

To: School Board, Ferndale School District (WA)

From: Linda Quinn, Superintendent

Date: July 26, 2019

**Subject: 2019 Monitoring Report
Operational Expectations Policy 9 (OE-9)
Learning Environment**

School Board's Monitoring Notes

(To be completed by each member individually prior to discussion by the whole Board)

Board Member: _____

Total Number of Monitoring Indicators = 20

Number Compliant= _____ Number Partially Compliant= _____ Number Non-Compliant= _____

Commendations

Recommendations

Other Notes

Overall Rating: _____ Compliant _____ Non-Compliant

Superintendent's Introduction

Through Policy OE-9, the School Board has provided us with guidance about the kind of environment they expect us to provide all students. While we cannot tell the Board we have fully met every indicator we have established to monitor compliance with this policy, we feel very comfortable asserting that (1) learning environment is a top priority for our leadership team; (2) we have taken concrete steps during the past year to strengthen the learning environment in every school and classroom; and (3) we are making positive progress in most areas reflected in this policy.

In the report that follows, we have told the story of our work through examples, data, and references to various related artifacts and resources. Whenever possible, we have looked at trends rather than a single snapshot in time.

We want to make a few notes about the format and organization of this report:

- First, we have included the interpretations and monitoring indicators you approved a year ago in our Phase One report so that you don't have to look back and forth between two documents. The language from the Phase One report is written in blue.
- Second, our response to each of the five components of this policy directly follow the monitoring indicators for that component. The headlines for the new sections are green and the new language is black.
- Finally, when you first adopted this policy, and when we submitted to you our Phase One Report, it was labeled OE-10. Since that time, we have made several changes in the overall set of governance policies, which has resulted in renumbering some of them. This policy is now labeled OE-9.

Policy

The Superintendent will establish and maintain a learning environment that is equitable, safe, respectful, and conducive to effective learning.

Interpretation

In general, we understand this policy expresses the Board's expectation that the Superintendent will set high standards for the organization related to providing a positive climate in which all students and staff feel welcome, cared for, and supported in doing their best work. Furthermore, the Superintendent will ensure such standards are met in a way that protects the rights of students and staff and addresses non-compliance by focusing on opportunities for learning and growth rather than just on consequences.

We understand the Board expects the learning environment throughout the School District will be:

- **Equitable**, which refers to a standard of fairness that provides each student what he/she needs to meet established targets rather than giving all students the same programs, resources, and support systems;
- **Safe**, which refers to the maintenance of conditions that promote inclusivity and prevent students or staff from experiencing physical, mental, or emotional harm;

- **Respectful**, which refers to the assurance that words and behaviors in all school facilities and at all school-sponsored activities honor the dignity and worth of each individual and group; and
- **Conducive to effective learning**, which refers to the creation of a feeling tone or atmosphere that encourages and supports listening, sharing, collaborative problem-solving, risk-taking, discovery, reflection, understanding, and growth.

Evidence of Compliance

The language of the Strategic Commitments the Ferndale School Board drafted nearly a decade ago are echoed in this policy. Specifically, the very first Commitment suggests the kind of learning environment you expect. It states:

We believe that nurturing the development and maximizing the learning of all children entrusted to our care is our highest mission. We believe that every child comes to us with unique strengths, and, supported by skillful instruction, can expand his/her abilities. Therefore, we pledge that advancing student growth will be our primary consideration in all discussions and decisions.

The Board has always conveyed the expectation that we address the needs of the whole child -- and we have always (at least during my ten-year tenure in the District) taken that value to heart. During the past five years, we have done more than that; we have been working very intentionally to translate your value into a concrete action plans.

Five years ago, we adopted the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) framework and began the process of implementing it in each of our elementary schools. PBIS fits under a larger Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) umbrella. One of its primary goals is to create a safe, respectful and effective learning environment for all learners. Four years ago, we began teaching *Second Step* in each of our elementary schools --a curriculum that provides instruction in social and emotional learning with units on skills for learning, empathy, emotion management, friendship skills, and problem solving. During the last two years, we have expanded our SEL work at the elementary level by adding four counselors and a District-level SEL coordinator.

“SEL isn’t one more thing on the plate. It is the plate.”

Character Strong

While the SEL work in our elementary schools has been continuous over the past several years, our secondary schools have had a harder time implementing the PBIS framework and finding a model for supporting Social & Emotional Learning. Three years ago, we trained approximately 80 middle and high school staff in a program called *Capturing Kids Hearts*, which provided them with some concrete SEL strategies. This past year, our middle school staffs have moved to incorporate the *Second Step* curriculum into their advisory programs; and Ferndale High School is currently working to create a blended model combining *Capturing Kids Hearts* and PBIS.

