

MONITORING REPORT: Policy OE-12 (Facilities)

PHASE ONE: Interpretation and Monitoring Indicators

DATE: April 2019

Policy

The Superintendent will assure that physical facilities support the accomplishment of the Board's *Results* policies.

Interpretation

We understand this policy expresses the value the School Board places on providing educational facilities that truly facilitate effective education. The Board understands that physical environment affects both teaching and learning, and that school buildings are tools which either enhance or detract from these processes. In other words, the Board understands that education does not occur in a vacuum. The physical environment is part and parcel of the way we teach and learn. Students and staff thrive in orderly, clean, and safe environments. Classrooms that are well ventilated, suitably lighted, and properly maintained enhance learning. Poor air quality, on the other hand, negatively affects alertness and can result in increased student and teacher absences, which can have a corresponding impact on student achievement. In short, both students and staff are more likely to prosper when their environment is conducive to teaching and learning, and when well-designed facilities communicate a powerful message about the importance the District and the community place on education.

Since school facilities affect the physical, educational, and financial foundation of the entire school organization, the Board expects us to be good stewards of our buildings and grounds, as well as of our students, staff, and programs, making facilities a focus of both our day-to-day operations and our long-range management priorities. We further understand that, to the greatest extent possible, the Board expects us to ensure the design, care, and operation of such facilities align with our District learning goals.

Specifically, the Board wants us to work to provide educational environments that:

- Enhance teaching and learning and accommodate the needs of all learners by providing (1) indoor air quality, occupant comfort, appropriate lighting, and good classroom acoustics; (2) spaces which allow students to work in groups of various sizes and learn by doing; and (3) multiple learning pathways and options for success.
- Support the use of modern tools and technologies.

- Are flexible and adaptable to various disciplines, programs, uses, and future changes in our profession.
- Make effective use of available resources by (1) attending to environmental sustainability; (2) maximizing the use of the school's own facilities -- like kitchens, theaters, maintenance areas, and athletic fields -- as three-dimensional textbooks and laboratories for authentic student work; and (3) wherever possible, providing students and staff with access to the rich resources of our community.
- Enhance extracurricular as well as curricular learning activities, since extracurricular activities are important avenues for growing well-rounded, successful students who have better attendance records, higher grades, and a greater likelihood of earning a diploma.
- Provide for health, safety, and security by, *at a minimum*, addressing all environmental safeguards and meeting all applicable health and safety codes.
- Reflect the needs, values, and cultures of our District's stakeholders.
- Serve as centers of the community, as well as places where students come to learn, by (1) being accessible to people of all ages; (2) helping to meet the community's leisure, recreational, and wellness needs; (3) encouraging active parental involvement; (4) supporting relationships with local businesses and community organizations; and (5) containing spaces that are accessible after regular school hours year-round.

For the purposes of Policy OE-12, we understand the Board expects us to include school buses as extensions of our physical facilities even though bus care, maintenance, and replacement are also referenced to in Policy OE-7 (Asset Protection). The Board views buses as more than just vehicles to transport children from place to place. As the District's visual face to the public, buses are students' bridges to accessing education, an essential cornerstone that afford all children the opportunity to participate in productive learning environments. They are also learning environments themselves. Properly maintained buses convey to the citizenry responsible use of public funds and good stewardship by the District. Ensuring the bus fleet is properly resourced, maintained, and utilized will support the accomplishment of the Board's *Results* policies.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

Provided below for each component part of OE-12

The Superintendent will:

1. **Develop and execute a facilities plan that establishes priorities for construction, renovation, and maintenance projects and that:**
 - a. **Assigns highest priority to the correction of unsafe conditions.**
 - b. **Includes maintenance costs as necessary to enable facilities to reach their intended life cycles.**
 - c. **Plans for and schedules preventive maintenance.**
 - d. **Plans for and schedules system replacement when new schools open, schools are renovated, or systems are replaced.**
 - e. **Discloses assumptions on which the plan is based, including growth patterns and the financial and human impact individual projects will have on other parts of the organization.**

Interpretation

We understand this component communicates, **in general**, the Board's expectation that we will do the kind of short and long-range planning required for the wise expenditure of public funds.

Specifically, the Board is expressing its belief that facility maintenance and planning is a vital component in the responsible overall management of our District. According to a 2003 report by the National Forum on Education Statistics and the Association of School Business Officials International, effective school facility maintenance can:

- contribute to an organization's instructional effectiveness and financial well-being;
- improve the cleanliness, orderliness, and safety of an organization's facilities;
- reduce the operational costs and life-cycle cost of a building;
- help staff identify facilities priorities proactively rather than reactively;
- extend the useful life of buildings; and
- increase energy efficiency and thereby help the environment.

A sound facilities maintenance plan serves as evidence that school facilities are, and will be, cared for appropriately. Conversely, failure to maintain school facilities adequately can discourage future investment in our public education system.

