

MONITORING REPORT
ENDS POLICY #3
EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS #13 & #16
PREPARED FOR THE GUFFEY COMM. CHARTER SCH. BOARD OF DIRECTORS
September 2017

By Martine Walker, School Administrator

Ends Policy #3: Personal Skills

(Martine Walker writes)

I have asked our school's teachers, Jenny Hartman, (K-2) Lynda MacDonald, (3-5) and Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch, (6-8) to write to this Board End Policy. I believe that by having our teachers write to our policies provides useful information about what we are doing in our classrooms and also to what we are doing both on and off school's campus. The school's ends policies are supported by weekly discussions at the staff meetings as we address that month's Ends Policy as a team. The school's Accountability Committee also reviews the written ends policies so that they are also informed as to what we are doing at our school. As evidence of how we are in compliance with this policy follows:

- 3.1.1 Students will create places for themselves in the community.
- 3.1.2 Students will effectively set personal goals.
- 3.1.3 Students will have a strong sense of self.
- 3.1.4 Students will work independently.
- 3.1.5 Effectively evaluate and reflect upon their own growth and learning.
- 3.1.6 Students will create a personal environment of emotional and physical safety.
- 3.1.7 Develop and practice self-discipline.
- 3.1.8 Organize their personal space and time.

Teacher, Lynda MacDonald (Grades 3-5th) writes:

3.1.1 Students will create places for themselves in the community

Already this year we have had a number of opportunities for students to create a place for themselves in the community. On August 24, we had a member of the BLM join us at Guffey Gorge to teach the students the principals of Leave No Trace. Through this activity students learned the significance of what it means to Leave No Trace, as well as specific strategies that are important to keep in mind when exploring a wild areas. The following week, other members from the BLM came to do additional activities with the students. Community members were also invited to attend a meeting the following day. At the end of this month, students will participate in a community clean up of Guffey. We will be taking the section from highway 9 to the school. Parents are also welcome to join us for this event. In November, students will be putting on their annual Veteran's Day program honoring all of our local veterans. This is always a well attended and well appreciated event.

Teacher, Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch (Grades 6-8th) writes:

3.1.2 Students will effectively set personal goals

Middle School students at Guffey effectively set personal goals each day by using their planners. Each morning I place the day's schedule on the board. Students are required to write the subject & assignment for the day as well as any additional notes in their personal planner. Their obvious goal is to complete their work and learn from it.

With all long-term assignments, I provide students with dated and detailed rubrics that allow them to choose how hard they plan on working.

I asked my students what has helped them the most this year; here are some of their responses:

"I am taking personal responsibility for all my assignments and changed my motivation."

"I have worked on focusing more – and not getting overwhelmed especially in science."

"Achieving my goals can happen if I just ask questions!"

All the students agreed that organization is another key factor in achieving their goals and that their new desks/file cabinets help them the most. This year each student has their own file drawer system at their desk and files for each subject plus notebooks and pocket folders.

I am excited to see such determination of a majority of my students – to see themselves as high achievers!

Teacher, Lynda MacDonald (Grades 3-5th) writes:

3.1.3 Students will have a strong sense of self

Students in Guffey definitely have a strong sense of self. Being in a small school and in multiage classrooms lends itself well to this. Students are recognized for who they are, honored for their strengths, and accepted for their weaknesses. Students know that everyone is different, so it is easy to just be who you are. Students are given opportunities to be kind and are treated with kindness in return. Students are also taught respect and as a result are respected in return. Both of these character traits lend themselves to having a strong sense of self.