In 2018-2019, we elevated this aspect of our work -- *creating the kind of culture and climate across our school district where (1) every student and staff feels safe and welcome, and (2) Social & Emotional Learning skills are intentionally taught and*

practiced -- to become one of the four major pillars supporting and directing everything we do in the District. In short, we feel confident in guaranteeing you that we are intentionally and systematically addressing the values and expectations you have expressed in Policy OE-9.

1. The Superintendent will maintain a climate that is characterized by support and encouragement for high student achievement.

Interpretation

We understand this component requires us to create a culture across the district of positive expectations for all students and mutual accountability for their learning. At the school level, it means that we must provide students with a variety of options for making positive connections and more than one route for achieving desired outcomes. At the classroom level, it means that we must ensure systems, routines, and interactions promote inclusivity and equity and reflect a strong belief in the capacity of each student to learn.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

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

- A survey of students reveals a high level of satisfaction with the learning-focused encouragement and support they receive in our school system;
- Teacher evaluation scores related to Dimension 5 (Classroom Environment and Culture) in *The 5 Dimensions of Teaching and Learning Instructional Framework* show more than 80% of our teachers are “Proficient” or “Distinguished” in this particular dimension;
- A catalogue of the District’s learning options and supports indicates a strong commitment to ensuring each student’s success *whatever it takes*; and
- Various evidence demonstrates the continued growth of our *Graduate Ferndale* campaign, which promotes high school graduation as a systemwide – even a communitywide – concern.

Evidence of Compliance

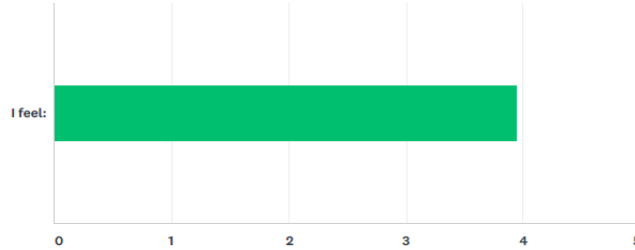
We attest to the Board that we are diligently working to create and maintain a climate in our School District characterized by support and encouragement for high student achievement. In support of this claim, we offer the following evidence:

To evaluate the health of our climate, we have reached out and asked our students for their perspectives. During 2018-2019, the counselors at each of our elementary schools (except Beach) administered a school climate survey to all students in grades 3-5 to assess this particular indicator. Below is sample data from one elementary school (Central). The three questions we have highlighted ask students to tell us (1) how happy they feel at school; (2) how helpful their teachers and support staff are; and (3) how safe they feel. You can see from this data, which is representative of all our elementary schools, the majority of students answered these three questions in the affirmative. You can also see that we have work to do to ensure that EVERY student is experiencing a safe and supportive learning

environment. (We did not conduct the same survey at our secondary schools, but the state-mandated Healthy Youth Survey provided us with a similar snapshot.

Q5 At my school,

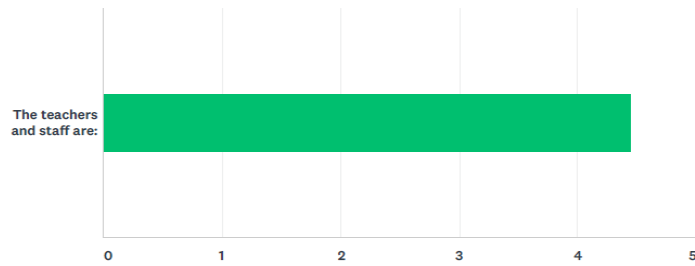
Answered: 159 Skipped: 2



	VERY SAD AND UNHAPPY	SOMETIMES SAD AND UNHAPPY	SO-SO	SOMETIMES HAPPY AND GOOD	VERY HAPPY AND GOOD	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
I feel:	1.89%	6.92%	19.50%	38.36%	33.33%	159	3.94
	3	11	31	61	53		

Q6 At my school,

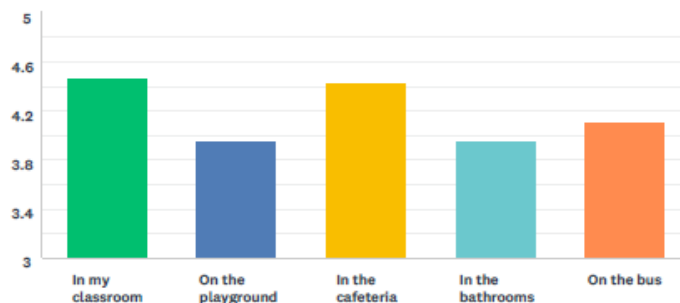
Answered: 159 Skipped: 2



	NEVER HELPFUL	HARDLY EVER HELPFUL	SO-SO	SOMETIMES HELPFUL	VERY HELPFUL	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
The teachers and staff are:	1.26%	2.52%	8.18%	26.42%	61.64%	159	4.45
	2	4	13	42	98		

