

June 17, 2021

Town of Erie, Trustees

Re: SVVSD/Town of Erie – Cash-in-lieu IGA  
School District's Foundations and Basic Commitments for Student Safety

Dear Trustees:

The Town of Erie (Town) and St. Vrain Valley School District RE-1J (District) have had an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) since 1998 regarding the collection of cash-in-lieu of land fees and/or the dedication of land through the Town's development review process.

The importance of these fair contribution IGAs is that school districts are inadequately funded by the state for school land acquisition and school facility construction. These serve as a small way for development to pay a portion of impacts created by new housing development, and provide the District with a role in the development process where it can better plan for schools. Without an IGA, the District becomes very limited in its ability to acquire land and then build schools in communities. This IGA has been instrumental for the District in the acquisition of sites in Erie for the construction of Black Rock Elementary, Red Hawk Elementary, Soaring Heights PK-8 and Erie High. As Erie continues to grow, more school sites will be needed. The renewal of this IGA will allow for the Town and District to continue planning together to address the need for new school sites.

The renewal of this IGA, with amendments that addressed traffic signals, an updated formula, and other identified planning needs, has already been approved by the District's Board of Education. At the June 8, 2021, Town of Erie Board of Trustees meeting, there was an agenda item for approval of this IGA. However, at that meeting, several Trustees raised concerns about the safety of BIPOC students and the IGA was not approved.

While these concerns are not related to the subject of this impact fee IGA, the District desires to address the Town's expressed concerns and answer any questions that the Town may have regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion in the District's schools. This letter provides a brief overview of the District's policies and other information that may be applicable to address the Trustees' concerns regarding student safety, in particular, the BIPOC student population.

The District's policies can be accessed on its website at <https://www.svvsd.org/about/board-of-education/board-policies/>. Below is a list of policies that touch upon the District's commitments to having an education and working environment that is free of harassment and intimidation, promotes equity and inclusiveness, and is safe for its students and staff.

- AC Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity
- AC-R-1 Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (Complaint and Compliance Process) - Regulation
- AC-R-2 Sexual Harassment Investigation Procedures (Title IX) – Regulation
- AC-E-1 Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (Sample Notice) – Exhibit
- AC-E-2 Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity (Complaint Form) – Exhibit



- ADD Safe Schools
- ADF School Wellness
- AE Accountability/Commitment to Accomplishment
- CBF Superintendent's Conduct
- GBA Open Hiring/Equal Employment Opportunity
- GBAA Sexual Harassment of Employees
- IHAM Health and Family Life/Sex Education
- IHAM-R Health Education – Regulation
- IHBD Equivalence of Services (Title I)
- IHBEA English Language Learners
- IKE Ensuring All Students Meet Standards
- IMB Teaching about Controversial Issues and Use of Controversial Materials
- JB Equal Educational Opportunities
- JBB Sexual Harassment of Students
- JFABD Homeless Students
- JICDE Bullying Prevention and Education
- JIH Student Interviews, Interrogations, Searches, and Arrests
- JII Student Concerns, Complaints, and Grievances
- JJF Student Activities Funds

As you will see when reviewing these policies, the District is committed to preventing and remedying harassment in its schools when it occurs, which commitment it considers as essential to ensuring a nondiscriminatory safe learning environment for students, employees, and community members.

The District has a robust reporting and compliance process that begins with the basis of model policies from the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB), which has been further developed over time by the District. Additionally, the current policies and procedures have been reviewed and approved by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). With approval from OCR for the policies, procedures, and training, the District is confident that the framework is not only in compliance with the law, but is currently up-to-date with best practices.

Through this framework, District and community members may report any such behaviors to myself, Johnny Terrell, as the District's Assistant Superintendent of Student Services as set forth in Policy AC-E-1. The District takes these matters very seriously. Each matter that is brought forth is thoroughly handled and appropriate steps taken for all of those involved.

Additionally, throughout the District's policies, diversity is addressed. For example, Policy IHAM addresses the District's goal of the Health Education program to provide students with relevant, accurate, reliable, and up to date information and skills regarding their social, physical, emotional, and mental health. This specifically includes strategies to support and maintain healthy choices, including Diversity Awareness. Another example can be found in Policy IMB, teaching about controversial issues and use of controversial materials. Controversial materials that are not part of the District's approved learning resources include materials that are likely to divide the community along racial, ethnic, or religious lines.



In addition to these long standing policies and commitments, the District has been working on matters regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. The District received suggested actions and recommendation from the NAACP as outlined in the May 26, 2021, letter. As communicated through the dialogue with the NAACP regarding this letter, the District believes that it is important to communicate the ongoing actions the District has taken prior to the incident at Mead High School that was referenced by one of the Town's Trustees,<sup>1</sup> as well as additional actions that will be taken as a result of that incident.

