

School Board Executive Summary

Topic: Board Policies for Review: #5300 and #7100

Date: April 27, 2026

Presented by: Nick Lesiak, In-House Legal Counsel



Recommended Action:

- ☐ Information Only
- ☐ Presentation/Discussion
- ☐ Discussion/Action by Board of Education
- ☒ Presentation/Action Next Meeting

Recommendation: None at this time. Presenting revisions to two existing policies for board discussion and consideration. Policies will be presented again for approval on May 11, 2026.

Background: The Board of Education and the District adhere to a regular policy review process to ensure: timely and appropriate updates to existing policies; the implementation of new policies as warranted; the elimination of outdated / conflicting policies; and grammatical / language revisions as needed.

5300 - Conduct (*Students*)

Revisions reflect changes to have we handle short-term suspensions and are required due to passage of LB 653 this legislative term.

7100 - Communications and School Community Relations (*Community Relations*)

Revisions reflect clean-up to defined terms.

Attachment(s): Redline copies of policies #5300 and #7100

TOPIC CATEGORY: STUDENTS
NUMBER CATEGORY: 5000
TITLE: CONDUCT
NUMBER: 5300

Students of the District represent themselves, their families, their school, and the Westside Community. It is the intent of this Code of Conduct to promote responsible behavior among all students at school and in the community. This Policy applies to all secondary and elementary students.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. "Short-term suspension" means the exclusion of a student from attendance in all schools within the District for a period not to exceed five school days.
2. "Long-term suspension" means the exclusion of a student from attendance in all schools within the District for a period exceeding five school days but less than twenty school days.
3. "Expulsion" means exclusion from attendance in all schools within the District (except the location designated for alternative education) for a period not exceeding the remainder of the semester in which the expulsion took effect, and in addition, the next full semester or other additional length of time to the extent permitted by the Nebraska Student Discipline Act.
4. "Mandatory reassignment" means the involuntary transfer of a student to another school in the District.
5. "Other disciplinary action" includes, but is not limited to, open mod in-school suspension (applicable to high school only), in-school suspension, short and long-term restrictions on a student's participation in school sponsored activities, clubs, and athletic programs, temporary or permanent loss of privileges to ride on school-provided busses, vans or other transportation, student counseling, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requiring a student to be in school other than regular school hours to do additional work, and requiring a student to receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation.
6. "Harassment" on the basis of sex includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature and unwelcome verbal, written, or physical advance or suggestion of a sexual nature. Harassment on the basis of race, national origin, disability, age, religious beliefs, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status includes, but is not limited to, any verbal or written statements to or about an individual which ridicules, slurs, mocks, derides, disparages, or makes fun of the individual because of his or her race, national origin, disability, age, religious beliefs, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status.
7. "Bullying" is as defined in Board Policy 5310.
8. "Firearm", as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any Destructive Device.

9. A "Destructive Device" includes (a) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or device similar to any of these devices; (b) any type of weapon by whatever name known which will, or which may be, readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter; and (c) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in (a) or (b) and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.
10. "Dangerous weapon" includes, without limitation, firearms, knives and switchblades (regardless of blade length), B.B. guns, stun guns, air-soft guns, ammunition, pipes, chains, brass knuckles (or any similar device made of another material", or any item that has the appearance of a Dangerous Weapon or that is portrayed by the student as a Dangerous Weapon.
11. "Under the influence" of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor has a less strict meaning than under criminal law; for purposes of this Policy the term means any level of impairment and includes the odor of alcohol on the breath or person of a student.
12. "Hazing" is any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership in any school organization. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, an act of sexual penetration, an exposure of the genitals of the body done with the intent to affront or alarm any person, a lewd fondling or caressing of the body of another person, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment or the performance of any unlawful act that endangers the physical or mental health or safety of any person. For purposes of school rules, hazing also includes any activity expected of someone joining a group, team, or activity that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate; personal servitude; restrictions on personal hygiene; yelling, swearing and insulting new members/newcomers; being forced to wear embarrassing or humiliating attire in public; consumption of vile substances or smearing of such on one's skin; binge drinking and drinking games; sexual simulation and sexual assault.
13. "Sexual assault" means sexual assault in the first degree as defined in section 28-319, sexual assault in the second degree as defined in section 28-320, sexual assault of a child in the second or third degree as defined in section 28-320.01, or sexual assault of a child in the first degree as defined in section 28-319.01, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended.
14. "Profane, vulgar or abusive" language or conduct includes, but is not limited to, that which is commonly understood and intended to be derogatory toward a group or individual based upon sex, race, disability, national origin, or religion or any other protected class under law.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

