



Superintendent Monitoring Report
Policy Title: EL 3 Relationship with Staff
March 10, 2021

This is my report on Executive Limitation Policy 3, presented in accordance with your monitoring schedule. I certify that the information contained in this report is true.

Thomas A. DeBalsi

With respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Superintendent shall not cause or allow conditions that are unfair, undignified, disorganized, or unclear.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the Superintendent shall not:

- 1. Operate without written personnel rules that a) clarify rules for staff, b) provide for effective handling of grievances, and c) protect against wrongful conditions, such as nepotism, and grossly preferential treatment for personal reasons.**

Superintendent's Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that all full and part-time District employees and volunteers are provided clear job responsibilities and procedures to allow them to perform their jobs in a professional manner; including supports that encourage their professional growth and meaningful engagement in program design and evaluation, operational procedures such as hiring and evaluating employees/volunteers, how to file a complaint or grievance and how to access services through the Employee Assistance Program.

Evidence:

The Hartford School District follows all state and federal laws pertaining to employment, record keeping, minimum wage, overtime, equitable payment regulations, as well as specific acts, i.e. Family Medical Leave Act, Civil Rights Act, Equal Opportunity, Fair Labor Standards Act, American Disabilities Act, changes in health care based on the federal AHC Act. In the past year, the District has received no complaints or notification of violations in the implementation of these regulations.

The above regulations and practices are monitored and updated by the District Human Resources Specialist based on communications from various agencies and departments. When appropriate, District staff members attend trainings that are provided regarding regulations changes. Local personnel conditions and practices are governed by the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) with the teachers, administrators and support staff. These agreements are with the Town of Hartford School Board.

Non-Union Personnel are covered by an agreement with the District that is similar to the support staff negotiated contract to insure equity where possible.

In addition to the above documents and regulations that govern treatment of staff, the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Staff Handbook, School Safety Protocols, updated state and federal mandated policies, recommended procedures and mandatory reporting laws, are available on the District website and/or in each school. These provide information for all staff in the District and are updated annually to reflect current and best practice.

The Superintendent monitors District procedures related to State Mandated School Board Policies: These policies include:

- Harassment of Employees
- Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing
- Substitute Teachers
- Tobacco Prohibition
- Volunteers and Work-Study Students
- Education Support System
- Parent Involvement
- Grade Advancement, Retention and Acceleration
- Acceptable Use of Technology
- Bullying, Hazing and Harassment
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Wellness

In August of each school year and when the employee is hired, a general orientation session is offered to new staff where information is shared, e.g. Multiyear Action Plan, Staff and Student Handbook/s, Technology Use Procedures and required practices such as safety items, blood borne pathogens, Act 1, mandatory reporting laws, Bullying, Hazing and Harassment Policy/Procedures etc. Support Staff are provided a similar orientation at the building level at their date of hire which is overseen by the Principal.

Based on the School Board's Volunteer Policy (2009), responsibilities and instructions for individual volunteers are provided to prospective volunteers at the point of recruitment by the Principal or designated employee

Additional Evidence

- Increased time for teachers to work together during district in-service days and throughout the regular work-week.
- Superintendent holds weekly 'open' office hours for any staff member to just show up and meet with him to discuss any issue, concern or idea.
- Superintendent meets bi-weekly with every principal at each school to discuss current events, staffing and student issues or concerns. Additional time is built into these principal meetings to ensure connections with staff can be had.

Superintendent always walks halls and visits with teachers and staff after principal meetings.

- Staff are always critical members of hiring committees. Every administrator hiring team has included staff from each of the major employee groups; support staff, teachers and administrators.
- Staff are included on each major district committee including technology, equity, safety and policy development. Administrators on district teams communicate all decisions to subset building based teams after each meeting.
- Principals have regular monthly or bi-monthly meetings with faculty to discuss all new initiatives and any information that will impact them. Elementary principals hold regular meetings with support staff in their buildings to keep them up to date about all school matters.
- All new teachers are assigned a mentor teacher for their first year to support them as they acclimate to the profession and the Hartford School District.