Q7 This is how safe I feel in each of these places:

Answered: 159 Skipped: 2



	VERY UNSAFE AND SCARED	KIND OF UNSAFE	SO-SO	KIND OF SAFE	VERY SAFE	I DON'T RIDE THE BUS	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
In my classroom	1.26% 2	6.29% 10	6.92% 11	15.09% 24	69.81% 111	0.63% 1	159	4.47
On the playground	5.16% 8	7.10% 11	14.84% 23	32.26% 50	40.00% 62	0.65% 1	155	3.95
In the cafeteria	1.94% 3	5.16% 8	6.45% 10	20.00% 31	64.52% 100	1.94% 3	155	4.43
In the bathrooms	6.54% 10	8.50% 13	17.65% 27	17.65% 27	49.02% 75	0.65% 1	153	3.95
On the bus	3.27% 5	1.96% 3	6.54% 10	9.80% 15	25.49% 39	52.94% 81	153	4.11

Another question on the elementary climate survey asked about school rules and expectations. At Cascadia, 75% of the students surveyed reported that they both understand and follow school expectations. Similar to Central, nearly 90% said they feel safe in their school classrooms. Fewer reported feeling safe on the bus.

We also surveyed our staffs this past year to gather information on the impact the PBIS framework is making in our schools. At Cascadia, 100% of the staff disagreed with the statement “*School-wide behavior supports may work in other schools, but we doubt it will work in ours.*” As you know, this is the same school that recently was among the 200 statewide recognized by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for closing the achievement gap and demonstrating improvement among student groups identified for support. In that sense, Cascadia is our 2019 “poster child.” However, all of our schools are showing positive growth in the implementation of PBIS.



In the space of this report, we cannot share all the information gleaned from surveys we have administered. Our intent with these few examples is to demonstrate that we are asking students and staff about their teaching and learning environments in systematic ways and, more importantly, we are analyzing their responses and using the information they provide to make decisions.

In addition to surveys, we looked at this year’s teacher evaluations as a second indicator of the strength of the climate in our classrooms -- since we know that teachers are a critical factor in creating supportive learning environments for all students. A review of our 2018-2019 teacher evaluation scores related to

“Classroom Environment and Culture” (which is Dimension 5 in the *Five Dimensions of Teaching & Learning Instructional Framework*) shows that 96% of our teachers have been assessed as “Proficient” or “Distinguished” in this particular dimension.

A third indicator of our commitment to ensuring we are providing each student with a positive pathway to success is the number of learning options and program supports we are providing. Over the past five years, we have expanded such options and supports for students at all levels -- from our very youngest learners, many more of whom are accessing educational services through the District prior to entering kindergarten, to some of our students eligible for special education services, who remain in our programs until they turn 21-years-old.

In our Birth-to-Three program, we serve just over 70 students who have been identified by local physicians, their own families, and/or the District’s child-find efforts as needing early support. Many of these students transition into our Developmental Pre-School programs at age 3, where staff work with them on a variety of cognitive and developmental skills. To fill the gap between Developmental Pre-School and Kindergarten, in the spring of 2018, we implemented our Jump Start K program, which gives qualified students a half-year head start on developing kindergarten readiness skills. Early sampling of the data shows that, in aggregate, students who complete Jump Start K are outperforming their peers in every category included on the State’s WaKIDS assessment. In addition to these formal early learning programs, during the past several years, we have significantly increased our outreach to local daycare providers, working with them to align their programs with school readiness requirements. We have expanded the number of students and families we serve in Kaleidoscope Play and Learn drop-in sessions, where we support parents, caregivers and the children in their care by providing them with the child development information and social connections they want for themselves and their children. We have also been working to support more English Language Learners (both children and adults) through Play and Learn.

To serve the needs of our highly capable learners, we provide one-day-per-week pull-out programs for students in grades 2-5 in addition to a full-time classroom for students in grades 4-5 identified as top performers who can benefit from a specialized setting. At the middle level, we run a Language Arts/Social Studies magnet program at Vista for students assessed as being in the top 3-5% in these academic areas. Beginning in middle school, students also begin a “self-selection” process for other advanced courses that best meet their unique strengths and educational pathway preferences. Currently, our middle schools offer Advanced Music, Algebra, Geometry, Science, and World Language.

