



Southwest Region School District

Indian Policy & Procedures

Responses to Parental, Community Member, and Tribal Council Feedback

March 19, 2020

Dear Parent,

Southwest Region School District (SWRSD) values feedback from parents, community members, and tribal organizations. The district is working on increasing collaboration with parents and tribal organizations as educational programs continue to progress and develop. Communication is a key component to having more collaborative opportunities between SWRSD and parents. It is important that you have access to information about educational programs and have the opportunity to ask questions, make comments, and provide suggestions.

In November, surveys were sent to parent and Tribal organizations to solicit feedback about the education programs in the district. In addition, each year there is a public meeting at each of our schools outlining the educational programs, curriculum resources, and individual school plans. The survey results were collected, as well as, the questions and comments from the public meetings. Below are the responses to the questions and comments.

Also included in this packet are the Indian Policies & Procedures (IPP's) for which no changes were recommended by parents or tribal organizations. The IPPs are reviewed annually and feedback sought from tribal organizations and parents to determine if changes are needed.

Date of Public Meetings

Aleknagik – Jan 30, 2020

Chief Ivan Blunka – Dec 11, 2019

Koliganek – Oct 15, 2019

Togiak – Dec 12, 2019

Clarks Point – Feb 27, 2020

Manokotak Nunaniq – Jan 22, 2020

Twin Hills – Feb 5, 2020

William Sonny Nelson – Dec 12, 2019

Questions

Question 1 – We have kids that get out of school and are not prepared UAA or UAF standardized core classes. What can we do to address this?

Response 1 – The Accuplacer is available to identify students qualified to take entry level English classes while still in high school as dual credit for those that score high enough on the Accuplacer. But overall we need to continue to raise the level or rigor and expectations for students to be eligible to take these classes.

Question 2 – What are we doing to bridge the gap between where we are and where we need to be?



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Response 2 – Strategies are school specific based on the needs of each school. Some schools have access to School Improvement funds that are used address gaps based on identified needs. Each school has a schoolwide plan to address key indicators directly related to improvement. Supplementary programs, interventions, and after school activities are also part of the strategies to bridge the gap.

Question 3 – What about the reading and math curriculum? It seems that there has been more reading with the Accelerated Reader program than with the Reading Mastery program.

Response 3 - The Reading Mastery program is the core reading curriculum for elementary grades. The AR program has helped to motivate the students to read and is in addition to the instruction occurring during Reading Mastery. We will be reviewing the reading curriculum next year. If you would like to have your name considered for the committee, please let me know.

Question 4 – Are we really getting the results needed? What about the students that are held back by other students? How do we separate them out so that they can be pushed ahead? What do we need to do to keep them from getting bored? Assignments are too short. They need more homework and be challenged more.

Response 4 – Parents think they need to ask for homework to be good parents and teachers think they need to assign it to be good teachers. Research (Jon Hattie) shows that homework has a very small impact on the success of students. We know that there is more things that need to be mastered than what we can teach at school. Instead of assigning homework, read with your children. Have them read to other brothers and sisters. Take them hunting. Teach them to split wood. Teach them the things that we can't teach at school.

We offer enrichment for advanced students and intervention for struggling students. Tracking students is not generally accepted as effective and it may violate least restrictive environment requirements. Supplementary resources are offered for Reading and Math.

Question 5 - How do the science tubs work?

Response 5- Science tubs are designed to be hands-on learning experiences for students. All the materials and lessons are within the tote to teach science concepts for an entire semester. This will be the last year of the science totes due to the state of Alaska adopting a new set of standards, which will require a science curriculum review process.

Question 6 – What is Jr. Achievement?

Response 6 - The district does not offer a Jr. Achievement program. However, BBNC offers a Jr. Achievement program and have worked with individual schools to implement the curriculum with BBNC staff as the instructors.



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Requests

Request 1 - Yup'ik Studies classes for the high school students.

Response 1 – The district works to offer Yup'ik Studies courses to all students given limited resources. The district will be offering distance delivery Yup'ik Studies courses next fall for specific sites.

Concerns

Concern 1 - Concerned that the GoMath curriculum is difficult to understand when compared to curriculum in the past.

Response 1 – The GoMath curriculum addresses the most recent content standards adopted by the State of Alaska. The standards for math have changed to ensure that students know several different methods to solve math problems with emphasis on the need to explain the reasoning behind solving the problem. This is a different approach to learning and teaching math than in the past.

Concern 2 – Concerned that there is a lack of a writing curriculum.

Response 2 – The language arts curriculum includes a writing curriculum. More work needs to be done to ensure writing is emphasized at all grade levels.

Concern 3 – Concerned about paraprofessionals teaching Reading Mastery and math groups.