Teacher, Jenny Hartman (K-2nd grades) writes:

3.1.4 Students will work independently

It is absolutely imperative that students learn how to work independently. This is a progressive skill where students learn how to work independently more and more as they get older. We are just starting to learn how to work independently in the K-2 classroom, while the students in the 3-5 classroom do fairly well working independently, and the 6-8 students have this skill almost mastered. Working independently is a skill that is actively taught in the K-2 classroom. In order to function effectively in a multi-age environment where 3 different things are always being taught at the exact same time, some independence is necessary. For my K-2 students, I can see a major difference in the level of independence just from the kindergarteners to the 2nd graders. The kindergarten students need to be guided through almost everything. Most kindergarten

students are unable to read, so this means that they can't even do the simplest activities alone... mostly because they cannot read the directions to any questions. As students get into 1st and 2nd grade, they are capable of learning how to become more independent workers. First of all, one policy that I have in my class is that if a student has a question and I am currently busy teaching another student, they may ask another student for help, or they can skip that question and move on – they need to continue working on something different until I am free to help them with whatever they need help with. The students are surprisingly very good at helping each other without giving away the answers. Something else that has helped them learn how to work independently is the very well established routines in our classrooms. They know what is expected of them throughout the day. They know what is expected of them on most assignments. This has become very helpful for two reasons. First, I can ask them to do something and not have to explain what I need them to do at all because they are so familiar with what the expectations are. This is the case for many subjects throughout the day, such as journals, handwriting, buddy reading, and spelling. I could almost walk out of the classroom and they could run it themselves! Another time routines are important are when volunteers are unable to come in and I do not have a replacement, especially during reading time. The 2nd grade reading group understands the routine of how reading time goes and what they need to be doing during that time. If a volunteer cannot come in, it is the 2nd grade group that gets to work 'independently' for that day. Obviously, they still come and ask a large number of questions, however they take pride in being able to complete their reading without an adult.

Teacher, Lynda MacDonald (Grades 3-5th) writes:

3.1.5 Students will effectively evaluate and reflect upon their growth and learning

In my classroom, every student is expected to make growth no matter where they are on the learning continuum. Students are encouraged to observe and measure their own growth. One way we do this is by keeping a reader's/writer's notebook. In this notebook, students can see how their writing and other work has improved throughout the year. I use these notebooks at conference time to show parents their student's growth. I also have students very involved in their own assessments. Every term, we give DIBELS assessments and MAP assessments in reading, grammar, and math. I let students know what their previous scores were so they can see for themselves how much they have grown. This helps to make students accountable and well as excited about challenging themselves to do better each time we take the assessment. If a student does not show adequate growth or needs help in certain areas, then we together to come up with a plan on how they can get the additional help they need to keep growing.

Teacher, Jenny Hartman (Grades K-2nd) writes:

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

In general, students at Guffey feel a sense of safety and security while they are at school. It is almost like we are in our own "Guffey Bubble" where nothing bad can happen. The K-2 students all have a middle school buddy who is always watching out for them. The middle school students make sure the K-2s feel safe on the playground, and are there to be with them if they feel like no one is playing with them. The middle-schoolers walk the K-2s to the library and read stories to them. They also pair up with the K-2 students on field trips and are always an extra set of eyes to make sure the youngest students at our school are ok. As teachers at the school, we do our best to build a positive relationship with each and every one of our students so that they can trust us. By trusting their teachers, students automatically feel more physically and emotionally safe. The

students know that they have an adult that they can go to if they ever feel like something is wrong or if they are feeling unsafe.

Teacher, Jenny Hartman (Grades K-2nd) writes:

