



**COUNCIL POLICY
COMPLIANCE MONITORING FORM
~ EXECUTIVE REPORT ~**

Policy Type: Executive Limitations - EL-9

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Policy Title: Treatment of Media, Public,
Stakeholders & Staff

Date: April 7, 2021

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Executive Limitations policy **Treatment of Media, Public, Stakeholders & Staff** according to the schedule established. I certify that the information contained in this report is true, and represents compliance with all aspects of the policy unless specifically stated otherwise, since the policy was adopted on October 10, 2012.

Superintendent
April 7, 2021

I. Interpretation:

This policy means that in all communications and relationships, the Superintendent must be respectful, fair, open, and empathetic. The Superintendent must ensure staff have the same types of interactions with our schools, community partners, the public and families. This includes media, stakeholders, community partners, staff, families and students. I must ensure ASD-S manages information so it remains confidential, a process for handling complaints including staff grievances, protect against discrimination and illegal activity, ensure we are hiring strong staff, have guidelines for volunteers and ensure there are criminal and vulnerable sector checks. This policy also addresses appropriate relationships with media and promoting the District in a positive way.

II. Evidence:

Confidential information is protected – staff personnel files are kept in locked rooms in the three offices and no one is permitted to remove a file from the building. ASD-S policy 230 – Access to Personnel Records supports this DEC EL policy. Competition files do not leave the offices, and at the end of an interview all pieces of paper are collected by the HR staff member who is part of the interview. All members of an interview panel must sign an oath of confidentiality. When

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new staff are involved in orientation sessions, the importance of confidentiality is discussed. In January of 2017 a brochure “Code of Conduct” (ASD-S policy 232 Professional Conduct) for all staff was distributed and reviewed for school based staff by Principals and other supervisors. It included a section on confidentiality. With the increase in social media interactions, our management team was in the process of updating this policy and the staff brochure; however, in fall 2019 GNB released three Human Resources policies on respectful workplaces, substance use in the workplace and prevention of workplace violence. We were further delayed by our March 2020 closure, and this policy is now being reviewed/updated. At start up meetings in August the protection of private information and right to information (RTIPPA) is reviewed with school leaders. It is also part of the communication module for Leadership Development Program participants. I mention this in my Southern Exposure comments as well. Some years we have many RTIPPA requests and many of these take considerable time to process.

The majority of our employees are unionized so there is a grievance process and I hear grievances at Level 2. Our largest employee group is the teachers (approximately 1,700 educators) and grievances in our large district are manageable. The Director of Human Resources hears Level 1 grievances for CUPE and they come to Level 2 with me. The Director of Human Resources and a Director of Schools hear teacher grievances at Level 1. We work very closely with our unions and attempt to work through issues before they come to a grievance. HR works closely with the CUPE local unions 2745 and 1253, NBUPPE (New Brunswick Union of Public & Private Employees), and PSAC (Public Service Alliance of Canada); the Directors, Directors of Schools and I work with NBTF/AEFNB local committees through meetings three times per year after school/supper to discuss challenges/concerns and for us to seek input. We have 8 local teacher branches. These meetings have been virtual on TEAMS this year.

We have many calls and e-mails from families, and sometimes members of the community with complaints and we attempt to direct callers back to the school level first if appropriate; to the teacher and to the administration if they have spoken to the teacher. If this has not been successful, the Director of Schools or Director of Education Support Services will be involved for student and teacher issues and a Manager or one of the Directors if it is a facilities issue, a bus issue, curriculum etc. I get involved in some of these issues but for a district our size, I am confident many issues are being worked through at the school level, often in partnership with a Director. Parent e-mails and calls are replied to as soon as possible, and we work as a team on some situations. We have callers who will communicate directly with the Minister, the local MLA, Human Rights, the Child and Youth Advocate and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner or the media. On our website, under Parent Resources, there is a brochure entitled, “How to Resolve a Question or Concern”. This is a joint publication of the Department, the NBTAA and the NB Home and School Federation.

Provincial Policy 701 (Pupil Protection Policy) can be used by parents or others if they feel there has been a violation; also the Workplace Harassment Policy can be used by employees as well. We do from time to time have situations where a workplace environment examination needs to happen, and we engage a retired administrator for this exercise. Policy 701 investigations and workplace environment issues are very time consuming for the Director of Human Resources and the Superintendent and it can be an anxious time for all involved. The Director of Human Resources presents annual data on grievances and investigations.

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The Department has provincial Policy 703 (Positive Learning and Working Environment Policy) and the District has ASD-S-732 (PLEP Plan and Behaviour Policy). These policies outline everyone's role in creating both a positive learning and working environment.

Stakeholders are involved in all schools, and significantly more in the schools with Community School Coordinators. In Saint John, staff and the Superintendent are involved in many organizations such as the Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative (BCAPI), Central Peninsula School Project, Living Saint John, Achieve Literacy, and the Superintendent Co-Chairs the Living Saint John Close the Achievement Gap Committee and sits on the Board of the Sweet Caroline Foundation and most recently the NB Children's Foundation Board of Directors. We have close partnerships with the police in each of our communities, with senior staff at Social Development, Horizon Health, Public Health (meetings twice a year and in planning immunization clinics), and with our municipalities. MLAs will call or email if they have questions, and they typically connect with me.

ASD-S has positive relationships with media, and for the most part the Superintendent and the Director of Communications are the contact persons. Schools will communicate if they have been contacted by media, if it is outside of a positive event or announcement. We continue to promote positive stories in the media. Media calls and emails are answered promptly as reporters have deadlines. These inquiries come to us any time of the day and on weekends. There are situations with the media which can be very time consuming. Some media outlets have a significant turnover of reporters, so building a relationship is not possible. It is very positive to have a Director of Communications.

Criminal Record/Vulnerable Sector checks are completed on new hires (including casuals) as outlined in EL-3. Ads do include the job description and salary. The Volunteer Policy and brochure were finalized a few years ago and posted on the website. ASD-S policy 234 - Criminal Records Check and ASD-S policy 728 - Volunteers in Schools are being reviewed spring 2021).

As members of the Management Team, we are open to meeting with staff if there are concerns, and to working with partners and families. Staff have regular meetings with unions (CUPE locals and NBTA/AEFNB branches).

The Superintendent communicates with staff each Wednesday by writing District updates/celebrations in Southern Exposure. This takes time, but communication to staff is very important. Communication has been a priority in our 2020-2021 District Improvement Plan – it has been so important during the pandemic. I have led on communications with all staff and families. We have had several virtual meetings with Principals, by level, and by cluster as phases have changed. The high school Principals (14) have had more virtual meetings given blended learning, assessment week, return of students and graduation. Having good communication is essential in our large organization of 3,200 employees and the families of over 22,000 students.

In relation to the policy points #9 and #6 (last point on the second page), this policy has not been shared with the media, public, stakeholders and staff; however, it is posted on the website.

Some statements in this EL policy are referenced in other ELs (e.g. hiring process and staff evaluations).

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