

Internal Monitoring Report

May 3, 2023

POLICY: **2.2 Treatment of Staff**
POLICY CATEGORY: **Operating Limitations**
PERIOD MONITORED: **April 21, 2022 – April 19, 2023**

The following monitoring report pertains to the Board of Education’s Operating Limitations policy “Treatment of Staff.” I certify that the information contained in this report is true and complete. The report is presented in accordance with the routine monitoring report schedule. This report will monitor the policy starting at its more detailed provisions and end with the global prohibition.

Panorama Education originally launched a “**School Climate & Culture Survey**” for Adams 12 Five Star Schools in January 2017. This is the seventh consecutive year that our employees have participated in a Panorama survey. Significant revisions to the survey occurred in 2018 but the survey has remained largely unchanged in 2019 - 2023, allowing trend data for this five year period to be utilized. This school year employees of Adams 12 were provided the opportunity to complete the survey during late January and early February 2023.

Of the 3,358 school-based employees surveyed, 2,490 completed the survey, a 74% response rate. The response rate of the survey ensures that validity and reliability of the data reflected in this report are high, with a minimal margin of error.

As part of the survey, staff were asked to answer Adams 12 custom questions as well as non-custom questions coming directly from Panorama Education. Survey questions reside within broader categories which are measured against national benchmarks. National benchmark data include staff and teacher member survey results from more than 3,000 schools across diverse geographic areas, school types, and achievement levels each school year.

Chris Gdowski, Superintendent
April 29, 2023

2.2.1 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not operate without written personnel rules which: (a) clarify rules for staff, (b) provide for effective handling of grievances, and (c) protect against wrongful conditions, such as nepotism and preferential treatment for personal reasons.

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

1. District policies for personnel are updated and available for all staff.
2. Supervisory staff receives policy information, training, updates and reminders of their responsibility for knowing, understanding and complying with district policies.
3. The Certified and Classified contracts coupled with district personnel policies have a defined grievance and/or appeal process.
4. District policy provides staff with guidance to ensure fair treatment of staff and that work place decisions are not influenced by personal or family relationships.
5. School Climate & Culture survey responses related to staff relationship to their leaders shall yield a percentage equal to or above the 50th percentile of Panorama's national benchmark within the topic of School Climate. Additionally, year to year trend data will show improvement.
6. Custom Questions do not have a national benchmark. Steady or increasing favorable response percentages in year over year trend data will show:
 - a. their rights as employees are not violated by their supervisory team and
 - b. their supervisory team does not display unfair unemployment practices through nepotism or preferential treatment for personal reasons.

Data Reported:

District Policies, 4000 Series – Personnel, are updated and available to all staff through the district website page. Staff is provided formal notification annually through salary/compensation letters, as well as upon approval/modification of an individual policy, that policies are available and staff are responsible to remain current in their knowledge of these policies. Updated policies are distributed by e-mail throughout the year following final approval by the Superintendent.

Supervisory staff received trainings related to personnel policies during the monitoring period including Nondiscrimination (Policy 8400) and Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect (Policy 5540) during the 2022-23 school year.

The grievance process is outlined in the Certified (August 2022) and Classified (July 2022) contracts.

District Policy 4130, Staff Ethics/Conflicts of Interest/Nepotism, provides specific guidance and prohibition from conflicts of interest including nepotism and preferential treatment.

82% of school-based employees responded positively to the questions related to staff-leader relations, a increase of 3% over last year's survey. This places us near the 70th percentile compared to Panorama's national dataset.

Our custom question results were as follows:

- 52% of school-based staff responded favorably to the question, "How connected are you to the larger vision and mission of the district?" This is an increase of 6% in favorable responses compared to last year.
- 89% of school-based staff responded favorably to the question, "My rights as an employee are not violated by my supervisory team (person(s) who formally evaluate my performance)." This is a 2% increase of favorable responses compared to last year.

- 87% of school-based staff responded favorably to the question, “My supervisory team (person(s) who formally evaluate my performance) displays fair employment practices and does not use nepotism or preferential treatment for personal reasons.” This is a 2% increase of favorable responses compared to last year.