I. ON SCHOOL GROUNDS / AT SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES / SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

A. Prohibited Conduct. The following conduct set forth in Paragraphs 1-26 constitutes Prohibited Conduct if the conduct occurs on school grounds, a school-sponsored activity or athletic event, or in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by the District being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee. The conduct set forth in Paragraph 9 also constitutes Prohibited Conduct regardless of where the conduct occurs.

1. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes, or making any communication that a reasonable recipient would interpret as a serious expression of an intent to harm or cause injury to another person;
2. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property;
3. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to any person;
4. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student or making any threat which causes or may be expected to cause a disruption to school operations;
5. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon, including, but not limited to dangerous;
6. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in section 53-103 of the Nebraska statutes, or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor;
7. Public indecency as defined in section 28-806 of the Nebraska statutes, except that the definition of public indecency applies only to students-at least twelve years of age;
8. Engaging in bullying as defined in Board Policy 5310;
9. Sexual assault or attempted sexual assault of any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted or attempted to sexually assault any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults which occur off school grounds not at a school function, activity, or event;
10. Engaging in any other activity prohibited by the laws of the State of Nebraska or the City of Omaha which activity constitutes a danger to any person or that interferes with school purposes;
11. Harassment or discrimination against any person on the basis of the individual's race, national origin, sex, disability, age, religious beliefs, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status;
12. Retaliation against any person for reporting or asserting a claim of harassment, discrimination or bullying;

13. Possession or use of a cell phone or other electronic device in violation of rules contained in the Parent-Student Handbook;
14. Behavior that constitutes a danger to any other person or that is disruptive to, or seriously interferes with, class work, school activities, or school transportation;
15. Participating in hazing or being present and having knowledge that hazing that is occurring even if not directly participating;
16. Plagiarism, cheating, or other academic dishonesty;
17. A repeated violation of any rules and standards in this Code of Conduct, including paragraphs 18-26, if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes;
18. Gambling;
19. The use of language, written or oral, or conduct, including gestures, that is profane, vulgar or abusive;
20. Insubordination, dishonesty, or gross disrespect to teachers, school officials, other school employees, volunteers, or bus/van drivers;
21. Skipping school, home room, or regulated time, being tardy, or being out of the building without permission;
22. Use or possession of any form of tobacco, tobacco or nicotine delivery device, or tobacco-product look-alike, e-cigarette or vapor ("vape") dispenser of any kind regardless of the substance, if any, that it contains;
23. Possession or use of any mood-altering or behavior-affecting substance regardless of whether possession or use is unlawful under the laws of the State of Nebraska;
24. Violation of student dress code, or clothing that is lewd or indecent, vulgar or plainly offensive, or that school officials reasonably conclude could materially and substantially disrupt the work and discipline of the school, or that a reasonable observer would interpret as advocating illegal drug use;
25. Intentionally making a false report or claim of harassment, discrimination or bullying;
26. Violation of the Internet Acceptable Use Responsibility Agreement or any computer use agreement.

B. Disciplinary Action for Prohibited Conduct on School Grounds, at a School-Sponsored Activity or Athletic Event, or in a Vehicle Being Used for School Purposes.