Response 3 – Elementary students are leveled in reading and math creating more groups than certified staff can teach in a class period; thereby making it necessary to have instructional aides provide small group instruction in those content areas. Instructional aides providing instruction are trained in the curriculum being taught. All instruction is under the supervision of a certificated teacher.

Concern 4 – Concerned that students need to receive the same level of rigor from all classes and content areas.

Response 4 – Instructional staff continue to collaborate and develop rigorous content. Each teacher has discretion in regards to grading assignments, expectations, etc. upon approval of the principal. Secondary content areas have district-wide pacing calendars and common assessments, which provides similar level of rigor across the district.



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Concern 5 – More communication needed between teachers and parents regarding missing assignments, assignment schedule, and grading policy.

Response 5 – Parents can check the progress of student progress including the PowerSchool app or PowerSchool website, or request progress reports from teachers. Additional lines of communication will be reviewed to ensure parents are getting timely information.

Comments

Comment 1 – The results on the state proficiency exams are very low. The curriculum needs to be challenging enough that we do not have to constantly supplement everything. If what we have does not meet our needs, then we need to reexamine that.

Response 1 – There is a curriculum review cycle that ensures the curriculum meets state standards. This is a complex challenge and includes a number of factors. This is an area that we continue to try to improve.

Comment 2 – We have a very nice shop and it doesn't get used as a shop class.

Response 2 – Shop and other career and technical education courses have grown significantly in recent years through E-week offerings. Budget constraints have not allowed full-time shop teachers to be hired. The district is using alternative certification paths to hire shop teachers when possible.

Comment 3 – I'd like a shop class and career counseling. I'd also like a counselor or skype counseling.

Response 3 – The district is exploring ways to increase counseling support.

Comment 4 – We would like more CTE opportunities for our children. Classes like accounting, small engine repair, CAD courses, wood shop, and survival skills.

Response 4 – Some of these courses are offered through Eweeks including survival skills, for which there are three Eweek courses. The district continues to seek alternative and innovative methods to offer CTE opportunities including the Bristol Bay Regional Career & Technical Education program, Eweeks, and where resources allow, traditional year-long courses. The district has been able to use a special certificate to hire industry experts to teach CTE courses where possible and continues to seek more CTE instructors using that method.

Comment 5 - Loves the opportunities that e-weeks have provided for her child to participate in activities that showcase the traditional way of life.

Comment 6 - Eweeks are a great! They provide opportunities for our children to participate in music and art and other classes that are otherwise not available.



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There are a number of opportunities for parents to provide comments or ask questions including but not limited to the following:

- Public comment section of SWRSD School Board meetings
- Public comment section at local CSC meetings
- Complete questionnaire's or feedback forms
- Participate in the Parent Advisory Committee
- Contact your local principal
- Provide comment by email at feedback@swrsd.org

You can access educational program resources at www.swrsd.org under the Parent Information tab.

If you are interested in being a member of a Parent Advisory Committee, please contact Jon Clouse.

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INDIAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Note: Districts receiving federal Impact Aid are required to have "IPPs" or Indian Policies and Procedures. The following sample was adopted from sample policies issued by the Department of Education.

The Southwest Region School District's goal under the Indian Policies and Procedures [IPP] is to ensure that all Native Alaskan/American Indian children of school age have equal access to all programs, services, and activities provided by the school district.

The District will establish policies and procedures to ensure that children residing on Indian lands participate in programs and activities supported by Impact Aid Funds on an equal basis with all other children. Parents of these children will be afforded an opportunity to present their views on these programs and activities, including the opportunity to make recommendations on the needs of those children and how the District may help these children realize the benefits of these programs and activities. Parents and Indian Tribes will be consulted and involved in the planning and development of these programs and activities and the relevant applications, evaluations, and program plans will be disseminated to the parents and the Indian Tribe.

It is the intent of the District to fully comply with all requirements of Title VII (Impact Aid Program) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (formerly Public Law 81-874, amended 8/2/02), and to that end, the Governing Board has adopted as policy these Indian Policies and Procedures (IPPs). The IPPs by intent and by Board action supersede all previous Board action and are intended to bind the Governing Board, administration, and staff of the District.

ATTESTATIONS

The Southwest Region School District attests that it has established Indian Policies and Procedures (IPPs) as required in section 7004 of the Impact Aid law for any children claimed who reside on eligible Indian lands. The IPPs have been adequately disseminated to the tribes and parents of children residing on eligible Indian lands. A copy of the current policies and procedures will be attached to the FY 2019 Impact Aid application.