Therefore, the Board expects us to create, implement, and continually update a plan for meeting the challenges of effective facilities maintenance.

Such a facilities maintenance plan must include the strategies the District will employ to maintain its facilities proactively. It should reflect the vision and mission of the organization; include an accurate assessment of existing facilities; incorporate the perspectives of various stakeholder groups; focus on preventive measures that ensure capital investments are being managed responsibly; and integrate best practices in planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Assigns highest priority to the correction of unsafe conditions means that, when we become aware of an unsafe condition, we must plan and act as rapidly as

possible to address it. Additionally, in our budgeting process, we must prioritize safety needs above all others.

Includes maintenance costs as necessary to enable facilities to reach their intended life cycles means that we need to monitor our facility assets carefully and develop budgets that allow us to maintain their various systems -- including building envelopes, HVAC technology, roofs, and floor covering -- in a way that maximizes the useful lifespan of each facility.

Plans for and schedules preventive maintenance means that we need to develop a regular, systematic plan for caring for each facility and for each system within that facility. Such systems must be maintained or replaced before they fail, become unsightly, or are no longer safe. In short, the Board expects us to allocate appropriate time, personnel, and resources to preventive maintenance in order to avoid the pitfalls of deferred maintenance, which, according to a 2003 report by the National Forum on Education Statistics and the Association of School Business Officials International, can include (1) extensive long-term costs; (2) reduced equipment efficiency; (3) entire system failure; (4) safety and health risks to occupants; (5) possible fines from regulatory agencies; (6) escalation into larger problems; (7) shorter life cycles; (8) more costly emergency repairs; (9) more downtime; and (10) compounding costs related to inflation.

Plans for and schedules system replacement when new schools open, schools are renovated, or systems are replaced means that the Board wants us to avoid the danger of assuming that new schools, or newly renovated schools, will be maintenance free for a period of time, and therefore will not need to be included on a maintenance schedule. Rather, the Board expects us to place such items as carpets, HVAC systems, and roofs of newly constructed or newly renovated facilities on a replacement schedule so that all upgrades are planned for systematically.

Discloses assumptions on which the plan is based, including growth patterns and the financial and human impact individual projects will have on other parts of the organization means that we need to base our facility plan on sound data regarding realistic revenue projections, accurate enrollment projections, intended lifespans of building systems and material, and the relationship between facilities priorities and all other District priorities. It also means that we need to be transparent in sharing our data, projections, and rationale for the facilities decisions we make.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- Timely correction of conditions that could lead to facility and/or equipment damage or could compromise occupant safety or health.

- A comprehensive schedule of preventative facility maintenance, along with a replacement and/or renovation plan, that includes, at a minimum, roofing, pavement, and flooring.
- A capital renewal plan for major building systems with end-of-life expectancies shorter than the facility life span.
- A bus maintenance and replacement schedule that is kept current and synchronized with the District's evolving student transportation needs.
- A long-range capital projects/construction plan based on the conditions of our facilities and foreseeable expectations of growth.

2. Project life-cycle costs as capital decisions are made.

Interpretation

We understand this component expresses the value the Board places on long-range planning. Since all physical assets have a projected lifespan, the Board expects all maintenance plans and schedules to be written in such a way that they inform the budgeting process. That is, the Board expects us to document when each system will likely need to be replaced so that these replacement costs become an integral part of the District's annual budget planning.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- Evidence that a schedule containing both preventative maintenance and lifecycle replacement of all major systems not only exists but has been fully utilized to inform the annual budget process.
- A District budget with adequate resources allocated to fund a systematic approach to facilities maintenance and upgrades as well as address unforeseen safety concerns and other emergencies.

3. Assure that facilities are safe, clean and properly maintained.

Interpretation

We understand this component expresses the Board's expectation that the safety of children, staff, and the public is our top priority, taking precedence over all competing needs for time and resources. To this end, the Board expects: (1) any aspect of our facilities that pose recognizable threat of harm to be corrected as soon as possible; (2) all facilities, including buses, to be kept appropriately clean to meet community and industry standards for health, hygiene, and appearance; and (3) all facilities, including buses, to be maintained and technologically upgraded according to a systematic plan that reduces the need for deferred maintenance and prolongs useful life.

This component of Policy OE-12 (Facilities) supports component 5 of Policy OE-7 (Asset Protection), which states that “the Superintendent will not allow facilities and equipment to be subject to improper use or insufficient maintenance.”

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- Evidence that all custodial, maintenance, and transportation staff have been properly trained in District policy and standards for safety, hygiene, and cleaning.
- Results of inspections of our buildings and grounds by the Director of Maintenance showing 90% meet established standards for safety, cleanliness, and maintenance.
- Evidence that work orders coded as “safety issues” have been responded to within 24 hours.
- Evidence that boiler systems have been inspected annually and repaired or replaced as needed.
- Evidence that HVAC systems have been maintained and serviced regularly.
- Grounds crew logs showing regular mowing, trimming, and seasonal maintenance have occurred.
- Evidence of a regular schedule of inspections and safety tests of such aspects of District facilities as playgrounds and water quality.
- Evidence that snow removal has been adequately addressed before the start of any impacted school day.
- Results from the State Patrol’s inspection of school buses that are sufficient to avoid negatively impacting the operation of the District’s Transportation Department.