I report policy compliance for this subsection

2. Discriminate against any staff member for non-disruptive expression of dissent.

Superintendent's Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that the Superintendent will ensure that any statement by an employee that indicates disagreement with any decision made by the administration will not be discriminated against. Such an expression is non-disruptive when there is no refusal to perform work, when there is no encouragement of others not to perform work, does not interfere with instruction and day-to-day operations of a school or the Superintendent's Office, and is carried out in a professional and respectful manner. Furthermore, the Superintendent will ensure that staff who disagree with an administrative decision shall not experience retaliation from any administrator such as dismissal, reassignment to less desirable jobs or initiation of a formal discipline procedure.

Evidence:

The Superintendent and district administrators meet with Hartford Education Association representatives twice monthly in a Labor-Management Council. The basis for these meetings is to review any concerns from either the Association or the District's Administration to prevent issues from becoming more problematic in the future. In addition, the Superintendent meets with the HEA Leadership when an employee feels unsupported or if language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) needs to be better clarified.

As of this date, there have been no grievances submitted to the Superintendent for last year school year, 2019-20 or thus far, for this year.

I report policy compliance for this subsection

3. Fail to acquaint staff with the Superintendent's interpretation of their protections under this policy.

Superintendent's Interpretation:

I interpret this to mean that the Superintendent will ensure that all staff is made aware of their protections under this policy on their date of hire and/or on an annual basis.

Evidence:

The District's Human Resource Specialist maintains an up-to-date package of information for all new employees that is reviewed with the employee at the date of hire. Moreover, the Human Resource Specialist maintains an open door policy for staff members who have any personnel related questions. The Superintendent reviews this policy monitoring report with the district leadership team on an annual basis.

- The Superintendent invites the HEA president or lead negotiator to discuss language interpretation before any ruling is made by the Superintendent.
- The Superintendent meets with the HEA President twice monthly or as issues develop to discuss district/building issues related to the collective bargaining agreement.
- The Superintendent meets with employees throughout the year who are challenged by personal matters. The Superintendent offers support and guidance in terms of how best to balance their work responsibilities with their life circumstances.
- The Superintendent kept the HEA Support Staff Leadership apprised of all staff transfers during the school year.
- Guided by the Superintendent, employees who are being transferred or non-renewed for the next school year hear directly from their supervisor before contracts are mailed.
- The Superintendent reviews the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Leadership Team on an annual basis.
- Each Principal meets with HEA building representatives on an ongoing basis - at least monthly throughout the year to stay informed on personnel related matters.
- The Superintendent has developed a rigorous hiring process for all hires that includes essential steps that must be verified as administrators pursue internal or external hires.

I report policy compliance for this subsection

- 4. Allow staff to be unprepared to deal with emergency situations.**

Superintendent's Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the Superintendent will ensure that all staff are informed and trained in emergency response procedures. I interpret "emergency situation" to mean any condition that threatens the safety and well-being of students and employees.

Evidence:

The Superintendent and key administrative, the transportation manager, the technology administrator and various teaching staff attend a monthly District Safety Team meeting whose membership includes local law enforcement officials and emergency responders.

Principals maintain up-to-date Crisis Prevention and Response Guides and practice selected activities on a monthly basis in an effort to ensure efficiency and safety in the event an emergency occurs at the building level. Principals review the evaluation procedures and emergency preparedness/response procedures on an annual basis with all staff. District nurses are trained in emergency medical response procedures. Hartford Technology staff maintain the district telecommunications network to ensure immediate and effective communication between and among employees.

- Building Safety procedures and expectations are clearly spelled out and explained in August faculty meetings which includes building security changes and entry protocols.
- The Superintendent facilitates the monthly district safety team meetings and regularly makes suggestions on how the district procedures can be enhanced.
- Faculty identification badges are updated immediately when a change occurs and annually student picture contracts include updating staff identification pictures.
- All rooms in each building have phones that are completely 911 compliant.
- Mandatory first aid training is conducted for all nurses and select school/district personnel on an annual basis.

I report policy compliance for this subsection