The Southwest Region School District attests that it has provided a copy of written responses to comments, concerns and recommendations received from tribal leaders and parents of Indian children through the Indian policies and procedures consultation process and disseminated these responses to tribal leaders and parents of Indian children prior to the submission of their FY 2019 Impact Aid application.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following Indian policies and procedures become effective upon school board approval.

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POLICY FOR STANDARD 1

The Southwest Region School District will disseminate relevant applications, evaluations, program plans and information related to the District's education program and activities with sufficient advance notice to allow tribes and parents of Indian children the opportunity to review and make recommendations.

PROCEDURE FOR STANDARD 1

The District Administrator/designee will, as soon as reasonably possible after such information becomes available, but not later than one week in advance of any meeting, mail (electronic mail preferred) to Tribal officials a copy of the following documents and mail a summary of the following documents to Indian parents:

- Impact Aid Fiscal Year 2019 application;
- Evaluation of all educational programs; and
- Plans for education programs the District intends to initiate or eliminate.

In addition, information regarding these materials will be included in the District's monthly newsletter, if appropriate.

Parents of Indian children, tribal officials and the public will be given notice of any and all meetings related to equal participation or the content of the educational program by including information about meeting times and locations in the questionnaire to be disseminated in the fall. The location, date and time of any meeting described above shall be posted in the same manner as a legally posted School Board meeting.

The District will disseminate information and seek timely input regarding the following programs on its educational program (including, but not limited to): Title I, Part A, Title I, Part C, Title I, Part D, Title II, Part A, Title III, Part A, Title IV, Part A, Title IV, Part B, Title V, Part B subpart 2, Title VI, Part A, subpart 1, Title VII-Impact Aid programs, Johnson O'Malley programming.

The completed applications, evaluations, and program planning will be made available to parents of Indian children, Tribal officials, and the Parent Advisory Committee and a summary will be prepared and disseminated in at least 5 days in advance of public hearings held no later than December of the current school year to afford all interested parties the opportunity to review the documents with sufficient time to provide thoughtful input at the public meetings. These hearings will be publically advertised by radio, advertisement, newsletter or in writing to allow all interested parties to attend. In addition,

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representatives from the District will schedule meetings with the local tribes to seek input.

Parents of Indian children, tribal officials, the Parent Advisory Committee and any other interested persons can review assessment data to help develop or modify educational programs and services allowing for the participation of Indian students on an equal basis in the district.

Minutes from the Parent Advisory Committee meetings will be posted on the District's website for all patrons and Tribal officials to review. This will allow for ongoing dissemination of information.

POLICY FOR STANDARD 2

The Southwest Region School District will provide an opportunity for tribes and parents of Indian children to provide their views on the District's educational program and activities, including recommendations on the needs of their children and on how the District may help those children realize the benefits of the education programs and activities.

As part of this requirement, the District will:

1. Notify tribes and the parents of Indian children of the opportunity to submit comments and recommendations, considering the tribe's preference for method of communication, and
2. Modify the method of and time for soliciting Indian views, if necessary, to ensure the maximum participation of tribes and parents of Indian children.

PROCEDURE FOR STANDARD 2

In order to allow Indian parents and tribal officials to make commentary concerning (1) the needs of their children and the ways in which they can assist them in realizing the benefits of the education programs; (2) the overall operation of the District's education program; and (3) the degree of parental participation allowed in the same, the Board will mail parents of Indian children and Tribal officials a questionnaire requesting their input and recommendations in the fall and will thereafter hold an annual Board meeting where such commentary may be reviewed by Indian parents, Tribal officials, and the School Board.

Indian parents and Tribal officials will be given notice of any and all meetings by including in the above-referred questionnaire to be disseminated in the fall semester information as to the location of legally posted School Board notices. The location, date and time of any meeting described above shall be posted in the same manner as a legally posted School Board meeting.

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If participation in the survey results in a low return rate or the established meeting yield low participation by the parents of Indian children and tribal officials, the District will re-evaluate its plan and consult with parents of Indian children and tribal officials on ways to improve and enhance participation in the consultation process. The District may re-locate meetings or times to encourage participation.

The Parent Advisory Committee of the District will meet at semi-annually for the purpose of addressing comments and concerns of parents of Indian children regarding the District's educational programs and activities. The meeting agendas shall be posted and all meetings shall be open to the public allowing for tribal officials as well as parents of Indian children the opportunity to submit comments and recommendations for consideration.

At each of the scheduled monthly school board meetings, a section of time is set aside for communications from the public. This is a time to offer comments and suggestions regarding programming for Indian students. In addition, at least one public hearing is annually scheduled during a Community School Committee (CSC) meeting at each school which is primarily devoted to providing information and addressing questions regarding educational programs including federal programs. Based upon suggestions, preferred methods of communication as well as ways to maximize participation from tribal officials as well as parents of Indian children will be seriously considered.