Prohibited Conduct described in paragraphs (1) through (17) above constitutes grounds for short or long term suspension, expulsion, mandatory reassignment, and/or other disciplinary action.

Prohibited Conduct described in paragraphs (18) through (26) above constitutes grounds for short-term suspension and/or other disciplinary action. Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will be imposed against students who are truant, tardy, are otherwise absent from required school activities, or as otherwise required by law.

The Board specifically determines that the types of conduct specified in paragraphs (1) through (26) have the potential to seriously affect the health, safety or welfare of students, staff and other persons or to otherwise seriously interfere with the educational process.

Any student who is suspended will be given an opportunity to complete any classwork and homework missed during the period of suspension.

Procedures

The principal or designee will conduct a reasonable investigation of the alleged Prohibited Conduct, examine the facts and circumstances, contact law enforcement as required by law, and cooperate with any law enforcement investigation.

The student will be given an opportunity to present his or her version of the situation. The principal or designee will determine the appropriate disciplinary action based upon the severity and extent of the Prohibited Conduct. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parents or guardian of the alleged behavior violation and the reasons for disciplinary action.

Short-Term Suspension

1. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension shall be made only after a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Before such short-term suspension takes effect, the student and the parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker, as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-530, of the student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against him or her, an explanation of the evidence the District has, and be given an opportunity to explain his or her version of events leading to the alleged conduct or violation the principal has determined necessitates a short-term suspension and evidence to support the student's version of such events.
3. Within 24 hours, or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, not to exceed an additional 48 hours, the principal or administrator shall send a written statement to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard, and the reasons for the action taken, the actions made by the school to try to discontinue or alleviate the behavior of the student prior to considering suspension, resources the school is able to provide or recommend to assist the student, and how the school plans to handle such behavior in the future, including an actionable plan aimed at maximizing strategies to keep the student in school. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents or guardian before or at the time a student returns to school after a short-term suspension, and the principal or designee shall document their attempt to make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parent or guardian. If such conference has not been held, a parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-530 may submit a written request to the school for a conference with the principal relating to the short-term suspension of such parent's, guardians', or educational decisionmaker's child pursuant to this section and the written statement received pursuant to this subsection 3. At the time of the short-term suspension, the student and parent or guardian shall be provided with information regarding any opportunity to complete class work (including examinations) missed during the short-term suspension.

4. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no pre-kindergarten through second grade student may be suspended from school, unless the student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity, or unless the student engages in violent behavior capable of causing physical harm to another student or school employee. Instead, the principal, or designee, may implement alternative disciplinary measures on a case-by-case basis if a pre-kindergarten through second grade student engages in misconduct that would otherwise result in a short-term suspension. If a pre-kindergarten through second grade student brings a deadly weapon on school grounds, in a school vehicle, or to a school activity, then the student may be suspended or expelled in accordance with this Policy's disciplinary procedures. For the purposes of this Section 4, "deadly weapon" means any firearm, knife, bludgeon, or other device, instrument, material, or substance, whether animate or inanimate, which in the manner it is used or intended to be used is capable of producing death or serious bodily injury.

Long-Term Suspension, Expulsion and Mandatory Reassignment

Any long-term suspension, expulsion, and mandatory reassignment for Prohibited Conduct shall be subject to the procedural requirements set forth in the Student Discipline Act of the Nebraska statutes.