3.1.7 Develop and practice self-discipline.

In order to be successful in school (and in life), students need to develop self-discipline. Self-discipline is necessary in many facets of school life, from academics to behavior. As far as academics, they students are developing self-discipline by getting their assignments done on time. During classroom assignments, students have a specific amount of time to get the assignment done. If they choose not to practice self-discipline and not use their time wisely, K-2 students will receive an “Uh Oh!” which is a piece of paper stapled to the assignment that says “I was unable to complete my work in class due to the following reason: (talking, playing, not using time wisely, other). After I have finished my work at home, please sign it so that I may return it.” This has proven to motivate students to practice more self-discipline in getting their assignments done in a timely manner during class. Our school also assigns nightly homework assignments. In addition to the academic reasons for having homework, homework has also proven to increase self-discipline in students. The students need to learn how to manage their time at home in order to complete homework assignments. In addition to academics, students also learn to practice self-discipline in their behavior choices. In the K-2 classroom, we have a behavior chart on the wall and each student has his/her name on a clip on that chart. Their names always start the day on “Ready to Learn”. They can move their names up to “Good Job” or “Outstanding”. They can also move their names down to “Slow Down”, “Think About It”, or “Parent Contact”. The students understand how they need to shape their behavior in order to either move their names up or down on the chart. Whenever a student moves his/her name, I make sure that the student clearly understands why their name is moving (for either positive or negative behavior).

Teacher Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch (Grades 6-8th) writes:

3.1.8. Organize their personal space and time

Happily, this topic is reinforced by my previous Ends entry!

As students reach the middle school years it is extremely important to reinforce the expectation of personal responsibility. The new desks and file systems purchased for this year (thanks to the Pie Palooza) allow students to easily organize their homework, academic texts, art, math, and writing tools. The following is a list of some of my middle school efforts to promote independent work:

- *By using a personal planner in class, students take ownership of the assignments and their due dates as well as upcoming event preparation*
- *Our online math program, IXL, allows students to work at their own pace in math. Along with supported instruction and hard copy assignments, students are expected to complete 20 minutes of IXL each evening.*
- *Our science class requires a specific 3-ring binder and is built around the process of maintaining good notes, keeping all quizzes and tests.*

- *Extended literature assignments (when reading entire books) are given with expected chapter completion dates, but students may read/work ahead as desired.*
- *My classroom website, hillevipeterson.com, allows students to submit work from home, see what assignments are coming up, download important handouts they may have left at school, and access support material from online links.*
- *Middle school places a strong emphasis on reading instructions **by themselves**, and highlighting key points in math, literature, science, Latin, and social studies.*

Guffey Middle School's purpose is to prepare our students for high school and college; it is our belief that by allowing students to be more independent, they must learn to advocate for themselves, assume responsibility for their mistakes as well as own all the glory for their (many) successes!

Martine Walker writes:

Evidence of my compliance with these policies are as follows:

Policy Number: EL-13

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: Educational Program

The Administrator shall not fail to adapt and develop the educational program of the school as necessary to meet content standards and fulfill the Board's Ends policies.

Accordingly, the Administrator may not:

1. Fail to ensure that the educational program will provide both formal studies to meet the general academic needs of each student and, to the extent possible, opportunities for individual students to develop specific talents and interest in more specialized fields.

Guffey School provides formal general academics while also providing opportunities to meet student's individual interest areas with the following:

ACADEMICS: "The Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) are the expectations of what students need to know and be able to do at the end of each grade. They also stand as the values and content organizers of what Colorado sees as the future skills and essential knowledge for our next generation to be more successful. State standards are the basis of the annual state assessment." (Quoted from www.cde.state.co.us) Colorado has the following content areas:

Colorado Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, Dance), Comprehensive Health (The standards underscore important skills for navigating today's society with its complex and often confusing messages around health, beauty, and happiness), Mathematics, Physical Education, Reading, Writing, Communicating, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Extended Evidence Outcomes (for students with significant cognitive support needs) and English Language Proficiency.

Our school's teachers along with our school's accountability committee (SAC) review and revise how our school covers the requirements of the state standards and try to cover one subject matter a year. For example, the goals last school year were to review and discuss District Unified Improvement Plan, to review and give input into the writing curriculum, to review technology changes and finally, to review the monthly ENDS reports. This year our school's

accountability committee will look at the math curriculum, technology, review ENDS reports and give support to the new administrator.

The October 11th Board Meeting will feature our three teachers and their students who will share their academic plans for the 2017-2018 school year in each of the core content areas as well as opportunities for individual students to develop their talents and interest in more specialized fields. This is a wonderful opportunity for board members, parents, students, and our community members to see what our plans are, get questions answered, and look at the resources that we will be using for the school year. I have put this date out to our school families as an 'Open House' event. In the past we have had a good turnout since we involve students, their families, the community and serve a family dinner. We will be holding an Open House much like that this year.

