

# WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

November 2020

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*Date* | 11/5/2020 | *Meeting called to order by* Kate Broyles and John Seevers

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## In Attendance

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Amy Baker	Kate Broyles	Melissa Gutierrez	Tricia Samuelson
Nanci Blanton	Sharon Burger	Kim Halingstad	John Seevers
michael brooks	Eliabeth Claflin	Dan Keane	Alison Thayer

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## Approval of Minutes

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The October 2020 minutes were published to the school website the evening of October 12. An amendment was made to update the rescheduled November meeting date on October 29.

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## Principal's Report

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A principal's report was not made at the meeting. First trimester ends on Friday, November 13, and information about that is being communicated to families.

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## School Budget Priority Survey

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With the deadline for individual School Accountability Committees to report their budget priorities to the [District Accountability Committee](#) earlier than in past years, the November meeting was rescheduled to address the survey questions by that deadline. The collected data influences decisions and recommendations made by the DAC Budget Subcommittee.

It was asked if the recent voters' decision to repeal the Gallagher Amendment will be figured into next year's district and school budgets. The repeal helps the state and districts avoid taking funds away and is not being figured as additional funds. Colorado schools were anticipating a decrease in successive years' budgets before the pandemic. Changes in enrollment and the economy resulting from the pandemic exacerbate budget concerns, but those concerns were not unexpected.

The School Budget Priority survey asks School Accountability Committees to rank their top three priorities for school-level reductions in the following categories, then for committees' lowest priorities for reductions, showing the highest level of support for those top three lowest priorities:

- Decrease in administration (assistant principal, deans, etc.)
- Decrease classroom teachers
- Adjustment to Digital Teacher-Librarian
- Adjustment to instructional coaches
- Adjustments to interventionist(s)
- Decrease in main office time and support
- Decrease para/aide time/support
- Decrease elective programming
- Professional development
- Adjustments to STEAM/STEM programs
- Decrease concurrent enrollment offerings
- Gifted/Talented supports
- Instructional resources
- Mental/Behavioral supports
- Increase student fees
- Resources for at-risk student populations

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Clarification was requested on the decrease/adjustment wording in the list of priorities provided by the district. The term “adjusting” there refers to actions like reviewing the ratios of certain positions or resources to school enrollment. (E.g., in 2011 the district adjusted the minimum enrollment for a school to have a full-time librarian position, which moved all mountain-area elementary schools to have half-time librarian positions.)

It was asked if digital teacher-librarians and instructional coaches are licensed teachers; yes, they are. Middle school digital teacher-librarians perform many of the duties of the technology specialist position at high schools.

Committee members were asked prior to the meeting to provide their top three highest and lowest priorities for school-level reductions. After weighting by number of responses, the five highest priorities for protecting from reductions, were: 1. Decrease classroom teachers, 2. Decrease in administration, 3. Mental/Behavioral supports, 4. Resources for at-risk student populations, and 5. Adjustment to digital teacher-librarian and the three lowest priorities to protect from reductions were: 1. Increase Student Fees, 2. Professional development., and 3. Decrease elective programming.

Clarification was requested for the "Decrease classroom teachers" and “Decrease elective programming" items. Are elective teachers included in the descriptor of “classroom teachers”? Yes. Would elective teachers be affected by a reduction in elective programming? It would probably just affect the variety of elective options, not the number of elective teachers, as our elective programming is what provides all teachers with a planning period in scheduling.

Clarification was requested on how much of an overlap exists between “Mental/Behavioral supports” and “Resources for at-risk student populations”. There is some overlap, but resources may cover more district-level resources such as the [Student Engagement Office](#) or [Connections Learning Center](#). At our school, administration and counseling do much of the management for at-risk students. We do have a budget line for at-risk funding, which we use primarily to assist with student fees and providing meal funding for students.

Clarification was requested on “Gifted/Talented supports” and “Adjustments to STEAM/STEM programs”. Our understanding is that GT supports might address services offered by the district [Gifted and Talented Program](#), including resource teachers and counselors that are shared among several schools. We do have GT-endorsed teachers already teaching our courses. The school does receive additional funding from the state for teachers with [Career and Technical Education](#) endorsements that teach a certain number of approved classes or sponsor organizations like Technology Student Association.

Clarification was requested on whether an instructional coach or paraprofessionals would provide greater good to a greater number of students. Instructional coaches support all students through their work with teachers, setting individual student growth goals, and often serving as a school’s assessment coordinator, both working on the setup and administration of testing and working with administration and staff to interpret the data from testing. An instructional coach has more impact on a school as a whole and in the long run.

The final ranking by the committee of priorities for school-level reductions from most important to protect to least impact to protect was:

- Decrease classroom teachers
- Decrease in administration
- Mental/Behavioral supports
- Resources for at-risk student populations
- Adjustment to Digital Teacher-Librarian
- Adjustments to STEAM/STEM programs
- Adjustment to instructional coaches
- Decrease in main office time and support
- Decrease para/aide time/support
- Instructional resources
- Gifted/Talented supports
- Decrease elective programming
- Professional development
- Increase student fees

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The ranking of budget priorities was acknowledged as a difficult discussion.

It was asked if there was anything else committee members wanted to suggest in the long text entry area of the form to suggest for saving money. There were no suggestions.

It was asked how many students identified as being in at-risk populations attend West Jeff. The school is provided by the district with a percentage of its enrollment that are students that receive free and reduced-price lunch program benefits (FRP). The percentage may overlap with students that have Individualized Education Plans, which are privileged information, or students struggling with engagement, which is also a percentage provided in our School Performance Framework from the state. In the past several years, 13 to 16% of our students receive FRP.

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## New Business

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It was agreed to hold the optional December meeting. Any requests for agenda topics may be sent to Kate Broyles. It was requested that Health and Safety be a standing agenda item.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 pm.

The December meeting, scheduled for December 14, 2020, was later canceled for lack of new agenda material.

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## Next Meeting

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Date: 1/11/2021

Time: 2:45 pm

Location: WJMS / Zoom