

## FIRST READ FOR POLICY PROPOSAL

### GP-15 Proactive Board Engagement with the Community

The Board is committed to equitable community engagement as an intentional process of building trusting relationships, sharing power and decision-making, and working collaboratively to improve student outcomes. The Board believes school systems work best when they have the support of their communities and when they give community members opportunities to be heard and involved. All Board members shall represent and act in the best interest of the community-at-large and shall refrain from the disproportionate representation of specific groups unless those groups or peoples have been historically underrepresented.

The Board shall establish annual community engagement in order to ensure that the board has intentional and constructive dialogue and deliberation with the community, primarily around the Board of Education's Ends Policies. The plan will include a selection from the community that reflects the community's diversity for dialogue, methods to be used, and questions to be asked of the community. The information obtained from this dialogue with the community will inform the Board's policy deliberations. This does not preclude additional community engagement on the part of an individual board member.

1. Board members shall use the following terms when engaging the community. Board members are encouraged to avoid using alternate terms to ensure a common language and understanding.
  - 1.1. Community - the people the Board of Education serves in providing educational results for the students that attend Denver Public Schools. The term "community" shall include students, teachers, school staff, parents, caregivers, and families, as well as residents, voters, and taxpayers throughout the city and county of Denver. In particular, the Board acknowledges the term "community" includes individuals and groups who, whether as students or as adults, have been historically marginalized due to their race or ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, income level, religion, language, ability, or other facets of their identity. With that in mind, the Board is committed to ensuring equitable processes and pathways for engagement, as well as equitable outcomes for students and families;
  - 1.2. Constituent - a person that resides within the geographical boundaries of Denver;
  - 1.3. Stakeholder - non-profits, advocacy organizations, political organizations, employees, contractors or vendors that have an interest in the success of DPS;
  - 1.4. Employee - a person that receives W-2 compensation from DPS;
  - 1.5. Contractor or Vendor - a business contracted with DPS;
  - 1.6. Beneficiaries - students, families, parents, or guardians that receive a service from DPS;

## FIRST READ FOR POLICY PROPOSAL

- 1.7. Marginalized identities and communities- defined within Ends Policy 1.1 (Equity);
- 1.8. Diversity of voices - intentionally seeking out voices of underrepresented communities and not allowing disproportionate attention to the loudest and most frequent voices;
- 1.9. Community meeting - any board member-initiated event that includes three or more board members.
2. The Board's community engagement goals are as follows:
  - 2.1. Inform - provide the community with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the work of the Board, Superintendent and Ends policies as defined in GP-3 and B/SR-1;
  - 2.2. Consult - obtain community feedback to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of the district and Board policies and practices;
  - 2.3. Involve, Acknowledge & Affirm- Solicit feedback and listen to the community to ensure district and Board policies and practices are responsive to public issues and concerns. ;
  - 2.4. Collaborate - partner directly with diverse members of the community to assist with developing important strategic initiatives;
3. The Board will consider its community engagement successful if, to a continually increasing degree:
  - 3.1. The community is aware that the Board is interested in and seriously considers their perspective;
  - 3.2. If asked, the community would say there were opportunities to let the Board know their views;
  - 3.3. When developing or revising board policies, the Board has access to a diversity of voices that are reflective of the community regarding what benefits the district should provide, for whom, and the relative priority of those benefits;
  - 3.4. The community is aware of how the Board has used the information they provided;
4. Board members shall conduct proactive community engagement with the community and voters of Denver. Proactive community engagement shall be values-based and focused on the board's Ends Policies to help determine what benefits should be produced, for whom, and at what cost. Should community engagement become operational or needs an immediate response, community members shall be redirected to the Superintendent's Office for additional support as outlined in policy GP-10.E.
  - 4.1. A "community meeting" is considered a board member-initiated event that includes three or more board members.
  - 4.2. The Board shall receive administrative support from the district, including translation services, for a maximum of ten(10) community meetings each school year. The Superintendent shall budget for this administrative support accordingly. The community meetings are proactive in nature, so