STUDENT INTERESTS: Our school's staff is adept at working with our students through projects in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended time to explore an authentic and engaging topic of their own personal interest. Examples of this can be seen throughout the school year on school walls, classroom bulletin board and most especially during the 8th grade project process.

2. Fail to ensure that the educational program includes all legally required courses and programs.

Guffey School adheres to the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) and we are held to the same rigorous educational standards as all public schools in Colorado. Our school's district, Park County RE2 in Fairplay and Mountain BOCES of Leadville (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) assist our school and staff in assuring that our school includes all required educational programs for our school's students. Two examples are our ability to offer, when possible, specialized services to students in the following areas:

IEPs (Individualized Education Plans), READ plans (Reading to Ensure Academic Development) and 504 Plans.

We also participate in The Colorado Student Assessment Testing Program, and the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). Our school is responsible and has maintained Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) which is a reflection on all the state required courses and programs.

3. Fail to develop a curriculum to provide a program of instruction based on and designed to enable students to meet or exceed the Board-adopted standards for student performance, meet the needs of all students and utilize a variety of educational programs and instructional strategies.

Our school works hard to meet both the Colorado Assessment Standards (CAS) and the Guffey Community Charter School Board adopted policies (Ends). One of our major concepts in working to accomplish this is that we meet each student where they are and implement teaching strategies to match the various learning styles of the individual student. Guffey School has always offered individualized instruction which provides every student the opportunities they need for academic and social success. I believe that creative thinking, dedication, problem solving, teamwork, and thinking outside of the box, have been our tools for this success. When needed, we include additional staff, community members or special education consultants, with parent permission. These resources are brought in to offer their expertise and guidance. The

multi-age environment eases students into learning groups where they can grow, be successful and most importantly, learn at their own pace.

4. Fail to involve appropriate staff and community members and utilize available resources to develop the curriculum.

Being able to match Guffey students with the appropriate staff or community members is one of our school's greatest assets. A Guffey School classroom teacher and community person is always a member of the 8th grader's project team, and we have community members assist in the classrooms for math, reading, art, yoga, mindfulness and science. Most of these community members come daily throughout the week to share their expertise by working with small groups of students or one-on-one in our school's classrooms.

5. Fail to encourage and carefully monitor innovative programs, evaluating the effectiveness of all pilot courses annually and keeping the Board adequately informed.

Our school's staff and I carefully monitor the effectiveness of our programs throughout the school year and make adjustments as needed.

6. Fail to ensure that faculty and administration regularly evaluate the education program and recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

The school's teachers and I regularly evaluate our educational programs by carefully analyzing and monitoring the progress of all our instructional programs based on our students' learning outcomes. To do this we ask specific student-driven questions. Examples of these are: Is this student achieving at or above their grade level? Is the curriculum still challenging and interesting to our students? Are there things that we could do better to improve our student outcomes? Over the years and with the implementation of the READ plan, our teachers have become proficient in identifying and targeting their instruction to meet the needs of all school students.

7. Fail to ensure that all new programs and courses of study as well as the elimination and extensive alteration of the content of current programs and courses are presented to the Board for information.

The board is kept informed about the school's curriculum at our school by reading the written monthly monitoring reports and attending our October board meeting and Open House where classroom teachers share their educational plans for that school year.

8. Fail to consider class size and organization as important components of the education program.

This school year we have three Colorado Certified Teachers: Jennifer Hartman, teaching grades K-2nd who currently has 11 students in her classroom, Lynda MacDonald, teaching grades 3rd - 5th grade, with 11 students and Hillevi Peterson-Hirsch (Mrs. P-H), teaching grades 6th-8th with 8 students. Each of our three classrooms are designed to be age specific and currently have a very manageable number of students in each setting.