Length of Expulsion

1. Except as described in subparagraphs (2) and (3), expulsion shall mean exclusion from attendance in all schools within the system for a period not to exceed the remainder of the semester in which it took effect unless the misconduct occurred: (a) within 10 school days prior to the end of the first semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect through the second semester, or; (b) within 10 school days prior to the end of the second semester, in which case the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and the first semester of the following school year. Such action may be modified or terminated by the District at any time during the expulsion period. For purposes of this subparagraph (1), if the misconduct occurred prior to the last ten school days of the first semester and the expulsion takes effect in the second semester because the recommendation for expulsion was appealed to a hearing examiner or the Board, the length of the expulsion shall not exceed the number of days it would have been in effect had the appeal not been made.
2. The expulsion of a student for: (a) the knowing and intentional use of force in causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, school volunteer, or student, except if caused by accident, self-defense, or on the reasonable belief that the force used was necessary to protect some other person; or, (b) the knowing and intentional possession, use, or transmission of a dangerous weapon, other than a firearm, shall be for a period not to exceed the remainder of the school year in which it took effect if the misconduct occurs during the first semester. If the expulsion takes effect during the second semester, the expulsion shall remain in effect for summer school and may remain in effect for the first semester of the following school year. Such action may be modified or terminated by the School District at any time during the expulsion period.

3. A student found to have knowingly and intentionally possessed, used, or transmitted a firearm (as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921) on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity or athletic event, or in a vehicle being used for a school purpose shall be expelled from school for a period not less than one calendar year. The period of expulsion may be extended beyond one year to the beginning of the semester following the one-year period. The Superintendent is authorized to modify the expulsion requirement on an individual basis.
4. Any expulsion that will remain in effect during the first semester of the following school year shall be automatically scheduled for review before the beginning of the school year. The review shall be conducted by the hearing officer who conducted the initial expulsion hearing, or a hearing officer appointed by the Superintendent in the event no hearing was previously held or the initial hearing officer is no longer available or willing to serve, after the hearing officer has given notice of the review to the student and the student's parent or guardian. This review shall be limited to newly discovered evidence or evidence of changes in the student's circumstances occurring since the original hearing. This review may lead to a recommendation by the hearing officer that the student be readmitted for the upcoming school year. If the Board of Education or a committee of such Board took the final action to expel the student, the student may be readmitted only by action of the Board. Otherwise the student may be readmitted by action of the Superintendent.

School Activities

During any time period that a student is excluded from school due to short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, or emergency exclusion, the student will be prohibited from being on school grounds (except the location designated for alternative education), from attending any extracurricular activities that take place on district property, and from participating in any school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs.

Other disciplinary action may also be imposed in the form of additional restrictions (beyond the length of the suspension, expulsion or emergency exclusion) on the student's participation in school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs, where such curtailment is necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process.

If such other disciplinary action is imposed in the form of restrictions on the student's participation in school sponsored activities, clubs and/or athletic programs beyond the time-period of the suspension, expulsion or exclusion, or is imposed in a situation where there has not been any accompanying suspension, expulsion or exclusion, the District follow the procedures as set forth in regulation to this Policy.

C. School Transportation

The Code of Conduct requirements set forth in this Policy apply equally to students when using any District-provided transportation.

Disciplinary action for behaviors that occur on District transportation includes, but is not limited to, temporary or permanent loss of riding privileges. During any period in which the transportation privilege is lost due to the misconduct of the student, transportation to and from school becomes the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee will conduct a reasonable investigation of the alleged Prohibited Conduct, and shall make reasonable effort to notify the student's parents or guardian of the alleged behavior violation. The student will be given an opportunity to present his or her version of the situation. The Superintendent or designee will determine the appropriate disciplinary action based upon the severity and extent of the Prohibited Conduct, and shall make reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian. Any short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, or mandatory reassignment from school for Prohibited Conduct shall be subject to the procedural requirements set forth in the Student Discipline Act of the Nebraska statutes.

II. OFF-SCHOOL GROUNDS / NOT AT SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITY OR SCHOOL VEHICLE

A. Prohibited Conduct described in Paragraphs (1) – (26) that occurs off school grounds and not at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event or in a vehicle being used for a school purpose constitutes grounds for short-term suspension and/or other disciplinary action where the conduct could reasonably be expected to reach the school or impact the school environment, or where there is such other connection to the school that permits disciplinary action to be taken. In addition, the Prohibited Conduct described in Paragraph 9 remains subject to the full range of penalties as discussed in Section I.

1. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable investigation of the facts and circumstances. A short-term suspension shall be made only after a determination that the suspension is necessary to help any student, to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference with school purposes.
2. Before such short-term suspension takes effect, the student and the parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker, as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-530, of the student shall be given oral ~~or~~ and written notice of the charges against him or her, an explanation of the evidence the District has, and be given an opportunity to explain his or her version of events leading to the alleged conduct or violation the principal has determined necessitates a short-term suspension and evidence to support the student's version of such events.
3. Within 24 hours, or such additional time as is reasonably necessary following the suspension, but not to exceed an additional 48 hours, the principal or administrator shall send a written statement to the student, and the student's parent or guardian, describing the student's conduct, misconduct or violation of the rule or standard, and the reasons for the action taken, the actions made by the school to try to discontinue or alleviate the behavior of the student prior to considering suspension, resources the school is able to provide or recommend to assist the

student, and how the school plans to handle such behavior in the future, including an actionable plan aimed at maximizing strategies to keep the student in school. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents or guardian before or at the time a student returns to school after a short-term suspension, and the principal or designee shall document their attempt to make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parent or guardian. If such conference has not been held, a parent, guardian, or educational decisionmaker as defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-530 may submit a written request to the school for a conference with the principal relating to the short-term suspension of such parent's, guardians', or educational decisionmaker's child pursuant to this section and the written statement received pursuant to this subsection 3. At the time of the short-term suspension, the student and parent or guardian shall be provided with information regarding any opportunity to complete class work (including examinations) missed during the short-term suspension.

III. ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS FOR EXPELLED STUDENTS. Expelled students will be offered an alternative school, class or educational program. Approved alternative educational programs include, but shall not be limited to: online-courses, community-based programs, home-based programs, District-based programs, specialized tutoring, and distance learning. The administration shall have the authority to approve other specific alternative programs and enter into contracts for the provision of such alternative programs. Such programs will include an individualized learning program to enable the student to continue academic work for credit towards graduation during the term of their expulsion. A student will not be required to attend any alternative education program in order to complete classwork and homework.

Legal Reference: Statute 79-266

IV. EMERGENCY EXCLUSION

Emergency Exclusion Up to Five Days. The principal or designee may exclude a student from school for not more than five school days if:

1. The student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and the student poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of the school community, or
2. The student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of the student or to others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

Before such emergency exclusion takes effect, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the reason for the exclusion, an explanation of the evidence supporting such exclusion, and be provided an opportunity to present his or her version. The principal or designee shall send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardians describing the reasons for the action taken. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents before or at the time the student returns to school.

Emergency Exclusion Beyond Five Days. If the Superintendent or his or her designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond the initial five school days, the following notice and hearing procedures shall be followed, and all procedures shall substantially comply with the provisions of sections 79-266 to 79-287 of the Student Discipline Act:

1. Written notice of the basis for the emergency exclusion beyond five days shall be given to the student and the student's parent/guardian by personal delivery or sent by registered or certified mail on or before the sixth day of the emergency exclusion, and shall include:

- a) A form on which the student or the student's parent/guardian may request a hearing, the date by which the hearing request must be received, and notice that, if such a timely request is received, the requestor has a right to have that hearing held and a final determination made within ten school days after the first day of the emergency exclusion;
- b) Hearing procedures and appeal procedures; and
- c) Advisement of the right to examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used and of the right to know the identity of witnesses and the substance of their testimony.

2. If a timely request for a hearing is made, the Superintendent or his or her designee shall appoint a hearing examiner, and the hearing examiner shall give oral or written notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent/guardian of the time and place for the hearing. If the request of the student or the student's parent/guardian is received after the deadline date provided on the request for hearing form, the same basic procedure should be followed and the hearing should be an expedited one since the student is already out of school, but the hearing and determination need not be completed by the end of the tenth school day following the exclusion.

