: *Sticks and stones may break your bones but words will never hurt you.* This always brings a great many stories about times when someone has carelessly hurt their feelings through something that has been said. And by real life examples, this brings home the point that *what we say can indeed hurt.* But in this process, equally important is the lesson that we can set ourselves free by letting go of our anger; C.S. Lewis wrote “Everyone thinks forgiveness is a lovely idea until he has something to forgive.”

Teaching a middle school classroom of differentiated learners, it has sometimes required that I step in and redress a comment made that has hurt another student's feelings. Sometimes it's a thoughtless comment about a subject matter (ability) that comes easy to one student while another struggles. Other times it's sensitivity to a person's values or religious beliefs. Middle

school students often hear and repeat generalizations at home or through the media that are unfair and hurtful. It's important to use that opportunity to reach out and remind the class that our differences are an opportunity to learn from other perspectives.

This year I have focused upon literature that celebrates heroes and moral virtues. As we read the great examples set for us by our texts, one common thread runs through all the books – honor. In *The Last Book in the Universe*, we discussed gangs and bullies as our hero in the text defended academic and physical differences – including the choice to befriend an old man who was mocked because of his age.

We are currently reading *Touching Spirit Bear* and (older readers) *The Hobbit*. Both set great examples of overcoming differences and stretching ourselves to try the unfamiliar.

Our social skills are developed over a lifetime. Honoring each other's diverse attitudes, beliefs, and values does not mean you have to agree with them, but rather that one honors the right of the individual to have them. At Guffey Community Charter School, we do a great job of preparing great citizens and future leaders!

**Written by Lynda MacDonald, 3-5 teacher**

#### 4.1.4 Students will work cooperatively in groups

Working cooperatively in groups is what makes multi-age classrooms work. I believe so strongly in this, that I do not have desks in my classroom, but prefer to use tables so we can easily move into groups of two or more. So often throughout the day, I pair students up to work together. This way ideas get shared and everyone is an active learner. I believe in learning through communicating and sharing ideas. Students who may struggle can easily get the support of others. Those who are supporting learn how to support in a supportive way. Those who are supporting, learn how to teach which is another effective way to learn. I believe it is good to see others' points of views and/or how someone else may have interpreted the problem. This most effectively is done when working cooperatively in groups.

**Written by Jenny Hartman, K-2 teacher**

#### 4.1.5 Create an environment of emotional and physical safety for themselves and others.

Guffey School is very unique in that the students here almost automatically feel safe and accepted by others without even thinking about it. One excellent example of this is how well the students work in a multi-age environment. In my classroom, we have multiple students who are not learning at a level equivalent to their grade level. I have a kindergartener learning at the 1<sup>st</sup> grade level, a 1<sup>st</sup> grader learning at the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level, and a 4<sup>th</sup> grader learning at the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level. The beauty of this is that none of the students care about what groups other kids are in. On the first day that we did reading or math groups in my classroom, I had a student who was new this year ask “Why is \_\_\_\_\_ in our group if he isn't in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade?” All I had to say was that we are all placed in groups where we work best and the grade level of the person doesn't matter. That was it. I did not have to explain anymore and never received another question again. I feel like the students are so accepting at our school and almost naturally make others feel emotionally and physically safe. In other schools, a student may be made fun of if he or she has

to go to another class that is a different grade level to receive the instruction that they need. This is not the case at Guffey.

The students also know how to talk to each other about their issues or what is bothering them without always having to tell a teacher for every little thing. I didn't even realize this until it was pointed out to me by Elizabeth (a person we are mentoring/providing observation hours for so that she can become a teacher). I thought that my students 'tattle' about everything, but she told me that at other schools where she observed how much the students would completely ignore the person who was bothering them and go straight to the teacher without even trying to talk to the person to solve the problem. Elizabeth said that she noticed my students talking to each other about issues far more frequently than they were telling me about. I started paying attention to this and noticing that the students do in fact listen to me! I have been telling them that they need to try to solve their problems themselves first, and if it doesn't work *then* they can come to me. This is actually what they are doing, and it was very noticeable to someone outside of our school community. This shows that the students are learning *how* to create that environment of physical and emotional safety themselves, instead of relying on only the adults to create that culture.

**Written by Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, Middle School**

4.1.6 Students will:

Celebrate each other's growth and learning

A vast change has happened from last year's middle school class of only girls. The introduction of a large group of 6<sup>th</sup> graders, mostly boys, brings with it a diversity of attitudes, learning styles and motivations. The bottom line is that in Guffey, we celebrate each other's successes no matter how different we are. There seems to be an overall system built into this school that overlooks our differences and welcomes unique spirits.

Once again, here are my students in their own words:

"We love Guffey because there is no peer pressure – we are a giant family!"

"We are trusted to have more freedoms because we demonstrate our honesty and integrity."

"We love the opportunity to express ourselves through music, theater and arts – this let's everyone's special talents shine!"

"We share ideas, successes and failures and have opportunity to come together to make things right when we do fail. We don't laugh at failure, we work together to fix it."

"As a school we love to honor veterans, community members, and have birthday celebrations without fear of offending someone."

"Having multiple grades in one classroom really is helpful – we see each other on an equal level unlike schools where they are divided by grades – just because you are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade doesn't mean you are at that level academically on all subjects and can learn from all levels."

"I love being in a class where we can be trusted to bring in home made baked goods, have tea, listen to music and be more relaxed during learning!"

“Since we have a small classroom we have more help from our teacher.”

“Because we are a small school we get to know each other and have the opportunity to discover great qualities about everyone.”

“We celebrate and congratulate each other. The A’s don’t make us jealous, it challenges us to do better!”

“In a mixed age class, everyone matures at a different level, but we have learned to support them where they are.”

“If there is somebody struggling in a subject, students who are stronger in that subject reach out to help. Our class is small enough that when the teacher is one on one with a student, we all pitch in with one another without being disruptive.”

“Teamwork works here because we have that Guffey mindset!”

“We aren’t embarrassed to say ‘we don’t understand something’ because often when we say it other people are emboldened to speak up and say they don’t get it either!”

“When a class member is celebrated for their strengths and abilities – it doesn’t cause us to get jealous, it challenges us to work harder.”

“This is a positive place. Academic success is encouraged and coming from a large public school where bad grades are bragged on, we actually are ashamed of our poor performance and determined to try harder.”

“Teatime is a great time to talk about literature and topics that we collaborate on. It’s easier to discuss academic topics in a casual atmosphere.”

-- All quotes are from Guffey Middle School students

**Policy Number: EL-11**

**Policy Type: Executive Limitations**

**Policy Title: Accomplishment Reporting to the Public**

The Administrator shall not fail to prepare an annual progress report to the community. Accordingly, the Administrator may not fail to include the following in the annual progress report:

1. Student achievement based on the attainment of established standards.
2. School strategies to improve student achievement.
3. Comparisons of school adopted content area.
4. Revenues, expenditures and costs of various segments of school operations.
5. The extent to which the school has achieved its ends.
6. Information regarding achievement of the state accreditation indicators.

***Pam writes:***

*Evidence of my compliance with this policy can be found in the school's annual report called, Guffey Community Charter School's Annual Progress Report for the 2015-2016. This document was presented to this board at the September, 2016 board meeting and is now available to the community and the general public on the school's website.*