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard, given that all of the policy and procedures required in interpretation items 1-4 are in place, that the District’s performance on the Panorama survey exceeds the compliance threshold in interpretation item 5, and given identified the increasing favorable response percentages in year over year data for the custom questions identified in interpretation item 6.

2.2.2 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not fail to communicate clear expectations to staff prior to required compliance; including performance expectations, authority limitations, standards of performance and evaluation timelines.

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

1. Staff receive information regarding performance expectations and evaluation timelines.

Data Reported:

The certified staff evaluation performance standards and evaluation timelines are published on the staff website in the APEX, Advancing Professional Excellence Guide. APEX Online training is provided through Schoology every year and it stays open all year for new staff. Professional Development provided APEX Lead Team training in August 2022, so they could provide training to staff in their building. New administrator training for APEX also occurred in August 2022.

Certified Progressive Discipline Guidelines are published on the staff website. Training available to all evaluators occurred on September 20, 2022 and October 18, 2022.

The classified staff evaluation performance standards and evaluation timelines are published in the Classified Master Agreement (January 2022) and the Classified Employee Performance Evaluation Procedures handbook, published on the staff website. Training available to all evaluators occurred on September 29, 2022 and October 25, 2022. Head custodians and maintenance supervisors were trained on November 20, 2022.

APEX training for principals and APs takes place at our annual start of the year APEX lead team meeting which this year was held on August 11, 2022. In addition, twenty-three (23) new administrators were trained on August 12, 2022. Training and support are provided individually on an as-needed basis for Executive Directors of Schools that are evaluating school administrators. Additionally, annual training of Approved Training Providers occurred on August 30, 2022 for those that are evaluating others but do not hold a principal license.

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard.

2.2.3 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not prevent staff from grieving to the Board when (a) internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and (b) the staff member alleges Board policy has been violated to his, her or the district's detriment.

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

1. Staff are aware that if complaints are not resolved by administration and/or their supervisor they have the option of bringing their issue to the Board of Education.
2. They have not been denied the opportunity to take a grievance to the Board if they feel that Board policy has been violated to their detriment.
3. The percentage of favorable ratings will remain steady or increase year over year.

Data Reported:

83% of school-based staff responded favorably to the custom survey question, "If I had a complaint which was not resolved by my supervisory team (person(s) who formally evaluate my performance), or if I feel a Board policy has been violated, I know that I have the option to take a grievance to the Board of Education after exhausting the internal complaint process." This is an increase of 1% over last year's results.

No employee has been prevented from grieving to the Board.

The Board asks these custom questions each year.

1. If you had a reason to take a grievance to the Board of Education, how likely are you to file a complaint?

The responses were:

Extremely likely = 15%

Very likely = 36%

Moderately likely = 33%

Slightly likely = 11%

Not at all likely = 5%

2. If you marked not at all likely or slightly likely, what barriers could we remove that would make you more likely to file a complaint?

334 people responded. We have compiled the responses into the following general categories:

- **N/A** = 24% of those who responded wrote "N/A"
- **Clarification of the process needed** = 19% of those who responded
- I would use **other methods to handle a complaint** = 16% of those who responded
- **Fear of reprisal** = 15% of those who responded
- Perceived **waste of time** = 7% of those who responded
- **Lack of trust in the Board or the district** = 6% of those who responded
- **Miscellaneous** comments such as "it's not my style to complain," "I don't like conflict," or "I don't know" = 4% of those who responded

The number of respondents who indicated fear of reprisal decreased from 19% to 15%.

The number of respondents who indicated lack of trust decreased from 12% to 6%.

The number of respondents who indicated waste of time was stable at 7%.

Comments indicating a lack of familiarity with the process increased from 15% to 19%.

Every new employee is introduced to the District Policies and Master Agreements as a part of new employee orientation. Annual trainings for all staff members occur at the start of each school year and Policy 8400 Nondiscrimination including the prohibition of retaliation is highlighted each year.