## **FIRST READ FOR POLICY PROPOSAL**

- board members shall give the Superintendent's office 45 days advance notice for community meetings.
- 4.3. All board members and the Superintendent shall be invited guests to the community meetings. The regional director and at least one At-Large director will collaborate in creation of the agenda and the format of the community meeting.
  - 4.4. The five community engagement questions related to the Ends shall be a priority of the community meetings. Board members will encourage community members to answer the questions through the online survey at [board.dpsk12.org](http://board.dpsk12.org) or by paper at their leisure.
  - 4.5. This policy does not preclude two or less board members from conducting community meetings and they are encouraged but not required to ask the community engagement survey questions. Individual board members may request district support per B/SR-2.2.
5. Board members shall proactively engage the community and share back to the whole Board in a cohesive and structured manner by asking the community to answer the following questions regarding the Board's Ends Policies. Board members are encouraged to ask additional questions.
- 5.1. Community members shall have the opportunity to answer community engagement questions in multiple formats. The Superintendent shall budget and plan accordingly to support the administration of the survey in alignment with Ends 1.1 (Equity).
  - 5.2. Survey responses will be immediately emailed to all Board members.
  - 5.3. The Survey responses, Ends feedback data from visits and other community meetings will be closed annually on September 30th. The Superintendent shall budget and plan accordingly to support the analysis of the survey results to be presented to the Board of Education at the December Board retreat. The response data shall be disaggregated by demographics as appropriate.

### **Questions to ask the community regarding Board of Education Ends Policies**

The Denver Public Schools' Board of Education requests your feedback on the Ends Policies for the school district. The Ends Policies are the long-term aspirational goals for the Superintendent and school district. You can view the Ends Policies here [\[insert weblink\]](#). Your feedback will help inform Board members' decisions regarding future policy, budgets, and priorities for the district. When submitted, your survey response will be emailed directly to Board members.

## FIRST READ FOR POLICY PROPOSAL

[Ask demographic questions at the beginning of the survey]

1. Rate your familiarity with the Board of Education's Ends Policies (long-term DPS goals).
    - a. Rate 1 through 5 based on "very familiar" or "not familiar at all"
    - b. Please explain (optional)
  2. Rate your support for the existing Board of Education's Ends Policies.
    - a. Rate 1 through 5 based on "very supportive" or "not supportive"
    - b. Please explain (optional)
  3. Is anything missing from the Board of Education's Ends Policies?
    - a. Yes/No/I don't know
    - b. If yes, what is missing? (optional)
  4. Would you be willing to raise your taxes to further support the Board of Education's Ends Policies?
    - a. Yes/No/I don't know
    - b. Please explain (optional)
  5. Are there external factors in your community that impact public education that the Board of Education should be aware of?
    - a. Yes/No/I don't know
    - b. Please explain (optional)
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### **Questions to ask the community regarding a proposal to an existing Board of Education Ends Policy**

1. Rate your support for the Board of Education's Policy [insert number and title].
  - a. Rate 1 through 5 based on "very supportive" or "not supportive"
  - b. Please explain (optional)
2. Is anything missing from the Board of Education's Ends Policy [insert number and title]?
  - a. Yes/No/I don't know
  - b. Please explain (optional)
3. Are there external factors in your community that could impact the Board of Education's Policy [insert number and title]?
  - a. Yes/No/I don't know
  - b. Please explain (optional)

## FIRST READ FOR POLICY PROPOSAL

6. When meeting with the community, Board members should confirm the community understands the role of the Board and Superintendent.
7. The Board and not the Superintendent or staff are responsible for community engagement in initiating new Board policy and revising existing Board policy.
8. Board members shall gather data and feedback from a diversity of voices with a focus on marginalized identities. It shall meet with, gather input from, and otherwise interact with the community in order to understand the diversity of their perspectives.
9. Board members are encouraged to share with their colleagues, information and data received from community visits and gatherings pertaining to the Ends policies.
10. When making governance decisions, Board members shall maintain a distinction between their personal interests as beneficiaries of the district's services and their obligation to speak for others as a representative of the community as a whole. As the agent of the community, the Board is obligated to proactively understand what the community wants and needs.
11. The Board shall continually improve community engagement in order to ensure that the Board has intentional and constructive dialogue and deliberation with the community. When and how community engagement occurs shall not limit the Board from developing board policy on behalf of the community. The Board will be mindful to gather evidence that Board members listened attentively to voters with a bias for action.

Refs:

Ends 1.1

Colorado Revised Statutes