

**MONITORING REPORT: Policy OE-3 (Relationship with and Engagement of Community Stakeholders)**  
**\*Formerly this policy was two: OE-3 (Treatment of Community Stakeholders) and OE-9 (Communicating with the Community)**

**PHASE ONE: Interpretation and Monitoring Indicators**

**DATE: December 2018**

## Policy

**The Superintendent will maintain an organizational culture that engages and serves parents and citizens with respect, dignity, and courtesy.**

### Interpretation

We understand this policy is the companion to Policy OE-4 (Personnel Management), which establishes expectations for the treatment of District staff, and Policy OE-10 (Learning Environment), which establishes expectations for the treatment of District students. Through Policy OE-3 (Treatment of Community Stakeholders), we understand the Board is setting expectations for how we will interact with and serve our external stakeholders.

The distinctive terms and phrases in this policy express both expectations and values. Therefore, shared definitions are critical.

**Stakeholders** (also denoted in this policy as **parents and citizens**) refer to the owners of the District who have a vested interest in seeing that the District delivers on its intended results and maintains the viability of its services and outcomes over time. Although stakeholders include those who work within the system on a daily basis, like teachers and support staff (also known as internal stakeholders), we understand that this policy is particularly aimed at external stakeholders who exist outside the day-to-day work of the District. External stakeholders have a definite *stake* in the District's outcomes, but they do not directly determine what goes into producing those outcomes. External stakeholders include the families who send their children to our schools, the taxpayers who support our schools, and the businesses who hire our graduates. External stakeholders also include care providers, first responders, government agencies, colleges and universities, civic groups, collaborative partners, and faith-based organizations.

**Organizational culture** refers to the underlying beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, and values that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment in the District. Culture manifests itself in a variety of ways, including customs, communication, traditions, symbols, systems, celebrations, behavioral norms, leadership styles,

interactions with the outside world, and future expectations. Simply stated, organizational culture is “the way things are done around here.” It is the context for everything that happens within the District. As such, the Board expects the Superintendent to be clear about the District’s values (as set forth by the Board in its policies), understand how those values are intended to define the organization, and live those values every day in a way that perpetuates and/or creates a positive culture for all students, staff, families, and other stakeholders.

**Engages** refers to establishing an on-going collaboration with external stakeholders focused on the District’s primary mission, which is student learning and development. The Board expects the Superintendent to involve parents and community members in ways that are aligned with the critical outcomes and results they have set forth in their policies. They expect such involvement to go beyond participation in social events, fundraising efforts, and traditional activities such as homework assistance and general volunteering. Genuine engagement must also encompass sharing information and providing opportunities, whenever possible, for stakeholders to have a voice in decision-making about issues that affect them.

**Serves** refers to supporting stakeholders in a way that ensures their experiences with the District are as easy, stress-free, and beneficial as possible. To these ends, the Board expects the Superintendent to maintain a customer service orientation across the District that is characterized by listening, helpfulness, a focus on solutions, and a genuine respect for every stakeholder. They expect the Superintendent to model such excellent customer service and to hold everyone within the organization accountable for doing the same. In instances when individual employees fail in this effort, the Board expects the Superintendent to notice and take corrective action.

**Respect, dignity, and courtesy** refer to a manner of treating members of the community that is consistently welcoming, positive, and kind. The Board acknowledges that a respectful culture is one that values diversity and honors the human rights of others regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or ability. The Board expects the Superintendent to ensure that every staff member conveys sincerity, empathy, kindness, thoughtfulness, and problem-solving skills in every interaction with the public. Even when a disagreement or conflict arises, the Board expects District employees to behave professionally and treat others as they would want to be treated themselves. Conversely, they expect the Superintendent to prohibit such disrespectful behaviors as (a) offensive remarks or gestures, (b) inappropriate jokes;, (c) yelling or belittling, (d) aggressive or patronizing behavior, (e) embarrassing or humiliating behavior, (f) intimidation or coercion, (g) discrimination as defined under human rights legislation, and/or (h) damaging gossip or rumors.

### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

Provided below for each part of OE-3

### **The Superintendent will:**

## **1. Protect confidential information.**

### **Interpretation**

We understand this component requires us to ensure all District held information about individual students, staff, and/or families is managed in a way that prevents persons from accessing that information unless they have a documented need or legal right to access it. Additionally, we understand this means staff members will not only maintain physical information and data securely, but will also refrain from gossiping or sharing information informally.

The Board's stance on confidentiality as it relates to employees is further defined in Policy OE-4 (Personnel Administration) component 7 ("protect confidential information"). The Board's stance on confidentiality as it relates to students is further defined in Policy OE-10 (Learning Environment) component 3 ("assure that all confidential student information is appropriately collected, used, and protected").

### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Clear procedures for handling confidential information and evidence that staff have been trained in following these procedures.
- No breaches in confidentiality practices as outlined in any District policy, state law, and/or federal regulation.

## **2. Effectively handle complaints.**

### **Interpretation**

We understand this component requires us actively to collect and pursue information that is both critical and helpful for the improvement of our organization. To this end, the Board expects us to establish multiple avenues for stakeholders to share their complaints with us, thereby allowing us to address perceived and actual shortcomings. To address them effectively, the Board expects us to (a) follow standard procedures for investigating incidents reported and information received, (b) research causes and solutions, (c) implement remedies aimed at both solving the immediate issue and also preventing recurrence, and (d) make sure person(s) sharing a complaint know that it has been registered and addressed. Furthermore, the Board expects us to do all of this in a manner that is respectful, timely, transparent to the extent possible, and clearly documented. Effectively handling a complaint does not, on the other hand, mean that the District will always implement the remedy advocated by the complainant, nor that every complainant will be happy with the District's decision.

The Board's expectations regarding the handling of complaints from employees is defined in Policy OE-4 (Personnel Administration) component 5 ("effectively handle complaints and concerns").

### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- Evidence that a process for registering complaints is readily accessible to stakeholders.
- A written protocol for allowing complaints to be escalated to a higher level if stakeholders are not satisfied with the response they have received.
- Documentation of the District's responses to community questions and/or comments shared through our website portal entitled "The Listening Post."
- Written responses to community questions and concerns published on BoardDocs and the District website each month.
- Zero reports to the School Board that District officials have failed to respond to legitimate questions or concerns from stakeholders, when those questions or concerns have been communicated through an appropriate venue (notwithstanding that the stakeholders may not agree with or like the response they received).

### **3. Maintain an organizational culture that:**

#### **a. Values individual differences of opinion.**

#### **Interpretation**

We understand this component requires us to create the kind of organizational environment that allows people with multiple backgrounds, mindsets, and ways of thinking to work effectively together and perform to their highest potential in order to achieve the District's goals. In other words, it is a call to embrace our diversity in all its manifestations, for, in the words of the Board's fourth Strategic Commitment, "our public schools belong to our entire community, and our diversity makes us stronger." Strategic Commitment Four goes on to say that, "to capitalize on this strength, we [must dedicate ourselves] to energizing and integrating all aspects of our community in support of our children and their learning."

Thus, in every aspect of our organization, the Board expects us to interact with stakeholders in ways that honor and value the variety of perspectives they bring to each issue. To do so, they expect all District employees to (a) embrace and respect diversity, (b) foster a climate where equity and inclusion are always at the forefront, (c) listen carefully to stakeholders regardless of who they are, (d) work hard to clarify their needs, and (e) provide them with appropriate feedback. To facilitate the fulfillment of these expectations, the Board wants us to have in place clear norms and procedures for how individuals and departments accept, process, and use information from stakeholders.

#### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence of clear norms and procedures for how individuals and departments accept, process, and use information from stakeholders.
- Evidence that the District's Civility policy is posted in every building.

- Evidence that critical information is provided to stakeholders in more than one language.
- Evidence of the ways that diversity is embraced, honored, and celebrated throughout the District.
- Evidence of the strategies the District has employed to diversify its workforce.