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard. No employee has been prevented from grieving to the Board and there was a decreasing or stable number of employees indicating they would not file a grievance because of a) a waste of time, b) fear of reprisal, or c) lack of trust.

2.2.4 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not allow reprisal against staff:

- a. for non-disruptive internal expression of dissent; or*
- b. for reporting to management or the board (per district policy and establish complaint and grievance processes) acts or omissions by staff or the board; and*
- c. that the staff member believes in good faith and based on credible information, constitutes a violation of state or federal law or governing policy of the board.*

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

- 1. District policies state that reprisal is not permitted and such policies have been shared with staff as published through the district website.
- 2. Established processes are in place in the event a staff member believes that reprisal has occurred.
- 3. Using the established processes, no reports of reprisal will go uninvestigated and unaddressed. Corrective action will be implemented for any founded reports of reprisal.

Data Reported:

District Policy 8400, section 8.1 states:

“It shall be a violation of this policy for any person to retaliate against a person who alleges discrimination/harassment or who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to discrimination/harassment allegations. A violation of this anti-retaliation provision may exist regardless of whether the underlying complaint of discrimination/harassment is substantiated.”

District Policy 8400, section 4.5 states:

“Retaliation can take many forms, including abuse or violence, threats, harassment, and intimidation. Actions in response to a good faith report or response under this policy are considered retaliatory if they have a materially adverse effect on the academic or working environment of an individual or if they hinder or prevent the individual from accessing the District’s educational programs or from carrying out the staff member’s work responsibilities.”

Annual Title IX and sexual harassment training is conducted for all staff at the start of each school year. The Title IX/Nondiscrimination Coordinator facilitates this training at all new hire orientation meetings after the start of the year. Many charter and district school staff members have participated in the Title IX investigator and decision-maker training to date; the remainder will do so next school year or as needed.

The grievance process is outlined in the Certified (August 2022) and Classified (July 2022) contracts.

During this period we have had three staff members file Policy 8400 complaints. One against a student and parent for discriminatory comments, one against a colleague for racist language, which was founded and corrective action taken, and one against a student for unwanted physical contact. No complaints of retaliation have been made under this policy. The students received corrective action in accordance with student discipline policies.

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard.

2.2.5 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not fail to appropriately train and equip staff to respond to foreseeable emergency situations.

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

1. Staff are trained and equipped to respond to emergency situations.
2. Crisis management and prevention processes are in place.

Data Reported:

In accordance with District Policy 3510, Emergency Response Plan, the District has established standard emergency procedures, trained district leadership, and conducted annual school safety training. Students have received training through annual lockdown drills and other safety drills. School safety drills are logged by the district Emergency Preparedness Manager and the Communications Center.

Preparedness Planning:

On April 10, 2023 the district conducted a Safety Summit and listening session. Over one hundred (100) administrators, certified, and classified staff participated in the summit. The summit focused on exploring the experiences of the staff participating. Some of the topics covered included:

- Student safety plans, searches, and re-entry plans
- Communication of our safety procedures to our schools and community
- Mental health support
- Staff stress and anxiety

The meeting participants identified improvement opportunities in each of the topics covered. As a result of the feedback the district is providing additional training to staff regarding how to safely conduct searches and safety plan implementation in May of 2023 and continues to analyze the data collected to improve and update our safety training for the 2023-24 school year.

The district will host similar discussions with our students, parents, and community members before the conclusion of the 2022-23 school year and incorporate the feedback into improvement plans for the 2023-24 school year.

District leadership participated in table top exercises in August 2022 in which the team described the response actions they would take during a crisis to address safety incidents occurring at a school. The table top exercises were based on actual incidents that have occurred at a district school. As a result of the lessons learned the district modified our incident command and unified command structures.

Response Planning:

The Standard Response Protocol (SRP) is a set of research-based actions/drills designed to prepare students, staff, and parents for emergency situations. Adams 12 Five Star Schools are required to conduct emergency drills throughout the year to practice the tools outlined in the SRP. These drills are supported by the Safety and Security Services team members, School Resource Officers, and local law enforcement agencies. Once a drill is completed, the drill components are reviewed and debriefed. The information is then shared with staff to improve the overall execution of the drills in the future.

