

1000 School-Community Relations

1001 Public Communication

1001.1 Board-Community Relations

The Pleasanton Board of Education recognizes the importance of strong school-community relations in administering the school.

The Board is mindful that they are directly accountable to the people of the district through the elective process. But the board also believes that accountability is a shared responsibility involving students, teachers and staff, the Superintendent of schools, and the people themselves as well as the Board of Education.

The Board should hold itself accountable for maintaining a vigorous stand, concern for, and constructive criticism of the school; for electing the most able men and women available to represent them on the Board of Education; and for providing the resources necessary for the Board and staff to accomplish the publicly endorsed goals and objectives of the school district.

1001.2 Releases to News Media-Internal School News

Internal school news shall be released to the news media through the Superintendent/Principal, or sponsor of an organization with approval of the administration.

1001.3 Releases to News Media-Board Matters

Releases of Board matters to the news media will be through the President of the Board of Education, or through the Superintendent with board approval.

1001.4 Duplicated or Printed Materials

Information of the Board of Education shall be printed or duplicated only with the permission of the Board of Education.

1001.5 Board Proceedings

All proceedings of the Board of Education are open to the public except those specified in law.

All proceedings of the Board shall be published, or shall be open to public inspection in the school office.

Purpose

Our plan exists to provide direction, support, coordination and communication to the students, staff, and community following a sudden death or other tragic event involving a student or staff member of our district. It must be remembered that each crisis is different and must be treated accordingly. The plan is to be regarded as a guideline for action.

Synopsis of Crisis Response Plan

1. By having a crisis response plan, the school is prepared to assist the student body, staff, and community.
2. A Crisis Response Team, directed by the school counselor, will implement the plan.
3. School will be as normal as possible. No large group assemblies will be called.
4. Staff members will be kept informed, and will be asked to be honest and accurate with students.
5. Resource people will be called upon to meet individuals or small groups.

Response Procedures

1. Following the crisis event, information funneled by the administration to the Crisis Response Team. The administration and Crisis Team gathers as much information as possible by speaking with the authorities, i.e. police, family, clergy, and friends. In the event of an attempted suicide or other crisis that did not result in death, a crisis team meeting will be called to discuss concerns and staff notification.
2. As soon as information is gathered, a statement that contains as many facts as available is prepared. The statement will be utilized in a calling tree of all staff members and may be used in communicating with students and the community. Any questions from, or communications with, the media will be handled by the superintendent.
3. The Crisis Response Team will meet to plan any needed activities and services to the students, staff, and community. Possible tasks of the team meeting could be:
 - a. Counselors or crisis team members from other schools may be asked to participate.
 - b. Opening the school after hours or during the weekend may be necessary for students and parents to talk to crisis team members or counselors.
 - c. Classroom activities and discussions may be organized to assist students dealing with grief.
 - d. Assisting staff members with grief reaction may include time to discuss the crisis of the hiring of substitutes.
 - e. Preparing a statement to be read to students by staff members at the beginning of first period, not over the intercom.

- f. Taking care of personal property owned by the deceased.
 - g. Organizing phone calls to parents of students who are particularly upset or at risk.
 - h. A letter from the school to be sent home notifying parents of the crisis events with information regarding ways to assist their children.
 - i. The availability of handouts to parents and teachers to deal with grief.
 - j. Assess the impact of the crisis on district students and staff members as well as neighboring districts. If necessary, communication with other districts affected by the tragedy will be made.
 - k. A Crisis Response Center will be identified where students, staff, or parents can talk to counselors or Crisis Team Members.
4. A staff meeting will be held thirty minutes prior to the beginning of the school day. A statement will be read by all teachers in all first hour classes, not over the intercom. No school assemblies will be held. In the event the crisis occurs during the school day, the staff will be informed by Crisis Team Members and asked to read a prepared statement before their classes that day. All members of the building staff need to be in attendance, including the school secretary, custodians, cooks, and aides.

Staff Crisis Meeting Agenda

- a. Allow staff members to express their reaction to the crisis.
- b. Provide a prepared statement for staff members.
- c. Explain how to relate accurate information to students.
- d. Generate a list of at-risk students.
- e. Schedule the day's events.
- f. Impress upon staff members the importance of expressing feelings.
- g. Provide handouts on grief reaction and ways to assist students.