This self-selection process continues through high school. Our eight-period schedule allows space enough for students in grades 9-12 to take classes to shore up areas where they struggle without sacrificing the opportunity to take classes focused on content areas that match their strengths and interests. Currently, we offer over 1100 courses every semester at FHS. In addition, our junior and seniors can take

advantage of courses offered at our local Community and Technical Colleges through Running Start.

As all of this suggests, we provide a great number of options for our students. However, five years ago when we began working diligently to raise our graduation rate, we realized we weren't offering enough options to meet the needs of ALL of our students. And that some of the options we were offering -- like Windward High School -- were no longer attracting students the way they once did. Since that time, we have expanded our "menu" by adding a several additional high-school-level pathways to graduation. These include (1) the SOAR program, located on the FHS campus and serving students with personalized supports on individualized schedules; (2) Ferndale Virtual Academy, a totally on-line option; and (3) IMPACT!, a youth re-engagement program operated by BTC with which we have worked very closely.

While this "catalogue" of the District's learning options and supports is incomplete, we believe it indicates our strong commitment to ensuring each student's success -- *whatever it takes*.

The final indicator showing we are maintaining a climate characterized by support and encouragement for high student achievement relates to the growth of the "Graduation Culture" we have been working to create in Ferndale. Over the course of the past five or six years, this culture has gradually taken hold -- and definitely not by accident. In the spring of 2014, when our graduation rate was initially published by the State as 67.6% (later revised as 69%) -- which was a number that earned us an informal designation as a "drop-out factory" -- we said "no more," and we got serious about changing that number. We kicked off the Graduation Advisory Committee (GAC) that year, and under the auspices of GAC, District staff, students, local community members, and the School Board joined forces to (1) identify the underlying issues causing nearly one third of our students to fail to finish their high school careers and (2) come up with strategies for changing this statistic.



One of the outcomes of the work of the GAC was that our school community embraced a common understanding that graduation is not a Saturday in June, but rather a process that begins with students' very first educational experiences and continues through Commencement into their next steps as young men and women well-prepared for college and/or careers. As a result of the work of GAC, we implemented (1) a number of graduation-culture-building strategies, (2) several new pathways for students who were not being well-served by the current system as referenced above), and (3) a more intentional system for identifying early warning signs that point toward dropping out. Our focus on the ABCs (Attendance, Behavior, and Course Completion) grew out of this work.

The data suggests our efforts have been on the right track. The adjacent chart shows the annual increases in our graduation rate between 2014 and 2018, when we achieved our record-breaking 85.6%.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Graduation Rate</u>
2013-2014.....	69.0%
2014-2015.....	74.4%
2015-2016.....	76.2%
2016-2017.....	80.9%
2017-2018.....	85.6%

Some of the strategies we continued to use during 2018-2019 to maintain and grow our Culture of Graduation include the following:

- Many of our staff made Friday “College Day” by donning their college alumni gear.
- Each school posted pennants celebrating the college(s) attended by its staff members.
- Most of our schools created College Bulletin Boards dedicated to tracking the post-high education choices of former students.
- High school seniors participated in the fifth annual “Grad Walk,” returning to their elementary and middle schools in their caps and gowns just prior to commencement to parade through student and staff lined halls while *Pomp and Circumstance* played from the public address system. This spring, graduates also walked through FHS for the first time to be cheered on by their freshmen, sophomore, and junior colleagues.

2. The Superintendent will ensure that all policies and procedures regarding discipline are collaboratively developed, appropriately communicated to students and parents, and enforced consistently using reasonable judgment.

Interpretation

We understand this component requires us to foster cooperation between home and school around shared values for positive student behavior; work with parents/guardians and other stakeholders to codify those values in written behavior expectations; calibrate understanding of and response to written behavior expectations among school personnel to ensure equitable implementation and application; inform and teach students and parents/guardians about the behavior expectations; and provide a process for resolving the concerns of those who believe they have not been accorded a fair interpretation and/or application of their rights and responsibilities related to this policy.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

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

- Common written behavior expectations being implemented in a similar fashion across the district;
- Evidence of stakeholder participation in developing and/or reviewing such behavior expectations;
- Evidence that behavior expectations have been fully explained to students and shared in multiple ways with parents/guardians;

- Evidence showing race, ethnicity, gender, gender identification, and/or socio-economic status are not predictors of disciplinary action related to behavior expectations; and
- The existence of clear due process information and easily accessible procedures for appealing a District decision related to the enforcement of behavior expectations.