Rules Regarding Other Conduct. In the event that individual coaches or sponsors of activities and/or clubs impose eligibility restrictions for student participation in school sponsored activities for behavior other than those listed above, those restrictions or rules shall be written and communicated to the participating students. Violation of the restrictions or rules shall result in discipline ranging from a reprimand to permanent removal from the school sponsored activities and/or clubs.

Students with Disabilities. Suspension, expulsion and/or emergency exclusion of verified or eligible disabled students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 shall comply with District procedures and state and federal law.

Legal Reference: Nebraska Student Discipline Act - Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-254 to 79-296

POLICY ADOPTED: April 3, 1973

POLICY REVIEWED AND ADOPTED: April 9, 1987

POLICY AMENDED: July 7, 1994

POLICY AMENDED August 4, 1997
POLICY AMENDED: August 3, 1998
POLICY AMENDED: July 10, 2000
POLICY AMENDED: February 7, 2005
POLICY AMENDED: July 14, 2009
POLICY AMENDED: July 23, 2014
POLICY AMENDED: June 12, 2017
POLICY AMENDED: July 27, 2020
POLICY AMENDED: August 7, 2023
POLICY AMENDED: _____

TOPIC CATEGORY: COMMUNITY RELATIONS
NUMBER CATEGORY: 7000
POLICY TITLE: COMMUNICATIONS AND SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONS
POLICY NUMBER: 7100

The Board ~~of Education~~ recognizes that the schools exist as an integral part of the community and cannot be separated from it. The Board further believes that the success of the ~~schools'~~ District's educational program will depend largely upon the effectiveness of parents, students and staff working toward common goals. A continuous program of ~~two-way~~ two-way communication is essential.

STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY

~~District E~~mployees ~~of the Westside Community Schools~~ are urged to participate in community activities as a means of keeping current on what is vital to the interests of the District and as a means of contributing time and resources to make the neighborhood, city, state, nation, and world a better place to live.

NEWS POLICY

The Board ~~of Education~~ recognizes ~~that the schools belong to the people, and~~ that the community should be kept informed about what is happening in the schools. Therefore, the news policy is based upon honesty, openness and fairness, and recognizes that what schools do is news.

Only individuals who have prior administrative approval may issue press releases or other official communication regarding school-related activities and events in furtherance of the individual's official responsibilities. The superintendent may delegate responsibility for communicating with the media to appropriate staff members.~~Staff members are urged to fully cooperate with members of the media in matters of school-related news, except where the rights of individuals may be compromised.~~

Information of a strictly personal nature shall not be released without the consent of the individual or as otherwise allowed by law.

In a crisis situation, the Board ~~of Education~~, administration and staff should refer to the crisis plan and deal with the media and other interested parties according to that plan.

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

A cooperative effort shall be maintained between the officials of the ~~school d~~ District and other governmental agencies. In doing so, the rights of the school, home, governmental authority and individual must be protected.

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL EMERGENCIES

In case of any school emergencies or disasters, the media and community shall be informed as soon as ~~possible~~ practicable.

NOTIFICATION AND ATTENDANCE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS

The media and community will be given advanced notice of the time, place, and business matters to be acted upon at all ~~School~~ Board meetings. The public is invited ~~and urged~~ to attend all ~~School~~ Board meetings.

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS

The Board ~~of Education~~ supports the adoption of programs which will aid the ~~d~~District in establishing effective communications both internally with the staff and externally with the community, state, and nation.

THE ROLE OF EDUCATORS

The Board recognizes the fact that the effective schools are developed through shared ideas. Since the District benefits from ideas shared with the system from across the nation, the system is therefore committed to, in turn, share with other school systems its ideas, on a local, state, and national level.

Cross References:

Policy 4430 - Confidential Information On Students and Personnel

Policy 5220 - Student Records

Policy 1220 - Public Meetings, Notification, Minutes

POLICY ADOPTED: April 3, 1973

POLICY REVIEWED AND ADOPTED: September 8, 1987

POLICY AMENDED: _____