At the end of the day, a staff meeting will be called by the Crisis Team Leader. The purpose of the meeting will be to assess students at risk and review student needs that will impact the next day's schedule. Staff members unable to attend the meeting will need to contact the team leader.

- 5. No student will be allowed to leave school during the school day unless accompanied by a parent. In extreme cases, a student may not be able to cope with the tragedy within the school setting.
- 6. Throughout the day, crisis counselors will contact parents of at-risk students as deemed necessary or appropriate.
- 7. The Crisis Team will meet at the end of the first day to assess student needs for the following day. The team will also evaluate the implementation of the Crisis Response Team.
- 8. Students and staff members may be given directions about what is appropriate as a memorial. There is a fine line between dramatizing a death, and doing something that allows students and staff members to express a sense of loss, channeling their feelings. It is important to remember the emotional well-being of

the survivors. To keep control of the grief, there are several things that must not be done.

- a. Do not fly the school flag at half-staff.
- b. Do not have a moment of silence in an all-school assembly or at the beginning of the day.
- c. Do not have a memorial service at school during school hours.
- d. Do not have an "In Memorial" page in the school yearbook or "In Memorial of...." on property within the building.

These things tend to glorify the death. We need to ask, "Will this alleviate the pain?" or "Will this compound the pain?"

Suggested memorials include:

- a. Outdoor plantings.
- b. Park benches.
- c. Blood drive.
- d. Letters of remembrance to the parents and family.
- e. Poetry
- f. Funds to support prevention and educational activities such as scholarships.

Memorial plaques should not be attached to memorials. A list of memorials will be kept in the office.

9. Within a week following the event, staff, parents, and community crisis team members will be given the opportunity to evaluate the crisis response plan. The team will then meet to review the evaluations and comments, and decide what changes or modifications are needed in the plan.

1001.7 Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the intent of Pleasanton Public School District 10-0105, Buffalo County, Nebraska, to comply with both the letter and spirit of the law in making certain that discrimination does not exist in its policies, regulations and operations. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board of Education for the Pleasanton Public School, District 10-0105, Buffalo County, Nebraska:

1. To comply with the Equal Pay Act of 1963 as amended; Title VI, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended; American With Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Nebraska Fair Employment Practices Act to the end that the Pleasanton Public School District 10-0105, Buffalo County, Nebraska, shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, color, national origin, religion, handicap or disability in its employment policies and practices, and in the educational programs or activities which it operates.

2. To assure itself that all contractors, subcontractors, subgrantees or others with whom it arranges to provide services or benefits to its students or employees in connection with its educational programs or activities are not discriminating on the basis of sex, age, race, color, national origin, religion, handicap or disability against these students or employees.

3. To make no transfer or other conveyance of title to any real or personal property which was purchased or improved with the aid of Federal financial assistance covered by this assurance, and which is to continue to be used for an educational program or activity and where the Federal share of the fair market value of such property has not been refunded or otherwise properly accounted for to the Federal government, without securing from the transferee an assurance of compliance with nondiscrimination requirements.

4. That all men and women are to be treated fairly and equally with dignity and respect. Any form of sexual harassment as defined below is contrary to this policy and shall be regarded as discrimination on the basis of sex. Appropriate corrective or disciplinary action will be taken against any employee exhibiting such behavior. It shall be considered a violation of this policy for any employee of the Pleasanton Public School District 10-0105, Buffalo County, Nebraska, to engage in sexual harassment or for any supervisory personnel within the Pleasanton Public School to knowingly permit sexual harassment of any employee or recipient of this agency's services. For the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment shall be defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of an individual's employment or a condition to receipt of services by a recipient of the agency's services;
- B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or agency decisions affecting an employee or recipient of the agency's services; or
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's work performance or the receipt of services by a recipient of the agency's services, of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of sexual harassment is encouraged to report the alleged incident immediately to the Superintendent of the Pleasanton Public School District 10-0105, Buffalo County, Nebraska. It shall be a violation of school district policy to harass another sexually, to permit the sexual harassment of an employee by a non-employee, or to harass or permit the harassment of a student sexually. Sexual harassment may take many forms, including, but not limited to:

1. Verbal harassment or abuse

2. Subtle pressure or requests for sexual activity
3. Unnecessary touching of an individual, e.g. patting, pinching, hugging, repeated brushing against another person's body.
4. Requesting or demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or student's status.
5. Requesting or demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or student's status.