- Any student involved in an incident of this nature will face consequences in accordance with St. Vrain Valley School's Board of Education policies (Board of Education Policy JICDA- See Item #6). Although federal privacy laws (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)) prohibit the District from providing specific details of our disciplinary response, we can assure you that we consider this to be a very serious matter. Below, please see some of the initiatives and strategies currently underway:

1. Ongoing review of our District Policies related to equity and discrimination
2. "Talking to Children About Race Speaker Series" (Dr. Rosemarie Allen) - Teacher PD credit offered
3. Partnership and consultation with the Longmont Community Justice Partnership related to this incident to explore the viability of facilitating a Restorative Circle

Additionally, the District has provided training to ensure the District is complying with federal and state statutes regarding nondiscrimination and to support the success of all students, including:

1. Equity training with leadership teams at various District schools and departments
2. May - Equity training for all of Student Services
3. Universal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training for all staff continuing June 2021 and continuing each month thereafter

- The District currently has a Code of Conduct Policy and Nondiscrimination Policies (AC, Nondiscrimination/Equity Opportunity, AD, School District Mission/Educational Philosophy, ADD, Safe Schools, ADD-R Safety/Security Committees, DBD, Determination of Budget Priorities, GBA, Open Hiring/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, GBAA, Employee Sexual, and Racial Harassment/Discrimination, IFC, Multiculturalism, JB, Equal Educational Opportunities, JBB, Sexual and Racial Harassment/Discrimination toward Students). It should be noted that these policies are consistent with state and federal statutes.

The District will continue to provide professional development to our teachers and staff to know and adhere to Board policy, and consistently interpret and apply the appropriate consequences and learning opportunities for students, staff, and community members

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the District's letter immediately condemning the Mead High School incident is attached.



who violate these policies. The current structures that the District has in place to address consistent interpretation and application of policies include (but are not mutually exclusive to):

1. Leadership Council Meetings
2. Administrator Level Meetings (principal, assistant principal, and dean)
3. Student Services Open Labs
4. Safety and Security Review Trainings
5. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training during each late start in the 21-22 school year
6. Consultation with legal counsel
7. Consultation with CASB
8. Consultation through various community organizations and partnerships

- The District is currently in the midst of a review of Mead High School that goes beyond this incident. Currently, the review is being conducted by District leadership, legal counsel, members of our Equity, and Community Engagement team and school leadership team.

- Article 8.11.2 of the Negotiated Agreement with the teacher's association addresses equity training. The following highlights the progress we have made in providing equity training for all staff members, which has been impacted by the current worldwide pandemic. The purpose of the trainings is to ensure the District is complying with all state and federal statutes regarding nondiscrimination and to support the success of all students. Trainings have included:

1. 2020 - Development and approval of District equity foundation training
2. July 28, 29, 30 of 2020 - District-wide training - 8 deliveries with the 8 feeder systems was scheduled and organized, but postponed due to COVID
3. August 13, 2020 - District, Counselor, and Interventionist training around equity - in partnership with Colorado Education Initiative (CEI)
4. Level 1 equity training for various District schools
5. November 13, 2020 - All preschool staff equity training
6. February 2021 - Equity Training Part II for preschool staff
7. Pilots of equity training with school leadership teams, Laura Hess' SPED team, and Student Services leadership team
8. May 2021 - Equity training for all of Student Services
9. May 2021 - Finalize the planning of a District-wide equity training for all staff in the Summer (June 24 & 25, & July 27) and Fall of 2021 (August 11) and throughout the year, each month, during late start
10. July 28, 2021 - Equity Summit
11. Annual equity training for all teachers and staff new to our District

- Currently, the District has active relationships with numerous community groups. Our partner groups include:

1. Diversity Our Narrative



2. NAACP
3. SURJ
4. OUT Boulder
5. El Comite
6. Hispanic Education Foundation
7. A Queer Endeavour
8. CU Public Achievement (Voces Unidas)
9. Boulder County Mental Health Partners
10. Salud Clinic
11. ELPASO
12. OASOS
13. St. Vrain Safe Schools Coalition
14. PIE (Padres Involucrados en la Educación)
15. Children Youth and Family Services
16. Blue Sky Bridge
17. RISE Against Suicide

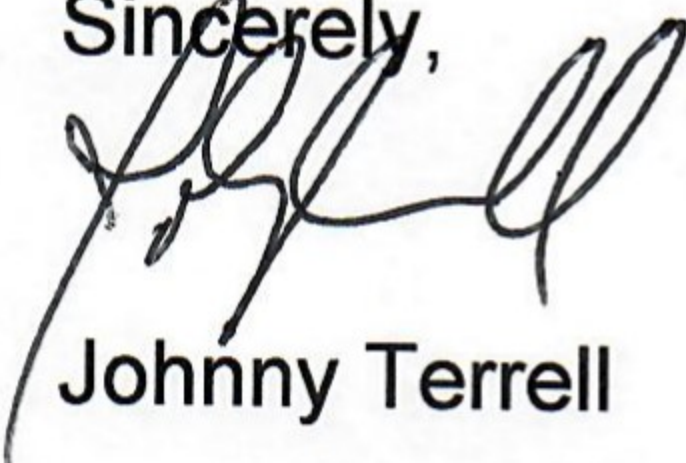
The District plans to engage with a BIPOC parent advisory board comprised of parents who can provide examples of experiences, recommended guidance, and support in ensuring safe environments for every student and adult within the St. Vrain Valley Schools. This engagement is similar to how the District works with other parent advisory groups throughout the community.

- The District has been and remains committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students.

While the matter before the Trustees concerns cash-in-lieu of land fees or land dedication for the construction of new schools to meet the needs of all students in the Town, I will be present at the Town's Board of Trustees' meeting on June 22, 2021, to address questions regarding this letter and to share the District's commitments and continued work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Additionally, we welcome the possibility of the Town joining the District in this commitment.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Johnny Terrell