

From: [REDACTED]@jpsk12.org
To: Kesha Hamilton
Subject: Re: Superintendent/Admin policy on Teachers
Date: Monday, August 2, 2021 11:38:44 AM
Attachments: Educator_Evaluations_At-A-Glance_522133_7.pdf

Kesha,

Perhaps I was unclear. Students and parents do not evaluate our teaching staff. Building principals that have been trained according to the law do and it is their responsibility to place a teacher on an individual development plan as they identify areas of deficiency. This happens when teachers are rated as ineffective or minimally effective by their building principal. Please refer to the law governing educator evaluation. [http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(yptomzjapiijpys5q1dgex55\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectname=mcl-380-1249](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(yptomzjapiijpys5q1dgex55))/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectname=mcl-380-1249)

As additional food for thought, you may want to discuss this with [REDACTED] and get her take on how the staff and MEA would view and adopt such an evaluation.

3. *It is not lost on me that any disagreement or any question that makes you uncomfortable prompts a belligerent form of communication from you. This is a problem and one I'd like to see you get further professional development on. Kesha, I was not being belligerent, I was pointing out your role as a Board member and as you heard at our MASB training where your activity tends to get in the weeds of operations vs at the policy level. I am well accustomed to parents and students reaching out to Board members as this has happened my entire career. As you will recall, when this happens you should send them my way and I will follow up with them.*

4. *I'm very concerned with how you engage those who dare to disagree with you who aren't your manager. We've discussed the culture this type of communication breeds. Do you have a specific example that you are referring to?*

5. *I am hoping that you will shift your attention away from the fact that I was contacted and toward the fact that I as a board member was contacted. (I said that exactly as I meant.) I am less concerned with any Board member being contacted. The District posts your contact information for this reason. I have given you my advice on how to resolve community concerns and will trust that you will encourage families to talk with their teachers or principals as often times they have failed to do so, but pending that, referring them to me will ensure that the buildings reach out to them. As was the case with the [REDACTED] family, you did not have all the information and neither the teacher nor the building principal were in the loop prior to them reaching out to you, once the connection was made between the teacher/ principal and the student/ family the issue was resolved.*

Jeff Beal
Superintendent
Jackson Public Schools
(517) 841-2201

Welcome to Jackson Public Schools - Where Community Comes Together!

On Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 10:34 AM Kesha Hamilton <[kesha.hamilton@\[REDACTED\]](mailto:kesha.hamilton@[REDACTED])> wrote:
Greetings [REDACTED]

I was unclear in my request. Please feel free to call if you don't understand after this.

While [REDACTED] was referenced because I was privy to this issue - she isn't the only teacher that students or parents are complaining about. I can see how that would have confused you.

1. I want to know your policy which helps you to determine when further professional development of our teaching staff is required. I'd like this in print.

2. What happens that signals to you when a staff member, specifically teachers, are in need of professional development? Do you ever feel that teachers need further professional development? What policy do you have in place as our Superintendent that guides or directs your steps in this area? Do you have a policy related to further professional development? And what instances cause you to refer to that policy?

3. *It is not lost on me that any disagreement or any question that makes you uncomfortable prompts a belligerent form of communication from you. This is a problem and one I'd like to see you get further professional development on.*

4. *I'm very concerned with how you engage those who dare to disagree with you who aren't your manager. We've discussed the culture this type of communication breeds.*

5. *I am hoping that you will shift your attention away from the fact that I was contacted and toward the fact that I as a board member was contacted. (I said that exactly as I meant.)*

I understand that the lens you view our students and their parents through is your own and a reflection of the life you've lived.

It is not a universal lens and understanding that is key to understanding point 5 of this email.

While I rest well in how I handled that situation the fact that a student felt so powerless and hopeless to reach out to their known highest form of authority is the issue you should focus on. And also another reason why we need to institute evaluation of our teachers from parents and students.

If our students felt empowered and believed that their needs could be met at the teacher level they wouldn't feel a need to reach out to a board member. That's my concern and that should be your concern.

How do we empower and applaud students to engage directly with their teachers? How do we empower teachers to listen to their students, to see their students and to see how they themselves as fallible humans could be unintentionally standing in the way of their students success?