The annual report below includes data around SRP directives and SRP drills for the 2022-23 year: [22-23 Annual Report - SRP & Drills](#)

The district assembled a Crisis Response group to review incidents that occur within our district. These reviews help us understand any additional resources or needs we as a district need in future responses to incidents.

The district conducted five (5) student/parent reunifications during the fall 2022 semester. All student/parent reunification followed the Standard Reunification Method (SRM) created by Adams 12 Five Star Schools and used by more than 40,000 schools across the country.

Facility Improvements:

The district continues to install cameras in and around our schools as they are requested, as well as the addition of more card access readers. The additional cameras and card access points improve our crisis response capabilities through faster access during an emergency.

Threat Assessment:

Threat assessment processes are utilized throughout the district to assess and avoid behaviors of concern. A threat assessment is conducted with the intent to better understand what is going on with a student, identify possible factors influencing the situation (risks and protective measures), and create a plan to support the safety of the individual, school, and community as best as possible, including appropriate interventions.

Interventions are created to foster a safe and secure learning environment for the community and individual students. Interventions are measured for success by reducing identified risk factors and seeking to enhance protective factors in any given situation. Interventions implemented should match the level of concern and individual student needs. These interventions are facilitated by various partners including, but not limited to:

- School Administration and Staff
- Student Engagement Initiatives
- Student Support Services
- Prevention & Crisis Support
- Counseling
- Whole Child Initiatives
- Charter Liaisons
- Security Services
- City and County Law Enforcement
- Adams County Youth Services

In the 2021-2022 school year, the district completed 502 threat assessments. Over 87% of these were screen-level interventions for behaviors of concern related to district policy 5510. There are two levels to the Threat Assessment process: an initial screen and/or a full threat assessment.

- A screen is used to determine whether a threat is posed. If a severe or significant concern or impact and/or not enough information is known to make an accurate determination - a trained school threat assessment team may move to a full threat assessment.
- A full threat assessment is used to delve deeper into the facts surrounding the alleged threat and the individual student's background.

Every threat assessment will have a screen but not every screen will result in a full threat assessment.

In a typical school year, prior to the pandemic, we averaged approximately 330 threat assessments, with around 25% of these having resulted in full-level threat assessments. This shows a 52% overall increase in reported and reviewed TA's from years prior. At this point in the school year, we are showing a projected 10-20% overall increase from last year's total. This does not include cyber security inspections related to threat assessments (32 completed, as of 3/20/23) or the newly introduced threat assessment baseline tracker

form (18 established this year, as of 3/20/23). The threat assessment baseline tracker is an additional tool used for monitoring ongoing behavioral concerns that may be perceived as harm to others AND are part of this student's patterned baseline behavior. This tool is intended to monitor deviations from baseline to establish interventions before possible harm to others can occur. Please note: This tool does NOT replace a threat assessment, but rather is to be used in addition. It should not be used without a completed threat assessment. The baseline tracker form was brought in to assist with continuous monitoring and support of students displaying a baseline of threatening behaviors.

School threat assessment team training continues as an in-person offering each Fall with eight sessions held in September and October. We introduced a third level of training based on team member's experience (Level One - new members, Level Two - returning members, Level Three - Motivational Interviewing in Threat Assessments). Motivational interviewing trains district staff to dialogue with a student to understand the motivation behind the behaviors of concern, in order to find a trajectory that provides safer decisions and skills for the student to achieve those.

In Fall 2022, we had 56 administrators who completed Level One training, 38 who completed Level Two, and 125 administrators who completed Level Three. We also brought in the Colorado School Safety Resource Center to conduct a four-hour threat assessment training session with our school resource officers in August 2022.

The 2022-2023 threat assessment report can be viewed at:
[2022-2023 TA Data.pdf](#)

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard.