**b. Reasonably includes people in decisions that affect them.**

**Interpretation**

We understand this component requires us to make important decisions, to the greatest extent feasible, through collaborative, inclusive processes that solicit and weigh input from those who will be affected by those decisions. It reflects the Board’s faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to solve problems and their belief in the value of involving stakeholders in creating solutions -- rather than just telling them what has been decided after the fact. In order to facilitate this kind of inclusive decision-making, the Board expects us to (a) encourage and embrace new ideas, (b) accommodate different styles of thinking, (c) identify and take steps to mitigate historical biases within our systems, (d) provide opportunities for diverse people to connect and dialogue, and (e) recognize and elevate different types of leaders.

The word “reasonably” in this component acknowledges that every person impacted by a decision cannot, and likely will not, be consulted or given a vote during decision-making processes. The Board realizes this level of participation is not feasible. However, even though we cannot consult everyone about every decision, the Board expects us to take into account the implications of every decision on the whole spectrum of stakeholders, asking ourselves as a matter of course who will be helped and who will be hindered by any action we contemplate taking.

**Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence of the ways people have been invited to participate in decision-making processes.
- Evidence that multiple and diverse perspectives have been considered in decision-making processes.

**c. Focuses on common achievement of the Board’s *Results* policies.**

**Interpretation**

We understand this component requires us to educate stakeholders about the District’s improvement goals, key indicators of success identified for those goals, progress made toward achieving them, and plans for the future. To this end, the Board expects the Superintendent and her administrative staff regularly to take advantage of opportunities for representing and advancing the District’s interests within the greater community. Such opportunities include (a) attendance at

District-sponsored community events like drama productions, music concerts, and athletic contests; (b) involvement in significant community functions and celebrations; (c) participation on task forces, committees, and boards; (d) presentations to various stakeholder groups; and (e) publications in various District and public news media outlets.

We further understand the Board expects such involvement in the life of the greater community by the Superintendent and her staff to go beyond just raising awareness about the District's goals to inspire active support and engagement in realizing them. For example, an organizational culture that successfully focuses on common achievement of the Board's *Results* policies would be one that encourages and facilitates an initiative like a community-wide campaign focused on getting every child to earn a high school diploma. In other words, it would help to support and sustain a broad-based "culture of graduation."

### Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence that annual monitoring reports on the Board's *Results* policies have been shared with the public.
- Evidence that the Superintendent and other District administrators have regularly participated in local school and community functions and events.
- Evidence that the Superintendent and other District administrators have represented the District through participation in community boards, committees, and other initiatives.
- Evidence of community support for District initiatives.

#### d. Is open, responsive, and welcoming.

### Interpretation

We understand this component requires us to ensure that all District employees strive to demonstrate the core values set forth in this policy -- specifically those values spelled out in the definition of key terms at the beginning of this report -- whenever they are interacting with stakeholders. In short, the Board expects such treatment to be professional, positive, and service-oriented. This means that (a) when stakeholders come into one of our buildings, call us, email us, or visit with a staff member, they are made to feel important and valued; (b) when staff are not immediately available to respond to stakeholder requests, they follow up in a timely fashion; and (c) when stakeholders ask for information that they have a legal right to receive, such information is provided as promptly as possible.

We further understand that maintaining an "open and welcoming" organizational culture means the Board expects the Superintendent to encourage parents and other members of the public to participate in the life of the District as volunteers and to make its facilities available for use by community organizations whenever such can be accomplished without impeding the mission of the District.

Finally, we understand that, in today's society, the Board expects the Superintendent to strike an appropriate balance between the desire for maintaining an "open and welcoming" organizational culture and the need for adhering to protocols aimed at protecting the safety and security of all students and staff – even when such protocols create barriers and/or limit stakeholder access to facilities, staff members, students, and/or information.

### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence that professional expectations are in place in all schools for staff to provide a welcoming environment.
- Evidence of zero complaints from stakeholders about a lack of openness and/or responsiveness exhibited by District employees – or evidence that any such complaints have been appropriately investigated and addressed with appropriate corrective action.
- Evidence of strategies used to encourage parents and community members to participate in the life of the school as volunteers.
- Evidence that building use policies and procedures allow community organizations to utilize school facilities when such facilities can be made available without impacting the mission of the District.

