



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO: Members, Board of Education
Dr. Albert Roberts, Superintendent**

FROM: Chris Jasculca

RE: Adoption of Policies

DATE: September 9, 2014

The District 97 Board of Education conducted a first reading of the following policies during its meeting on August 19, 2014:

- Policy 7:180 – Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment
- Policy 7:190 – Student Discipline
- Policy 8:30 – Visitors to and Conduct on School Property

Board members asked questions, offered comments and/or provided feedback about each of the policies during the discussion at the board table. Below is an update on these policies based on the input that was given.

- **Policy 7:180 (Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment)** – Hodges Loizzi Eisenhammer Rodick & Kohn LLP (HLERK), which is the district’s legal counsel, recommended replacing prevent with address throughout the policy because “the district cannot guarantee it will ultimately prevent such behavior, although it must investigate and take all appropriate measures to address the behavior.” The policy review team informed the board that a number of other districts, including districts 90 and 200, use the word prevent in their version of the policy. The team also conveyed our belief that the use of the word prevent reflects the district’s strong commitment to the health and safety of our students, and provides consistency in the language (i.e., preventing is in the title of the policy).

The board members agreed with the recommendation to use the word prevent rather than address. It also identified the need to make minor revisions to the policy to reflect the decision and ensure that the language is consistent throughout the document. The policy review team has updated the policy to include the replacement of address with prevent wherever necessary/appropriate.

- **Policy 7:190 (Student Discipline)** – In the section titled “Disciplinary Measures,” item 10 states that the period of time for in-school suspensions should not exceed five school days. The policy review team contacted PRESS for clarification regarding the reason/rationale for the five-day limit and received the following response.

“State law does not cover in-school suspensions, so item 10 in 7:190 is not based on a legal requirement. This is one of those policy statements that is based on best practice. The concern of our attorneys and the attorneys who serve on the Policy Advisory Board is that an in-school suspension that goes longer may become a regular suspension, especially if no educational program is provided. That, of course, would necessitate the procedural steps required for a suspension.”

Based on this feedback from PRESS, the policy review team recommends leaving item 10 written as is.

- **Policy 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)** – During the first reading of policies conducted on August 19, the policy review team recommended that the district move to the PRESS version of policy 8:30. However, the team also stated our belief that the current policy and guidelines we have in place still play a critical role in the process of scheduling visits to our schools. With this in mind, we suggested combining the two documents (policy and guidelines) into one titled School/Classroom Visits Practices and Protocols that would be shared with staff, families and community members via a variety of resources (email, websites etc.).

The board agreed with these recommendations, and suggested that, in addition to sharing the School/Classroom Visits Practices and Protocols document with stakeholders, the team should include a reference to it in the policy. Per the board's suggestion, a hyperlink to the document (<http://www.op97.org/communications/documents/1School-ClassroomVisits.pdf>) has been added to the cross references at the end of the policy.

Additional information about the policy review and discussion that took place on August 19 can be accessed by visiting <https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicItemDownload.aspx?ik=35781523>.

Attached are the policies that are being presented to the board tonight for adoption.

Attachments:

- Policy 7:180 – Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment
- Policy 7:190 – Student Discipline
- Policy 8:30 – Visitors to and Conduct on School Property