

MONITORING REPORT
ENDS POLICY #3
EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS #13 & #16
PREPARED FOR THE GUFFEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS
September 2021
By Martine Walker, School Administrator

Ends Policy #3: Personal Skills

Martine Walker writes:

I have asked our school's teachers, Elizabeth Jackson (K-2), Lynda MacDonald (3-5), and Jenny Hartman (6-8) to write to this Board End Policy. Having our teachers write to the policies provides us with 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 end 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 end 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.

3.1.1 Students will create places for themselves in the community

Teacher, Elizabeth Jackson (K - 2nd) writes:

One of the biggest struggles for a young child when they are first starting school is the loss of the security and a sense of belonging that they had at home. A school can be a scary place with lots of new people, things, and rules. In the K-2 class each student has a job. These jobs range from being the messenger for things that go up to the office, passing out papers, picking up trash, holding the door, turning on and off the lights, and more. Each week the students get a new job and they rotate so everyone gets to do every job. This gives each student the chance to be responsible for something important in the classroom, helping them to feel a part of their classroom and the school.

3.1.2 Students will effectively set personal goals

Teacher, Jenny Peck (6th - 8th) writes:

Generally speaking, when students are setting goals at school, those tend to be academic goals. This year, I am happy to see students setting personal goals that go beyond their grades. I learned about one of my student's goals for this year when we were doing a basic literature discussion. A student was responding to the prompt, "Who does one of the characters in the novel remind you of and why?" His response was that one of the characters reminds him of himself. He then further articulated why the character in the novel reminds him of himself. He said that, like the character in the novel, he often speaks without thinking and gets frustrated easily and can be quick to take out his frustration on others. He continued to explain, out loud to the class, that this is something he is really trying to work on this year. He said he wants to focus on controlling his temper and he wants to work on not saying things to others that might hurt their feelings. I am so proud of this student for expressing what his challenges are to the class, and for explaining what it is that he is working on at a personal level this year. So far, this student has had zero incidents where he could not control his temper or said something that he would regret, and he is continuing to be successful at his goal.

3.1.3 Students will have a strong sense of self

Teacher, Lynda MacDonald (3rd – 5th) writes:

Every year, I like to start the first day of school off with a different focus. This year I was introduced to the Imagine Project. Through this project students were able to share with me in writing what they felt their strengths and weaknesses were as it relates to school. I was very impressed with how honest students replied to this assignment. I now know areas to focus on in helping students to grow and improve as it relates to their sense of self. To wrap up this project I had students create "I am special" mini posters where they got to write all kinds of words and phrases about themselves that makes each one of them special.

3.1.4 Students will work independently

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

Having four grade levels this school year, it is imperative that students be able to effectively work independently. 3rd-6th grade is a great age to hone in these skills. At the beginning of the year, I stress and we practice what it takes to work independently. Students know that everyone will work at a different pace, however, I have three "rules" written on my board to guide all students in doing their best: 1) Stay on task 2) Follow directions 3) Work efficiently. It is good to see how much better the fourth grade students are at the beginning of this year compared to where they were at the beginning of their third grade year. Some students definitely suffer from some degree of attention deficit (especially this time of year). Fortunately with a small class size, I can easily see these issues and help to address them on the spot so students do not fall behind.

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

Teacher, Jenny Peck (6th - 8th) writes:

Students can reflect upon their own growth and learning in so many ways. The incoming 6th and 7th graders are reflecting on their growth and learning by discussing how things may be similar or different from Mrs. Mac's class and are talking about how certain subjects might seem relatively easy or hard compared to what they may have expected.

The 8th graders who are in the middle school classroom for their 3rd year are reflecting on their learning in a different way. These students have expressed how they learn best, and what teaching style works best for them by asking specifically about the format of how certain classes will be taught and letting me know which format they prefer. While it is important to continue to grow and learn no matter how certain material is taught, it is equally important to recognize what works best for each individual and for them to be self-advocates to help themselves learn to their best potential.

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

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

An environment of emotional and physical safety is a very important part of my classroom and my students know this. In conjunction with the Imagine Project, we started the year talking about kindness. First I read Patricia Polacco's story, Bully. We discussed the point of view of the three main characters. Then we read a book about kindness called A Ticket for Kindness. This book was written by one of my student's uncles who is a Guffey resident. After we read and discussed the story, we wrote letters to the local author thanking him for his book and sharing ways we had been kind to others. The students were thrilled when this author wrote back to thank them for their letters. Throughout the year, students know they can come to me to work out any concerns they may have with another student and we will work out any issues together in a positive, non-judgemental manner.