Evidence of Compliance

We can attest to the Board that we are doing a good job of (1) developing and implementing common written behavior expectations, (2) providing opportunities for stakeholder input, and (3) communicating expectations, along with due process procedures, to students and families. We have not, however, successfully closed the equity gaps related to the application of student discipline. To support these claims, we offer the following evidence:

- For several years, our schools have been focusing on the ABCs of School Success. The “B” in this acronym stands for “Behavior.” In each of our schools, a Behavior Team has been formed to carry out the kind of work defined by this component of Policy OE-9.
- To help ensure consistency across the District, administrators and staff at our two middle schools have co-developed their student behavior expectations and student handbooks. They have also shared this information with high school administrators and staff to inform the way they develop their student handbooks.
- A similar collaborative process has occurred at our elementary schools to develop behavior expectations.
- In the fall, staff at each school shares expectations with all students.
- At the secondary level, parents are asked to review these same expectations at home and sign off indicating they have done so.
- At the elementary and middle levels, staff have provided explicit teaching and guided practice of desired behaviors -- which is a foundational requirement of PBIS. To test our effectiveness with this process, this past year we conducted a survey of all students in grades 3-5. At one of our largest elementary schools, 75% of the students surveyed reported that they both understand and follow school expectations. Nearly 97% indicated they know they are supposed to follow the expectations set by their schools.

- At all levels, students and families are provided due process procedures when they indicate they believe a discipline decision needs to be reviewed or appealed. These procedures are also included in Student Handbooks and posted on the website.

- To strengthen the consistency of the way in which expectations are implemented across the District, our executive administrators facilitate regular meetings with secondary assistant principals, elementary principal representative(s), and the director of transportation. Dialogue at these meetings focuses on (1) creating common discipline matrixes to guide the application of sanctions related to behavior expectations; (2) working through various scenarios to calibrate responses; (3) analyzing discipline data; and (4) keeping up-to-date on changes in State discipline regulations.

Scenario #3

A fourth grade student tells his friends that he has knife and asks them if they want to see it. Two other students not only see it but they handle it and pass it around for each to see. Another student comes to you later and tells you that he believes one of the students (3 involved) has a knife.

What steps do you follow from initial report to follow up?

(You do find a fixed blade hunting style knife that is approximately 5 inches long. It's deer season by the way!)

- As we stated above, we have not successfully eliminated the discipline gaps in our schools -- although we can assure the School Board that doing so is an ongoing focus of our work. To this end, we regularly review, analyze, and discuss data sets like the one below that comes from one of our middle schools. We remain committed to achieving the kind of equity that assures race, ethnicity, gender, gender identification, and/or socio-economic status are not predictors of disciplinary action. (NOTE: the categories in this chart are not discrete. Some students may be included in more than one category or counted more than one time in the same category.)

Student Category	Suspension (in or out of school)	Expulsion (emergency or non-emergency)
American Indian (5.3%)	29 (7.4%)	1
Asian (4.1%)	3 (0.7%)	1
Black (1.0%)	26 (6.7%)	0
Hispanic (21.7%)	47 (12.0%)	0
White (59.3%)	180 (46.0%)	2
ELL (6.0%)	22 (5.6%)	2
Special Education (15.5%)	54 (13.8%)	2
504 Plans (9.6%)	29 (7.4%)	0
Females (52.2%)	44 (20.6%)	0
Males (47.8%)	170 (79.4%)	3

3. The Superintendent will assure that all confidential student information is appropriately collected, used, and protected.

Interpretation

We understand this component requires us to respect the privacy rights of students and parents/guardians to the greatest extent possible without compromising student and/or staff safety. That is, the Board expects us to strike a balance between, on the one hand, creating an ethos of trust in which students, parents/guardians, and staff can ask for help without fear of retaliation, discrimination, prejudicial treatment, or stigmatization; and, on the other hand, ensuring clear protocols are followed when situations are divulged that require personal information to be shared (such as those related to abuse, threats of harm to self or others, or criminal activity). In short, the District's attitude toward confidentiality should be open and easily understood, and everyone should be able to trust the boundaries of privacy operating across the system.

We understand **confidential student information** refers to a range of data about a student maintained in any recorded way. Examples include (a) date and place of birth; (b) citizenship status; (c) course schedules, grades, and test scores; (d) special education records; (e) disciplinary records; (f) medical and health records; (g) documentation of attendance; and (h) identification code and social security number. We also understand that some of the other data we keep about students, known as **directory information**, can be made public according to our District's administrative policy. This data includes the student's name and address and other information typically found in school yearbooks or athletic programs like pictures of participants in various extracurricular activities or recipients of awards and heights and weights of athletes. We understand each year we need to notify parents/guardians of the types of data we have designated as directory information and allow them to identify all or part of it they do not wish to be available to the public. (These guidelines are outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as FERPA.)