9. Fail to ensure that all staff members are qualified and trained to perform the responsibilities assigned to them.

Teachers MacDonald, Peterson-Hirsch, and Hartman are State of Colorado professionally certified and licensed, teachers who are all recognized as highly qualified teachers (HQT) by our state.

10. Fail to meaningfully involve staff members in the development and evaluation of staff development programs designed to meet the Board's Ends.

I encourage and support our staff to participate in educational classes, read books, and attend workshops or seminars on topics that would be helpful to our school and their professional development needs. The first opportunity of this school year is an offer to our staff to partake in Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training. This is an 8hr, one-day course in which trains how to properly and effectively manage disruptive and assaultive behavior. I will be attending this course in October in Buena Vista. This is being offered to our staff as a free course by Mountain BOCES.

11. Fail to provide a learning environment that maximizes multi-age instruction through project-based learning that is rooted in a sense of place and community connection.

Guffey School is firmly rooted in our small, rural community and because of the connection that we have with our community, our school's students have the opportunity to learn and grow in our local environment. For example, the school has a lease agreement on two pieces of pond properties from Cover Mountain Sub Division that would offer living labs for both science and social studies projects and at the beginning of this school year our school went on a field trip to the Guffey Gorge, a local swimming hole, which is currently experiencing some environmental hardship due to an increase in human activity. Our students were led by the Leave No Trace (LNT) organization out of Boulder, CO to learn more about the human activities that are negatively impacting this local place of natural beauty and wonder. They were able to learn how to apply Leave No Trace standards to their local places and community.

Policy Number: EL-16

Policy Type: Executive Limitations

Policy Title: Student Conduct and Discipline

The Administrator shall not fail to ensure an environment which is reasonably safe, conducive to the learning process and free from unnecessary disruption.

Our school maintains an environment that is safe and free from disruptions, creating a learning environment where all students can be successful. Our school is a closed campus, which means that students are not allowed to roam about the building or leave the school's campus without permission. We do not allow people from the community or neighborhood to hang out on our school's playground or in the building during school hours. Parents are required to sign their children "out" if they are taking them for the day and "in" if they arrive late. Only one door is unlocked during the day, and visitors are directed to the school's office. Students are informed of any known guests or visitors during morning announcements. Annually, and as needed throughout the school year, we review rules of conduct with our students and issue these rules to families by way of the Student Parent Handbook. Disruption at our school remains at a minimum. We continue to have an annual State of Colorado fire inspection, and have visits from the school nurse, speech language consultant and special education consultant. Our school district superintendent visits our school monthly. The Park Co. Sheriff Department makes itself

available to us as needed. We review our emergency procedures as needed and at least annually. We perform fire drills monthly.

Accordingly, the Administrator may not:

1. Fail to adopt a written student conduct and discipline code which, at a minimum is in accordance with state and federal law.

The school's Parent/Student Handbook, which every family receives at registration, offers information about student conduct. The parts of the handbook that speak to student conduct and discipline are as follows:

Dress Code, Student Absences & Excuses, Concerns or Complaints, Bully Prevention Policy, Bus Safety and Rules and School Discipline Policy. In addition, school rules are reviewed with students at the beginning of the year. This year we had the students break off into 4 groups and pick a category of rules to perform student-led skits to the other students. This turned out to be a fun and productive way to remind returning students of the rules and to introduce new students to rules. A copy of the school's handbook is on the school's website too.

2. Fail to include teachers, administrators, students and the community in developing the code.

Whenever there is a major change in a written policy it is reviewed by teachers, staff, the board, and our school families. Our school annually asks open ended questions of our school parents in the end of year survey. Examples are: What do you see as the greatest strength(s) of our school? What do you see as the greatest weakness(es) of our school? Is there any positive change you feel our school could make to service our kids better? The school's staff and I review the survey results during a staff meeting and if necessary, implement any needed improvements or follow up on suggestions.