The school district can be held responsible for acts of sexual harassment by supervisors and agents regardless of whether their supervisors knew or should have known of the harassment. The school district can be held responsible for acts of sexual harassment between co-workers when supervisors knew or should have known of the misconduct. The school district can also be held responsible for sexual harassment of teachers or employees by non-employees when supervisors or agents knew or should have known of the misconduct and failed to take immediate and appropriate corrective action.

Supervisors must be especially alert to actions which may constitute sexual misconduct, whether such actions are complained of or not. Such misconduct and allegations of sexual harassment shall be fully investigated and corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment, taken as warranted.

Specific complaints of alleged discrimination that is prohibited by this policy should be referred to the superintendent of Pleasanton Public District 10-0105, Buffalo County, Nebraska.

1001.8 Tobacco Policy

The use of tobacco products is prohibited in all school buildings and all school vehicles. Smoking shall also be prohibited in any area where school staff, students or members of the public may be present or may be affected by smoke, including without limitation the stands and bleachers of outdoor athletic fields and near the entry of school buildings. For purposes of this policy, tobacco means any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, and chewing tobacco), vapor products (such as e-cigarettes), alternative nicotine products, tobacco product look-alikes, and products intended to replicate tobacco products either by appearance or effect.

1002 Citizens' Advisory Committees

1002.1 Organization Dissolution

The Board of Education shall have the ultimate authority over the dissolution of any advisory committee established by the school.

1002.2 Membership Appointment

The Board of Education shall have the authority to appoint members to any advisory group they deem necessary.

1002.3 Recommendations

The Board of Education shall have the authority to accept or reject any recommendations made to the board by any citizens advisory committee.

1002.4 Parent-Teacher Associations

The Board, at their discretion, may recognize any parent-teacher organization, or other community support group they desire. They may also withhold support.

1003 School Personnel and the Public

1003.1 Participation in the Community

Members of the staff shall be encouraged to take an active part in the affairs of the School District.

The Superintendent is urged to identify himself/herself personally with many facets of community life, providing opportunities for all citizens, including non-parents, to experience relationships with the school.

The principal is encouraged to be an active and leading member of the school community.

The teacher, to the degree to which the teacher is known and accepted as a citizen in the community, has a direct relationship with this degree of understanding and goodwill flowing from the community to the school.

1003.2 Gifts to School Personnel

Gifts if received by school personnel, should be of non-monetary nature. A gift received by school personnel should also be of small monetary value so as not to be mistaken for payment of passing grades, special favors, or for receipt of anything not available to all students.

1003.3 Complaints

All complaining regarding school personnel should be brought to the attention of the administration.

Complaints that are serious, and may cause damage to the professional standing of a staff member should be presented in writing.

1003.4 Citizen Assistance

Citizen assistance within the school must be approved by the administration. Many presentations, experiences, and/or help by local citizens have educational value and should be encouraged by the school.

1004 Use of School Facilities

1004.1 Community Use

The Pleasanton School may be used by local community members for a fee. As part of the school's service to the community the school may also be used by some service organizations at no charge.

Use of the school shall be arranged through the Superintendent or his/her designee.

1004.2 Use for Private Profit

The Board of Education shall discourage the use of the school to individuals or organizations, which gain a profit through its use. However, if the school is used in this manner a fee shall be charged. The fee shall be set by the Board of Education.

1004.3 Application for Use

Application to use the school should be made through the superintendent's office. Use of the school shall not interfere with school activities.

1004.4 Fees

Fees for the use of school facilities shall be set by the Board of Education at the beginning of each school year. Fees not set shall be determined as the need arises.

1004.5 Regulations

Regulations shall be discussed with the organization using the facilities.

1004.6 Sunday Use

Sunday use of the school facilities is not prohibited.

Use of the school facilities for religious services is prohibited.