We understand **appropriate collection** of student information requires us to ensure we are only gathering data for which we have express educational purposes, and we are doing so in a professional and sensitive manner. We further understand that we cannot violate the privacy rights of students and parents/guardians by asking about such personal topics as political affiliations, religious beliefs, citizenship status, and/or family values – *even when we have a clear educational purpose* – without first requesting and receiving prior permission.

We understand **appropriate use** of student information requires us to ensure any data we gather about our students is shared only for specific and legally defined reasons; and information gathered for one purpose is not used for other purposes. We understand parents/guardians have a right to see any data we have collected about their children as defined in law, but not data related to other children. We understand sharing information between school staff members is an essential element in safeguarding our pupils' well-being and safety, but such sharing needs to be purposeful, professional, and thoughtful, devoid of assumptions that it is alright to discuss sensitive material widely even when it appears already to be well-known. We understand categorical data must be generated to support continual school improvement planning, but individual children should not be identified through this process.

We understand **appropriate protection** of student information requires us to hold such information in a safe and secure place that cannot be accessed by anyone other than school staff with a legitimate need to know. We understand confidentiality also refers to conversations, and all staff need to endeavor to protect privacy rights by considering how, why, and where their discussions about students take place.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

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

- The existence of a Confidentiality Statement that outlines both the District's commitment to confidentiality and the limits to confidentiality that can be offered by individuals within the school community.
- Clear procedures for handling confidential information and evidence that staff have been trained in following these procedures.
- Evidence that all District parents/guardians have received an annual notice of their privacy rights under FERPA, including (1) the right to inspect and review records and, if they believe the records to be inaccurate, to seek to amend them; and (2) the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information in District publications.
- No breaches in confidentiality practices as outlined in District policy and/or federal regulation.

Evidence of Compliance

Maintaining appropriate student confidentiality has become increasingly complicated within the world of rapidly expanding digital communication. With that said, we have taken appropriate steps to keep pace with the increased demands, which means our training and commitment to maintaining student confidentiality has become more than an opening day reminder. Rather, it is an ongoing process in all of our schools. In support of this claim, we offer the following evidence:

- Staff are trained annually about the need to protect the confidentiality of student information.
- We also communicate with parents and guardians each year about our collective responsibilities regarding their privacy and confidentiality rights.
- At the elementary level, letters on this topic are sent out with regular parent newsletters. In part that letter reads:

[Student] record information, in most cases, will not be released to persons or agencies without written consent of parents.

Parents of students have the right to inspect and review the student's educational records.

- At the secondary level, staff spends time helping students understand that data privacy is becoming a growing issue in our age of expanding digital footprints.

We communicate with both students and parents about this topic by asking them to review Student Handbooks. An excerpt from the Handbook reads:

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 requires a school district to notify parents that schools maintain official records regarding their child, which include information deemed necessary to the welfare of students and the orderly operation of schools, or information required by law regulation.

Student records are the property of the school district; however, parents and/or students eighteen years of age or older may inspect the records by contacting the school counselor for an appointment.

- While our building principals and staff have been trained regarding expectations for confidentially dealing with student data related to assessment, health records, discipline, and attendance within the confines of the District, the ever-evolving world of social media has created new confidentiality challenges -- especially at the same time that we have been working to increase the number of “Good News Stories” we share with stakeholders Our Communications and Community Engagement Department has developed its own internal procedures for exercising great care and caution with the publication of such things as student photos, names, quotations, and any related information.



- Related to Component 3 of Policy OE-9, we need to report one breach in confidentiality during the past year: In spring 2019, a District computer and set of hard copy student health files were stolen from the car of one of our employees. The employee immediately reported the breach, and our Executive Administration immediately began the process of notifying the parents and families whose information may have been compromised. Fortunately, within 24 hours of their being taken, both the computer and the files were recovered intact by law enforcement. To our knowledge, none of the student records were copied or used in anyway. However, as a result of this incident, the District has implemented corrective measures aimed at preventing similar breaches in the future.
- 4. The Superintendent may not tolerate any behaviors, actions, or attitudes by adults who have contact with students that hinder the academic performance or the well-being of students.**

Interpretation

We understand this component requires us to prohibit conduct, deeds, words, methods, or manners by staff members, volunteers, or visitors in our schools that impede any student’s ability to learn and grow or diminish any student’s sense of health and security. In other words, the Board expects every person who interacts with students in our organization to be held accountable for creating a welcoming, supportive, and harassment-free learning environment for all. To this end, the Board

expects we will not tolerate communications or actions that are rude, belittling, uncaring, insensitive, volatile, hostile, aggressive, or suggestive of any manifestation of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identification, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, status within or outside the School District, or any of the other differences among people that have been excuses for misunderstanding, dissension, and/or hatred.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

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

- Evidence that District employees, volunteers, students, and parents/guardians have been informed of the content of this aspect of the Board's policy;
- Evidence that District staff have been trained to recognize and address behaviors, attitudes, or actions that constitute an infraction of this policy.
- Evidence that employees, students, and parents/guardians have been provided easily accessible means for reporting behaviors, attitudes, or actions that violate this policy without fear of repercussions.
- Evidence that all such reports of violations have been appropriately addressed by the District.