How do we empower and applaud parents to step in as the by birth protector and provider of their student to engage with teachers and have teachers reach back and a solution that each party can live with is reached?

That is the focus that we should have when viewing this incident. How many people who didn't have an accessible board member to reach out to simply left JPS. If you truly 'believe the hype' it is more than about how loud you shout it. And if it is related to the success of our students then examining everything - especially 'best practice' - that our students are dealing with should be your first response.

Again - why did she feel she needed to reach out to me? What message are you sending that isn't being received? What message is the teacher sending that the students aren't hearing? What message are we as a JPS community sending that parents aren't hearing? What might be standing in the way of them being able

to hear? The 'on-us' is on us. How are we addressing the confused messages which is causing so much angst in our families?

How many students and families have left or will leave because of this? How many students and families are here but are disempowered? Discouraged? And just waiting to get out of JPS? How might our responses be contributing to that? Do we 'believe the hype' for all students or just some? What should be our priority? Who should be our priority?

You mentioned that you have a separate admin policy than what is found on the board website. What is your admin policy that isn't found on the board policy website that helps you determine when a teacher needs further professional development? Do you have one?

Thank you,
Kesha
Sent from my cell

On Mon, Aug 2, 2021 at 9:03 AM [REDACTED]@jpsk12.org> wrote:

Good morning Kesha,

No, the District does not have a policy or practice that would allow for students and or parents to evaluate or provide feedback of our teachers. The teacher evaluation process is governed by Michigan Law 380.1249. I have attached a pdf to this email for further explanation.

I am not as concerned about the interaction between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as you are, but likely for different reasons. [REDACTED] circumvented the chain of command and missed having crucial conversations with [REDACTED] teacher because [REDACTED] went straight to you. [REDACTED] parents should have been redirected to the principal, not to the superintendent and while I am happy to help with day to day matters, the number of points a student earns on a class participation grade is likely something that could have been and should have been handled at the classroom level or at most the principal level. In the future, I would ask that you encourage students to reach out to their teachers when they are struggling or pass them along to me and I will have the building principal follow up with the teacher and the student. Board level intervention at this level is inappropriate.

I realize that you are concerned about parental engagement, which is why it is increasingly important to continue to provide the correct guidance to our students and their families as your role as a Board member gives you no authority over student grades or the points they earn on any given assignment. It is vital that you facilitate a conduit of communication between parents and the buildings not to attempt to provide direct intervention. This facilitation of good communication habits will foster stronger parental engagement.

Please clarify which policy you would like more information about. All of our policies and administrative guidelines can be found here. <https://go.boarddocs.com/mi/jacks/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies>

[REDACTED]
Jackson Public Schools

Welcome to Jackson Public Schools - Where Community Comes Together!

On Sun, Aug 1, 2021 at 6:48 PM Kesha Hamilton <[keshahamilton@\[REDACTED\]](mailto:keshahamilton@[REDACTED])> wrote:

Greetings [REDACTED]

I trust this communication finds you well. I'd like to understand the policy that we have in place for how we address teachers whose students or parents are impacted negatively by teachers actions.

Do we have an evaluation process by students and parents of teachers, to assess how effective our teachers are with our students and parents?

I'm really concerned about [REDACTED] and the incident that occurred with [REDACTED]. That process was a nightmare for her and her parents and our response as the admin team was very concerning to me as a board member and as a parent.

I'd like to understand what type of steps we take after these incidents to ensure that further professional development is occurring so that these incidents are not occurring.

I'm very concerned about parental engagement, student engagement and as we both know from the lessons we received during the 2 equity trainings and the recommendations in the now 4 year old equity audit - we need to respond through a cultural lens. Aside from common sense in understanding that if we never do anything different we can't expect anything different.

So what steps do we take to ensure professional development?

What policies do you as the admin staff have in place? We talked about me receiving copies of your admin policy as issues arose - this is an instance where I'd like to see your policy on this issue.

I'm hoping you can get me this information by the next board meeting. If that's too soon please let me know when you will be able to get it to me.

Thank you,

Kesha Hamilton (she, her)
JPS Board Trustee
Jackson Public Schools
[keshahamilton@\[REDACTED\]](mailto:keshahamilton@[REDACTED])

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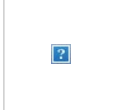


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