#### **4. Provide communication that:**

##### **a. Is transparent, honest, and timely.**

### **Interpretation**

We understand this component refers to the quality, quantity, and frequency of the District's communication with stakeholders. The Board expects the Superintendent and her administrative team to provide extensive communication to the community to ensure stakeholders receive information about the operation of the District that is informative and that builds positive regard and confidence in the District and its work. "Transparent and honest" convey the Board's expectation that such information is accurate, truthful, and complete to the extent we are legally empowered to impart. "Timely" conveys the Board's expectation that communication is consistent and ongoing so that stakeholders receive the information they need when they need it.

We further understand that this component applies to interpersonal interactions – such as face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and electronic conversations via email or other social media platforms --as well as written communication.

### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence of the use of multiple venues for communicating with parents and other stakeholders.

- Evidence that key informational items relative to the operation of the district have been shared with external stakeholders via electronic and/or printed means in a timely fashion.
- Data showing the number of stakeholders who access District information via website, Facebook, Twitter, electronic newsletters, and other venues.
- Results of District surveys of parents, staff, and other stakeholders indicating overall positive or improving perceptions of the District's efforts to communicate effectively.

**b. Ensures opportunities for appropriate input and strategic two-way communication between the District and its stakeholders.**

**Interpretation**

We understand this component refers to the Board's expectation that there will be an element of reciprocity in District's communication with stakeholders. The Board values regular, proactive outreach to solicit input from stakeholders, discuss issues of interest, hear concerns, answer questions, and collect feedback about the District's vision and direction. In other words, the Board expects us to be good listeners as well as good sharers.

This component is closely related to 3a above, which sets forth the Board's expectation that we value individual differences of opinion, and also 3b above, which sets forth the Board's expectation that we involve people in decisions that affect them. Taken together, these components establish the requirement that we use information gleaned from "opportunities for appropriate input" and "strategic two-way communication" to inform District decision-making processes.

**Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence of the various ways (District website, School Board meetings, parent meetings, advisory committees, surveys, etc.) that the District has provided stakeholders with opportunities to provide input on relevant topics or decisions.
- Evidence of occasions when the Superintendent and/or her administrative staff have engaged stakeholders in discussions about the District's current status and/or future direction.

**c. Builds understanding and support for District efforts.**

**Interpretation**

We understand this component identifies critical pieces of content that need to be included in the District's communication with stakeholders. That is, the Board expects the Superintendent to communicate openly and regularly with the public about the District's improvement goals, key indicators of success identified for those goals, progress made toward achieving them, and plans for the future -- as spelled out in component 3c above, which sets forth the Board's expectation that



we will maintain an organizational culture focused on common achievement of the District's *Results* policies.

Furthermore, the Board expects this content to be shared in ways that are accessible, comprehensible, and acceptable to the community. Regarding the latter, we understand stakeholders' acceptance of District's plans and goals is generally influenced by the degree to which they have been invited to provide input and/or feedback. As such, this component is closely related to component 3b above, which sets forth the Board's expectations that we maintain an organizational culture that includes people in decisions that affect them, since the Board realizes that people are more likely to support plans and goals they have helped to create.

#### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence of the ways people have been invited to participate in decision-making processes.
- Evidence of the ways the Superintendent has worked to build community understanding and support for District initiatives.

#### **d. Includes an annual progress report.**

##### **Interpretation**

We understand this component describes a particular type of communication the Board expects the District to provide stakeholders once per year. Stakeholders who pay taxes are the owners of the District. The Superintendent and her staff have an obligation, on behalf of the Board, to provide information to owners about the way their tax dollars have been invested in the past year and the strategic directions charted for the future use of their taxes.

At a minimum, the District's annual report should include information about (a) the current condition of the District with regard to curriculum and instruction, student achievement, financial status, staffing levels, and the state of facilities and related equipment; and (b) the direction of the District with regard to vision and improvement goals for the future related to student achievement, programming, facilities, and budgets.

#### **Monitoring Indicator(s)**

We will know we are compliant when we can provide:

- Evidence that the annual budget has been submitted to the Board and posted to the District website for public review prior to being adopted.
- Evidence that the District Report Card published by OSPI is linked to the District website for stakeholder review.
- Evidence that an annual progress report summarizing both the current condition and the future direction of the District has been made available to all stakeholders.