Evidence of Compliance

This component of the Board's policy charges us with being both **proactive** in preventing negative behaviors, actions, and attitudes that thwart the healthy development of our students, and also appropriately **reactive** when such negative behaviors, actions, and attitudes occur. We feel confident in assuring the Board we are meeting these expectations. In support of this claim, we offer the following evidence:

- In planning for our expanded focus on Social & Emotional Learning (SEL), we have recognized the need to extend the scope of our efforts to include the adults who work with and interact with our students -- both within the District and beyond it in our Ferndale community. The branding we have selected for our SEL initiative -- Ferndale cares! -- suggests our desire to make it all-encompassing.
- We recently proposed a Civility Policy, which the School Board, in turn, adopted for inclusion in the Superintendent's Administrative Policies. This Civility Policy -- which is a companion piece to our Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy -- sets forth expectations for adult interactions. The policy, which is printed and posted throughout the District, as well as being published on our website, reads as follows:

The Ferndale School District Board of Directors expects administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents, volunteers, and other community members to take an active role in maintaining and meeting clear expectations for respectful conduct, civil discourse, and positive problem solving throughout the school district. The Board is committed to providing training and resources to support these expectations. The Board refuses to condone uncivil conduct

on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, whether by staff, students, parents, volunteers, community members, or visitors.

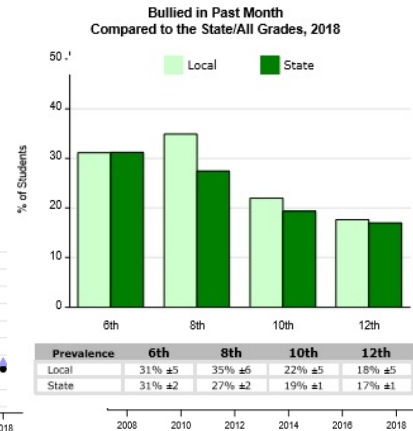
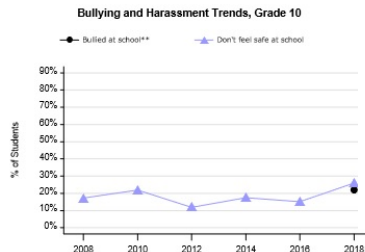
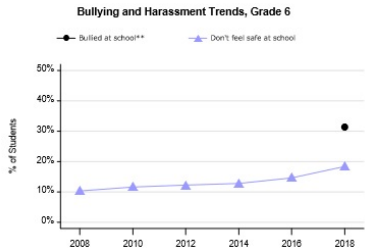
- As referenced above, the Ferndale School District also has a consistent Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) policy in all of our schools and departments. In part, this policy reads as follows:

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including, but not limited to, one shown to be motivated by any characteristic as listed in RCW 9A.36.080(3), (race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, or sensory disability), or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including all forms of electronic harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying:

- *Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or*
 - *Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or*
 - *Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or*
 - *Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.*
- Obviously, the legalistic language of our HIB policy makes it inaccessible to many of our students, families, and stakeholders. Therefore, we expect our staff to take time to translate its meaning and discuss its intent. This work is closely aligned with everything else we are doing to advance SEL and implement the PBIS framework across the District.
 - During the past year, 28 elementary HIB incidences were officially reported to school officials. Each of them was acted upon by building-level administrators. During the same period, 25 HIB reports were made and addressed at the secondary level. (These are the 2018-2019 numbers we shared with the State as part of an annual mandatory HIB reporting process.)
 - While we are confident that corrective action has been taken by our building administrators when HIB incidents have been reported, other data indicate the existence of more issues than we are hearing about through our formal reporting channels. The results of the 2018 Healthy Youth Survey, for instance, show that 31% our students in grade 6 say that they have been “bullied in the past month.” A review of survey trend data over the past five years shows a consistent

increase in student concerns about bullying and harassment. This is alarming on several fronts, including the fact that research tells us that being bullied is directly correlated with earning lower grades in school. Despite our efforts to educate, address, and ultimately eliminate harassment, intimidation, and bullying, clearly we still have work to do. And, we are committed to doing it, which is one of the reasons we spent the entirety of the first two days of our 2019 Summer Leadership Retreat focused on Social & Emotional Learning (SEL).