3.1.7 Develop and practice self-discipline.

Teacher, Jenny Peck (6th - 8th) writes:

Self-discipline is always going to be a skill that middle school students will need to continue to practice and improve upon. The types of self-discipline that students in middle school are continually working on include having a filter when speaking. One of the ways we are teaching students to practice self-discipline by having a filter is by reminding the students to think about four specific things before saying something: "Is it kind? Is it helpful? Is it necessary? Is it true?" If something does not meet these four requirements, it is not something that should be said out loud. I have reiterated this many times in the classroom this year, and it might be sinking in. I have seen students who are about to say something, then they take a step back and say, "Never mind, I'm not going to say that." Sometimes it seems like having a filter when speaking is one of the hardest forms of self-discipline for a middle school student, and I am glad to see some students are starting to develop their filters.

3.1.8. Organize their personal space and time

Teacher, Elizabeth Jackson (K - 2nd) writes:

Part of a multi level classroom is that students are not always going to complete their work at the same time. When students complete their work and others are still working, they have a selection of activities to choose from. Each activity has some educational value to it, such as reading, finishing homework or other incomplete work, learning new vocabulary, or even word problems. These students have free choice of available activities in order to remain engaged and learning when they complete the assigned topics quickly.

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.

Martine Walker writes:

Guffey School provides formal studies to meet the 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 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 the social studies and technology curriculum.

Normally our school's October Board meeting features our three teachers in their classrooms with their students who present and share their academic plans for the current school year. Along with the school board parents are also required to attend. This is usually a well-attended

event with a potluck to follow. Due to the current pandemic situation this year we have not decided how we plan to hold this event this year.

STUDENT INTERESTS: We are so fortunate here at Guffey School with our dedicated and professional staff, our small class sizes, and our volunteers to be in an excellent position to meet and know each of our school's children and their unique interests and needs. Students have multiple project opportunities in a school year which helps them to retain knowledge and hold on to a love of learning because they get to make their studies more personal and can also dive deeper into each subject. These projects are visible throughout the school year with displays on the school walls and bulletin boards. Our 8th graders have the most in depth project of all students with their cumulative and year-long focused 8th grade project. This year Guffey Students will again have multiple opportunities to explore arts electives. Our K-5th graders will have Zumba this year and each trimester our middle school students will be rotating through and participating in Sewing with Kathie Boucher, Welding with Ken Walker & Bill Sioux, Cooking with Sarah Garoutte and Cathleen VanEgmond, Art with Dana Peters, Photography with Chris Peterson, and Computers with Kristie Satterly.

As you can see we are able to offer our students SO much in the way of traditional academics along with arts, sciences, and physical activity/movement. Having all of these wonderful opportunities makes for a more well-rounded student who is ready to learn!

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 Buena Vista (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), RtI plans (Response to Intervention), and 504 Plans.

We also participate in The Colorado Student Assessment Testing Program, and the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) when presented by our district school. Our school 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, middle school science, and all middle school electives. 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 Mrs Jackson's K-2 classroom currently has 9 students, Mrs MacDonald's 3rd-5th grade classroom currently has 6 students and Mrs Peck's 6th-8th grade classroom has 10

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.

We require our teachers are State of Colorado professionally certified and licensed, and further, we prefer teachers who are recognized as highly qualified teachers (HQT) by our state. All 3 of our teachers hold current teaching licenses for the state of Colorado and two of our teachers are highly qualified.

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. We are open to any opportunities that may be provided through the District. On the radar is READ training which will be required by Mrs Jackson and Mrs MacDonald before January 2022.

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 Subdivision that would offer living labs for both science and social studies projects. This year we have four 8th graders who will be satisfying the 8th grade project requirements this year.

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.

Martine Walker writes:

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. 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 AND in the Ponies at the end of the first week of school. Disruptions at our school remain at a minimum. We continue to have an annual State of Colorado fire inspection and the Park County Sheriff Department makes itself available to us as needed. We perform fire drills monthly and we also review our emergency procedures as needed.

The safety of our students is a top priority of our school and community which is why we review policies on a regular basis and make changes as we see fit. Each time we review these policies we do it as a committee made up of qualified and diversified members.

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 and upon request at any time, offers information about student conduct. The parts of the handbook that speak to student conduct and discipline are as follows:

School Rules, Attendance Policy, Discipline Policy & Philosophy, Suspension Philosophy, Anti-Bully & Pro-Kindness Policy, Dress Code, Personal Items, and Homework.

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

Whenever there is a major change in a written policy or the introduction of a new policy, it is reviewed by teachers, staff, the board, our school families, and any other stakeholder representatives. Our school annually asks open-ended questions of our school parents in the end of year survey, and occasionally on surveys throughout the school year. 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.

This year we opened for 100% in-person learning and our COVID response plan was developed based on input from school parents, staff and the school board. In addition to this plan we are also following any state mandates that are put forth by our Governor of which there are not currently any mandates and we recognize the need to continually revisit our response plan based on current circumstances.