2.2.6 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not fail to acquaint staff with the Superintendent's interpretation of their protections under this policy.

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

1. Staff is acquainted with the Superintendent's interpretation of their protections under this policy as explained in items 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, and 2.2.4.

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard.

2.2.7 Policy Wording

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not fail to assess the climate and culture of the district by obtaining staff input, publishing findings, and developing a plan to utilize the findings to improve operations and practices.

Interpretation:

I interpret this policy wording to mean:

1. Staff will have the opportunity to participate in an annual climate and culture survey.
2. Staff will have an opportunity to view the results and to participate in the development of a site-based plan to improve their climate and culture and, when District performance has declined, to participate in the development of a District improvement plan. Site-base climate/culture improvement plans are monitored as a part of principal/supervisor evaluation processes.

3. The percentage of favorable ratings will remain steady or increase year over year and meet or exceed Panorama national data in each topic area.

Data Reported:

Panorama survey

All staff members, classified, certified and administrators, have been encouraged to complete the Panorama climate and culture survey for the past five years. The response rates are as follows:

Year	School Based Staff	Non-Instructional Staff
2017-18	81.8% (3677/4496)	
2018-19	76.9% (2341/3043)	47.4% (742/1565)
2019-20	71.4% (2375/3325)	59% (911/1544)
2020-21	73.4% (2471/3365)	66.9% (813/1216)
2021-22	73% (2391/3275)	58% (785/1353)
2022-23	74.2% (2490/3358)	57.7% (768/1331)

Every domain area on the Instructional Staff Survey but one improved when compared to data from the 2021-22 survey administration. The areas that improved 4% or more were:

- District Environment (increased by 5% from 66% to 71%, with no national norm data available due to custom questions)
- Evaluation (increased by 5% from 46% to 51%, now at approximately the 60th percentile nationally);
- Feedback and Coaching (increased by 6% from 46% to 52%, now at approximately the 60th percentile nationally);
- Professional Learning (increased by 5% from 52% to 57%, now at approximately the 60th percentile nationally);
- Professional Learning About SEL (increased by 4% from 51% to 55%, now at approximately the 70th percentile nationally);
- School Leadership (increased by 4% from 65% to 69%, now at approximately the 70th percentile nationally); and
- School Resource Officer (increased by 4% from 69% to 73%, with no national norm data available due to custom questions).

The only domain on the Instructional Staff Survey that declined when compared to data from the 2021-22 survey administration was Resources, which decreased 1% from 46% to 45%, now at approximately the 70th percentile.

Principals and Cabinet members/division supervisors received a district protocol for analyzing Panorama survey results and developing action plans for addressing areas in need of growth and for recognizing areas of strength. These processes occur at each school and department prior to the end of the school year.

Principal/AP Survey

82% of Principals and Assistant Principals report that “there is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within Adams 12 Five Star Schools.” This is a 2% increase over last year.

Principals and assistant principals completed a survey providing feedback to the Superintendent and Cabinet members during the past four years. The response rates are as follows:

Year	Number of respondents
2017-18	86
2018-19	63
2019-20	83
2020-21	106 (40 Principal, 66 AP)
2021-22	84 (37 Principal, 47 AP)
2022-23	103 (42 Principal, 61 AP)

The superintendent and cabinet members share the results of these surveys with principals as well as their plans for improving operations and practices in the spring of each year.

Compliance Statement:

District performance complies with the policy standard with regard to having the opportunity to participate in an annual climate and culture survey and having an opportunity to view the results and to participate in the development of a site-based plan to improve their climate and culture. Site-based climate/culture improvement plans continue to be monitored as a part of principal/supervisor evaluation processes. The percentage of favorable ratings increased year over year and the percentage of favorable scores met or exceeded the Panorama national data in each topic area.

The Board acknowledged receipt of a monitoring report as of May 3, 2023, for the period April 21, 2022 through April 19, 2023, of the Superintendent concerning Board Policy 2.2 Treatment of Staff, and found the superintendent’s interpretations were reasonable and supported by data that was relevant, justified and complete.