- The Superintendent may not permit unruly behaviors on school property or at school sponsored events by students or adults that disrupt learning or that are disrespectful or dangerous.**

Interpretation

We understand this component requires us to prohibit disorderly, discourteous, harmful, hazardous, or unlawful conduct that impedes teaching and learning or threatens health and safety. We further understand the Board expects us to enforce this standard for any person who is on a District campus or participating in a District-endorsed activity.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

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

- Written safety plans, discipline codes, and/or social contracts that spell out the kinds of behaviors that are unacceptable on school property and at school-sponsored events along with consequences for violations.
- Evidence that students, staff, and parents/guardians have been informed of the District's behavior standards.
- Discipline data showing a downward trend in the number of incidents related to physical aggression and/or disrespect.

Evidence of Compliance

This component of the Board's policy charges us with making sure we are maintaining a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for students in all aspects of our schools' operations and programming, not just within classrooms and other academic learning spaces. The expectation is that every person who interacts with our students -- at school events, within the context of athletics and activities, during field trips, and so on -- does so in a civil and harassment-free way. Our Civility Policy and our HIB Policy, both referenced above, spell out the types of behaviors that are

unacceptable to us. We offer the following additional evidence that we are meeting the intent of this component of the Board's policy:

- The Civility Policy, which is posted throughout the District, has been fleshed out in accompanying Procedures in order to provide more specific direction to stakeholders. The Procedures read:

For the purpose of this policy, "uncivil conduct" includes the following: directing vulgar, obscene or profane words or gestures at an individual(s); taunting, jeering, inciting others to taunt or jeer, raising one's voice at another individual, repeatedly interrupting another person who is speaking; imposing personal demands at times or in settings where they conflict with assigned duties and that cannot reasonably be met; using personal epithets, gesturing in a manner that puts another in fear for his/her/personal safety, invading the personal space of an individual after being directed to move away, physically blocking an individual to leave, failure to follow the directive of a school official or other similar forms of disruptive conduct.

- The Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy has been explained in greater depth in Student Handbooks in order to provide more specific direction to students and parents. An excerpt from the Handbook language reads:

Other distinguishing characteristics" can include but are not limited to: physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and marital status. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or other written, oral, or physical actions. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

- When we have become aware of issues related to mistreatment of our students, we have taken swift and decisive action to address it. As example, we offer our response to the information we received in May 2019 about student concerns related to sexual harassment and assault. These are the immediate steps we took:
 - We contacted our partners at DVSAS, the Domestic Violence Commission, and the Police Department to engage them in doubling down on our previous efforts related to these concerns.
 - On May 20, we hosted a Facebook Live program focused on this topic -- with FHS Principal Jeremy Vincent, FHS Counselor Aimee Bachmeier, DVSAS Executive Director Karen Burke, and Superintendent Linda Quinn.
 - On May 22, we sent our health teacher and our head football coach to a three-day training in Texas on these issues -- with a focus on raising healthy men.
 - On June 11, we put on an assembly for all FHS students to talk very directly about laws, definitions, the Superintendent's expectations for District staff,

- resources, and ways students can seek support. Both a police officer and a counselor from DVSAS were part of the program.
- We met with our District Counseling Coordinator to talk about making healthy relationships and a culture of consent all of our counselors' focus for next year.
 - We talked to high school students about starting a new action group in the fall, a plan which one of the students who participated in the assembly announced to the entire student body with an invitation to join "the movement."
 - We committed to implementing a sports-based training program with some of our coaches for the coming school year, using the *Coaching Boys Into Men* and *Athletes as Leaders* curricula.
 - And finally, we reinforced the fact that our HR Department and District administrators would be continuing to do what we have always done when we get a report of a sexual assault, an illegal intimate relationship, and/or failure by a staff member to fulfill his/her duties as a mandatory reporter: We investigate and take corrective action as appropriate.
- In addition to reacting to concerns when they arise, we have also continued to search out proactive strategies for facilitating positive interactions between our students and the adults in our community. Two such strategies we implemented during 2018-2019 are: (1) *Be The One* mentoring program, which pairs individual high school students with community adults who agree to meet with them one-on-one every week during the school year; and (2) *Lunch With Leaders*, which puts local business leaders in contact with high school students for dialogue about job opportunities and employer expectations along with opportunities for job shadowing experiences.

Summary

While we have not met every monitoring indicator we set forth in our interpretation of Policy OE-9, we believe the evidence included in this report supports substantial compliance during the 2018-2019 school year.