

**Portage Public Schools  
Monitoring Report**

Policy Type: Executive Limitation  
Policy Title: (2.1) Treatment of Consumers

**Global Board Policy**

With respect to interactions with consumers (defined as students, parents and/or legal guardians) or those applying to be consumers, the Superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions which are inequitable, unsafe, undignified or unnecessarily intrusive.

**Certification**

I hereby present my monitoring report on Executive Limitation, 2.1, "Treatment of Consumers" in accordance with the monitoring schedule established by the Board. I certify that the information provided in this report is true as of October 6, 2015.

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Signature

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Date

**Interpretation**

I submit that the Board's Policy is comprehensively interpreted in the succeeding seven sections. My interpretations of those sections, the report, and conclusion statements are presented below. There are no significant changes to my previous interpretation.

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### **2.1.1 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not use application forms that elicit information for which there is no clear necessity.

#### **Interpretation**

I interpret this to mean that application forms used by the District request only information that is required for that aspect of operations.

#### **Report**

Application forms are reviewed annually by District staff to make certain they comply with applicable laws and ask only for information required for the function they serve. Furthermore, as part of implementing NEOLA Operational Policies, all forms are being reviewed for compliance with policies and guidelines.

An internal audit of application forms used throughout the District has not revealed any intrusive request for information. There have been no known intentional violations of this Policy

#### **Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

### **2.1.2 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing client information that fail to protect against improper access to the material elicited.

#### **Interpretation**

I interpret this to mean that electronic and paper-based information about students and staff is not made available to anyone other than for whom the information is intended.

#### **Report**

A high percentage of information about students and staff is collected, reviewed, transmitted, and stored electronically. This information is secured in the same manner as intellectual assets as reported in the Monitoring Report for Policy 2.6.6.

Non-electronic information is kept within locked file cabinets in locked rooms

School offices and counters are designated to maximize privacy while information is collected and reviewed.

Cumulative records and other information are hand-delivered or mailed through the U.S. Postal System.

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Administrative guidelines are in place addressing confidentiality and privacy matters.

All employees (PPS and EduStaff) complete FERPA training and sign a statement that they will follow FERPA. Please note that we now use EduStaff as a third party provider for some of our staff.

### **Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

### **2.1.3 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not provide facilities that are inaccessible to all or do not provide for appropriate privacy.

#### **Interpretation**

I interpret “facilities” to mean those buildings, athletic fields and other structures that are available for use by students, staff and the community and which fall under accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

I interpret “inaccessible” to mean being non-compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I interpret “appropriate privacy” to mean that restrooms, showers and changing facilities allow users to seclude themselves when necessary and that office space is available to staff to enable conversations to not be overheard by others.

#### **Report**

All District buildings meet the ADA standards that were applicable at the time the buildings were built. Renovated facilities which required ADA updates incorporated those upgrades. Any non-compliance is addressed at the time of the renovation. The District relies on the expertise of architects, construction managers and the inspection/approval process to demonstrate compliance. The Maintenance Department maintains verification records of inspections and approvals.

District pool facilities, some of our most heavily used special spaces, allow limited handicap access.

Most District restrooms contain toilet partitions and urinal dividers to provide appropriate privacy. Not all shower areas have compartments for individual use and privacy. Additionally, the Student Code of Conduct absolutely prohibits the use of personal electronic devices in all locker rooms and restrooms.

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These conditions have been identified and noted in the Facilities Assessment Report and have been incorporated in our Facilities Master Plan.

Our facilities are evaluated at least annually for any maintenance/repair. Work orders are processed promptly.

### **Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

### **2.1.4 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not cause consumers to be confused about what may be expected of them by the organization.

### **Interpretation**

I interpret this to mean the District is clear about what it expects from students, parents and/or legal guardians.

### **Report**

On an annual basis, information provided in Student and Parent Handbooks is reviewed to strengthen clarity and intent based on issues that have arisen or feedback that has been received. We strive for uniformity in language where appropriate while allowing for flexibility.

Other District communications (District Bulletin, Facebook, Twitter, District website, Annual Report, etc.) are reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure clarity and concise messaging.

We continue to keep a close eye on procedures used to enroll new students. Though our survey of parents of newly enrolled students generally indicates a positive experience, individuals have raised concerns about the process and are unclear about scheduling appointments or what is needed in the way of school supplies, etc. This is an area that we continue to work on and improve.

### **Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

### **2.1.5 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not cause consumers to be confused about what may or may not be expected from any service offered by the organization.

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### **Interpretation**

I interpret this to mean that the District is clear about what students, parents and/or legal guardians can expect from services provided by the District; the primary services being transportation, food service, special education, curriculum/instruction, child care and enrichment.

### **Report**

Student and Parent Handbooks are reviewed and updated annually to more accurately describe services as well as limitations of those services.

Our District web site lists key contact information for each of the services offered by the District. The purpose of each department and services offered are included on each web page and in handbooks.

Applications for the use of District facilities are clear about fees and what services are provided/included.

We continue to streamline our process for granting/denying in-district transfer requests while maintaining attendance area boundaries. Our goal is to be as objective as possible in evaluating and balancing complex parental needs with District priorities.

A catalogue describing Enrichment Class offerings is mailed to over 52,000 households twice each year providing valuable information about classes, programs and fees.

E-mail is frequently used with consumers about interruptions in services such as transportation, school cancellations/delays and other service impacts. Our automated phoning system complements the e-mail system and has recently been upgraded to allow for customization of notices.

Parent Open Houses, financial aid nights, orientations and other periodic meetings are used to both convey information and communicate information about services.

The District maintains healthy relationships with our consumers through various advisory groups.

- Curriculum Instruction Council – reviews and shares information regarding instructional materials, curriculum changes and class offerings.
- District Advisory Council – provides feedback to the District Administration and serves to communicate a wide variety of issues impacting consumers.
- Parent-Teacher Organizations – building level groups used to support student activities and serve as sounding boards for building principals.
- Designing For the Future – a steering committee that helped create the District’s Facility Master Plan during the fall of 2014.

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### **Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

### **2.1.6 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not allow consumers to be uninformed of their protections under this policy or discourage persons who believe they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their protections under this policy from airing a complaint and being heard.

### **Interpretation**

I interpret this to mean that District Policies and guidelines provide processes for effective handling of complaints.

### **Report**

The District has Policies and guidelines in place that delineate processes for addressing a wide variety of concerns/complaints. These processes are communicated via Student/Parent Handbooks as well as the District's web site. These include but are not limited to:

- Appeal Process (General)
- Bullying
- Discrimination (Gender, Racial, Disability, etc.)
- Harassment (Sexual, Racial, Disability, etc.)

Very few complaints reach the level of the Superintendent further reinforcing that complaints are being addressed/rectified at appropriate levels.

### **Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

### **2.1.7 POLICY LANGUAGE**

The Superintendent shall not allow or condone discrimination by the District or its staff against students or their families for voicing their opinion in a non-disruptive manner.

### **Interpretation**

I interpret this to mean that disciplinary measures will be taken against any staff member who discriminates against any student or their family who express their opinion in a respectful, non-disruptive manner.

### **Report**

No such disciplinary actions have been taken in the past year.

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**Conclusion Statement**

The organization met expectations.

**Closing Comment**

Now that we have completed a full cycle (one year) of policy monitoring, we will review all of the reports and determine if additional measures, such as surveys, need to be developed and used to collect monitoring data.