4. Consistently administer facilities use guidelines delineating:

- a. Permitted uses.
- b. The applicable fee structure.
- c. Clear user expectations, including behavior, cleanup, security, insurance, and damage repair.
- d. Consequences and enforcement procedures for public users who fail to follow the established rules.

Interpretation

We understand this component reflects the Board’s belief that public schools are owned by the taxpayers who paid for them and operated for the community. Therefore, the public must be welcomed to use school District facilities when such use is not in conflict with school operations.

Permitted uses means that, although the Board wants our buildings to be open for use by community groups, they are clear that District-sponsored activities, including curricular and co-curricular functions, always retain first priority. District facilities

must be dedicated to their primary purpose, which is education. Beyond this primary purpose, the Board expects us to provide fair and consistently administered procedures spelling out the conditions under which the facilities may be used.

Applicable fee structure refers to the fact that the public is expected to reimburse the District for using school facilities in order to ensure funds intended for education are not used for other purposes. For instance, when facilities are utilized outside of regular school hours, and/or when the District incurs extra costs, the using organizations must be charged to recoup those costs. For rental rate purposes, organizations seeking the use of District facilities have been divided into three categories: (1) school-related or child-related groups or other government agencies whose main purpose is to promote the welfare of students or to provide members of the community access to government programs or opportunities for civic participation; (2) nonprofit groups and organizations who want to use District facilities for lectures, promotional activities, rallies, entertainment, college courses, or other activities for which public halls or commercial facilities generally are rented or owned; and (3) commercial enterprises who represent profit-making organizations and/or business-related ventures. The District's rental rates reflect these three types of use.

Clear user expectations, including behavior, cleanup, security, insurance, and damage repair refers to the Board's expectation that the Superintendent will establish procedures for the use of District facilities, including rental rates, supervisory and security expectations, accident and liability insurance requirements, and any other applicable rules and restrictions.

Consequences and enforcement procedures for public users who fail to follow the established rules refers to the Board's expectation that the Superintendent will ensure users who violate established rules or procedures will fully reimburse the District for any costs incurred to correct the violation and/or will be prohibited from further use of District facilities.

Authorization by the District for an activity, group, or organization to use school facilities will not be considered endorsement or approval. The District reserves the right to deny or cancel any application for use when such use, in the sole opinion of the District, is determined to be detrimental to the District's best interests.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- Information on the facility rental process is easily accessible to and understandable by members of the community.
- Inquiries about facilities rentals are answered within 72 hours.
- The public has been allowed to utilize District facilities, as specified in administrative policy, when such facilities are not being used for educational purposes.

The Superintendent may not:

5. Build or renovate buildings.

Interpretation

We understand this component prohibits the Superintendent from unilaterally making decisions about building or conducting major renovations of District facilities.

Although the Superintendent may be asked to make recommendations or provide plans for construction projects or renovations, the ultimate authority in these areas resides with the Board.

We do not believe this component prevents the Superintendent or her staff from implementing such minor upgrades as deemed necessary to conduct the safe and efficient operation of the District. Such minor upgrades may include, but are not limited to: (1) reconfiguring spaces through the addition or removal of partitions; (2) adding or converting storage areas; and/or (3) installing or taking away equipment.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- No major construction or renovation projects have been completed without School Board authorization.

6. Recommend land acquisition without first determining growth patterns, comparative costs, construction and transportation factors, and any extraordinary contingency costs due to potential natural and man-made risks.

Interpretation

We understand this component prohibits the Superintendent from bringing any proposal related to land acquisition to the School Board without first meeting appropriate standards of due diligence. This means the Superintendent is expected to base such recommendations upon carefully gathered data and rationale regarding demographics, costs, and benefits to the District.

This component of Policy OE-12 (Facilities) is the companion to component 8 of Policy OE-7 (Asset Protection), which states that “the Superintendent will not purchase or sell real estate, including land and buildings.”

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- Any land acquisition proposals have been thoroughly vetted by the School Board.

7. Authorize construction schedules and change orders that significantly increase cost or reduce quality.

Interpretation

We understand this component prohibits the Superintendent from approving any substantial change orders without first getting approval from the School Board. In this context, substantial is defined as any change order over \$50,000.

We further understand that this component expresses the Board's expectation that the School Board will be informed and given opportunity to provide input whenever significant changes need to be made in construction schedules. In this context, significant is defined as any construction schedule that will be altered by more than one month.

Monitoring Indicator(s)

We will know we are in compliance with this component when we can show:

- All construction change orders over \$50,000 have been brought to the School Board for approval.
- All construction schedule changes over one month have been brought to the School Board for input.