1004.7 Gratuities to Personnel

Gratuities to personnel for use of school facilities shall be discouraged. The exception may be gratuities given to kitchen personnel, or custodians that may help with activities, or cleaning.

1004.8 Supervision

Supervision by school personnel is not always necessary. Efforts shall be made to supervise during their activities. If this policy should become abused, other arrangements may be made according to the need.

1004.9 Loan of School Equipment

The school may loan school equipment with the approval of the Superintendent. Damage to school equipment while on loan shall be paid for by those using it. Such persons or groups shall also be liable for any action brought by any person as a result of such use of facilities and equipment.

1005

Activities Involving Students

1005.1 Public Performances

Public performances by students of the Pleasanton Schools are encouraged. All performances shall be under the direction of a sponsor, and part of the educational program of the school.

1005.2 Contests for Students

Pleasanton Public School may compete in all NSAA approved activities. Students eligible to participate in those activities shall be determined according to the eligibility rules established by the NSAA and the Pleasanton Public School.

Students may participate in other activities not sponsored by the NSAA with approval of the Superintendent.

1005.3 Money Raising Activities

Money raising activities by school personnel or students shall be approved by the administration. All money collected shall be given to the school secretary for deposit, and credited to the organization that raised the funds.

All funds collected become school funds, and shall not be expended without the approval of the Superintendent.

1005.4 Use of Student Carriers

Whenever possible school busses shall be used to transport students to activities. Other transportation may be necessary as situations demand.

All transportation of students shall be approved by the administration.

Private use of school busses, or use of non-certified bus drivers is prohibited.

Individuals with a disability shall be permitted to use a service animal on school premises as and to the extent provided by law.

1. Definition of Service Animal

A service animal is a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Other species of animals are not service animals for the purposes of this definition, though miniature horses are in certain circumstances entitled to similar treatment.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks that a service dog may perform to meet this definition include:

- Navigation: assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks,
- Alerting: alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds,
- Protection: providing non-violent protection or rescue work,
- Pulling: pulling a wheelchair,
- Seizure: assisting an individual during a seizure,
- Allergens: alerting individuals to the presence of allergens,
- Retrieving: retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone,
- Physical support: providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and
- Interrupting behaviors: helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

Work or tasks that are excluded from meeting the definition are:

- Guard dogs: the crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and
- Companion dogs: the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship.

2. Permit Presence of Service Animals

An individual with a disability shall be permitted to be accompanied by his or her service animal in all areas where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go. A bona fide trainer of a service animal also has the right to be accompanied by such animal in training. The individual may not be required to pay an extra fee for the service animal to attend events for which a fee is charged.

Service animals may be excluded from school premises if:

- a. The service animal is out of control and the service animal's handler does not take effective action to control it;

- b. The service animal is not housebroken; or
- c. The presence of the service animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. To determine whether a “direct threat” exists, an “individualized assessment” is to be made to ascertain: the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures or the provision of auxiliary aids or services will mitigate the risk.

3. Control of the Service Animal.

The service animal must be under the control of its handler. In most cases, the dog must have a harness, leash, or other tether. The service animal does not need to be on a leash, however, if the handler is unable because of a disability to use a leash. A leash is also not required if it would interfere with the service animal’s safe, effective performance of work or tasks. If either of the leash exceptions applies the service animal must be under the handler’s control via voice control, signals, or other effective means.

4. Responsibility for Care or Supervision.

The school district is not responsible for the care or supervision of the service animal. The individual with the service animal shall be liable for any damage done to the premises or facilities or to any person by such animal.

5. Inquiries.

When addressing a service animal matter, staff shall not ask about the nature or extent of the person’s disability.

Staff may not ask questions about the dog’s qualifications as a service animal when it is readily apparent that the dog is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. Examples include where the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person’s wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability.

Where it is not readily apparent that the dog qualifies as a service animal, staff may ask if the dog’s presence is required because of a disability and what work or task the dog has been trained to perform. Staff may not require documentation, such as proof that the dog has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

Legal Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), 28 CFR §28.104 and §35.136; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504); and Neb. Rev. Stat. §§20-126.01 and 20-127

Date of Adoption: July, 2011