The District representatives will schedule meetings with the affected tribe or tribes to discuss ongoing programming goals.

POLICY FOR STANDARD 3

The Southwest Region School District will at least annually, assess the extent to which Indian children participate on an equal basis with non-Indian children in the District's education program and activities. As part of this requirement, the District will:

1. Share relevant information related to Indian children's participation in the LEA's education program and activities with tribes and parents of Indian children; and
2. Allow tribes and parents of Indian children the opportunity and time to review and comment on whether Indian children participate on an equal basis with non-Indian children.

PROCEDURE FOR STANDARD 3

The District will take the following measures to annually assess the extent to which Indian children participate on an equal basis with non-Indian children in the District's education program and activities.

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- A. The District will monitor Indian student participation in all academic and co-curricular activities.
- B. School district officials will review school data to assess the extent of Indian children's participation in the District's educational programs on an equal basis.
- C. The District will share its assessment of district funding, Indian student participation, related academic achievements and other related data will be shared with the parents of Indian children and tribal officials by (mail, email, posting at tribal offices, etc.).
- D. Parents of Indian children, tribal officials and other interested parties may express their views on participation through direct communication with the school district, at any school board meeting or to the Parent Advisory Committee

The District shall annually calculate from its records the ratio of Indian children compared to other children participating academic and co-curricular programs ("school data").

Annually, the District Administrator (or a designee), administrators, staff members, the Parent Advisory Committee, Indian parents, and Tribal officials will hold a meeting to assess the extent of Indian children 's participation in the educational program. At such meeting, attendees will analyze the school data and Tribal/parental commentary to determine the extent of equality of Indian children's participation with other children.

The District will disseminate the results of the assessment of Indian participation to parents of Indian children and tribal officials within one month of publication by mail or e-mail.

Parents of Indian children or tribal officials may comment on the results at regularly scheduled school board meetings, Parent Advisory Committee meetings, directly to the school district by (phone, email, writing, etc.). In addition, parents of Indian children and tribal officials may comment in the fall semester through a questionnaire requesting information concerning their views as to the extent of Indian children's participation in educational programs on an equal basis with other children.

This data will be utilized to develop appropriate supports for various programs.

If it is determined that there are gaps in Indian participation in the educational program or activities, the School Board in consultation with the Parent

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Advisory Committee and tribal officials, will modify its education program in such a way as to improve Indian participation.

POLICY FOR STANDARD 4

The Southwest Region School District will modify the IPPs if necessary, based upon the results of any assessment or input described in this document.

PROCEDURE FOR STANDARD 4

During the organization meeting of the Parent Advisory Committee, the Indian Policies and Procedures will be reviewed and revised if necessary. Once this had happened, the document will be forwarded to the School Board as well as the tribal officials and parents of Indian children for review and consideration. If necessary, the Parent Advisory Committee may suggest revisions at other times of the year as appropriate. Any updates will be sent to parents of Indian children and tribal officials within one month of adoption by the School Board.

The Parent Advisory Committee shall serve as a task force to review the meaningfulness of Indian input, to review the extent of opportunity for Indian input and to review the District's response to Indian commentary. The Committee will review the effectiveness of the District's methods of gathering the input of Indian parents and Tribal members; calculate the number of Indian suggestions which were actually implemented; permit Indian parents and Tribal officials to suggest more effective ways of communicating their views. If necessary, the Parent Advisory Committee shall make recommendations to the Board to modify its policies and procedures.

The District will hold a School Board meeting to modify policies and procedures if the Parent Advisory Committee indicates such modification is necessary.

The District will notify parents of Indian children, tribal officials and the general public of any changes to the Indian Policies and Procedures by mail/email.

POLICY FOR STANDARD 5

The Southwest Region School District will respond at least annually in writing to comments and recommendations made by the Parent Advisory Committee, tribal officials or parents of Indian children, and disseminate the responses to all parties by mail/email or posting at tribal offices prior to the submission of the IPPs by the District.

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PROCEDURE FOR STANDARD 5

The District will at least annually respond in writing to comments and recommendations made by the Parent Advisory Committee, tribal officials, or parents of Indian children, and disseminate the responses to all parties by mail/e-mail or posting at tribal offices, prior to the submission of the IPPs by the District.

POLICY FOR STANDARD 6

The Southwest Region School District will provide a copy of the IPPs annually to the affected tribe or tribes.

PROCEDURE FOR STANDARD 6

The District will annually provide a copy of the current Indian Policies and Procedures to each local tribe by mail or posting at tribal offices.

Added: 01/2009

Reviewed: 08/2014, 01/2017, 09/2017

SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOL DISTRICT
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