

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

January 2023

Date | 1/12/2023 | Meeting called to order by [NAME]

In Attendance

Christopher Bauer	Melissa Gutierrez	Dominique Prizgint
Susan Bergkamp	Chris Harrington	Tricia Samuelson
Darby Brady	Kim Halingstad	Allison Thayer
Elizabeth Claflin	Stephen Matschullat	Miranda Tucker

Approval of Minutes

The November 2022 minutes were circulated to the committee on November 11 for approval. Once the minutes have been approved (and any revisions made), they will be published on the school website.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report.

Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) Progress

Our school's 2022-2023 [Unified Improvement Plan](#) (UIP) has two major improvement points. These were presented to the committee for review:

MIP 1 - Professional learning communities within content departments. Structure focused on the teaching/learning cycle and teachers will: Plan, Teach, Assess, Reflect, Responsive Instruction.

Our departmental professional learning communities (PLCs) meet twice a month on Tuesdays, with smaller collaborative planning weekly. The department PLCs are facilitated by the instructional leadership team. Learning labs (teachers observe another classroom, then debrief as a group) continue for every department. Unit plans are being written and reviewed. Coaching cycles are in place for teachers and groups of teachers; these are about observation and feedback. Kim Halingstad and Tricia Samuelson have attended training on providing better, more focused feedback.

It was asked how the teachers feel about observations. Both classroom teachers at the meeting replied that they don't really notice them. One of the teachers added that they prefer drop-in visits as scheduled times make them feel like there is an expectation to put on a performance for the observer.

MIP 2 - Rigorous instruction and assessment drive instructional intervention and enrichment. The use of IXL and classroom instruction will fill gaps in building student skill sets.

Tricia Samuelson provided an overview of the IXL data our school has been collecting as part of using the program this school year. Observed trends include that students were choosing to work on English/Language Arts modules when given a choice and that we have lower participation among eighth grade students.

We are using IXL, a personalized instructional platform, so our school can track students' growth prior to CMAS testing and help students be prepared for testing. While we do not want to 'teach to the test', we want students to be able to effectively engage with testing, so the results accurately reflect their knowledge. Ms. Baker oversees the IXL programming for our school, with support from Ms. Samuelson.

Tools for students include goal monitoring sheets with plans for a schoolwide goal tracking poster and incentives. A growth celebration breakfast was held for students that showed significant growth; one is planned for the spring.

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Identified students have begun receiving high-dosage math tutoring through a district initiative with Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund I and II (ESSER) funds. These students, identified as being on the cusp of meeting or exceeding standards in testing, took their initial diagnostic test this week and will receive tutoring time three times a week through the end of April. The tutoring time is not being taken out of class time or as an elective, as some other schools have chosen to do. Ms. Hodges oversees the program for our school.

Support for classroom instruction will take the form of learning walks with district support, looking for instructional rigor and maximizing instructional time; feedback given to teachers; and peer observations for teachers.

CMAS testing

As participation rates trend lower statewide, we hope to reduce the number of testing refusals by inviting families to have a conversation when a refusal is received. They may decline that offer, but we want to open the door to communicate that CMAS testing is a valuable practice for students to increase comfort/reduce anxiety with testing, so they are more comfortable when they get to higher stakes tests, and is a piece of the data schools use to get a picture of the whole student.

We plan on communicating to families beginning in February, and multiple times throughout the spring, about what to expect, the amount of time spent testing during our test windows, and emphasizing the proportion of the school day spent testing compared to the instructional time that continues during CMAS.

It is planned to communicate specifically with families of students that receive testing accommodations what testing might look like specifically for their student(s).

We are working on a testing schedule to be less stressful for students. Last year's testing schedule allowed students without accommodations to leave after testing (early release) while students with extended time accommodations remained at school for the full day during CMAS. While it was mostly well-received, it caused a sense of isolation/separation for students with extended time accommodations.

2023-24 Budget

The state's [base funding](#) has been adjusted, increasing for elementary schools and reducing for middle and high schools. Combined with a reduction to the size equity factor our school has received for many years has us looking at an approximate cut of \$200,000 to the school's 2023-2024 budget.

It is likely that we cannot keep one teacher that is currently in a temporary position and may need to cut more for the 2023-2024 school year. A district hiring freeze and displacement of elementary teachers may impact our own hiring ability. We already have many teachers teaching more than one grade level or subject.

Electives classes may have to streamline options to be more generalized and offer fewer singleton classes (i.e., where a specific class is only offered once in the schedule). Student choice in electives may be impacted.

It was asked if our school is considered a small school. We used to be, but we are now closer to average for Jeffco.

It was asked if school funding is affected by dispensaries. No, it mostly comes from specific ownership tax on cars.

It was asked if cuts to central (district) staff would free up funding for anticipated school-level staff cuts. It might help for a few school-level positions, but not enough to impact all schools.

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It was noted that district budget is [available online](#). Community members can [sign up to speak at board of education meetings](#) or contact the superintendent's office if they would like to attend a [District Accountability Committee](#) meeting, which are held monthly at the Education Center.

Student Fees

At this point, fees have been pared down and we do not see a need for significantly increased fees.

It was asked how much the school has outstanding for Outdoor Lab fees – about \$4000. Our financial secretary Debbie Jessee works with families to set up payment plans so we aren't as impacted by unpaid student fee. We also have access to some at-risk funds that can be used toward unpaid Outdoor Lab fees.

It was asked if PTA can help with outstanding student fees. Yes, our PTA has provided a scholarship (sometimes a few) for 8th grade band and orchestra students to attend the Colorado West Invitational Music Performance Festival.

Open Forum

Transportation Issues

On Monday, January 9, a semi-truck accident closed US 285 between Foxton Road and Pine Junction. Families received multiple SchoolMessenger notifications within about an hour's span advising of the issue and listing the affected bus routes.

It was asked if the school has a plan for when bus routes are canceled due to emergencies. Students are held in the gymnasium or cafetorium (depending on the number of students) and supervised by licensed staff until families either pick up their students or make alternative arrangements for their students to be picked up.

The plan was not communicated in the SchoolMessenger notifications to families. In addition, the school had to wait on messaging from West Transportation and messaging guidance from the district.

The school will include messaging in the January 18 issue of the Weekly Wednesday Update regarding the plan for when bus routes are unexpectedly canceled. The messaging can also be added to the Welcome Guide on the school website and Family Handbook document.

2023-2024 School Start Times

Next year's [school start and end times](#) have been released. In the upcoming school year, our school day will start at 8:45 am and end at 3:45 pm. Our area elementary schools will start at 7:45 am and end at 2:45 pm, with some schools looking at 15 or more minutes between buses arriving and the start of school.

The meeting adjourned at 3:48 pm.

Next Meeting

Date: 2/2/2023

Time: 2:45 pm

Location: WJMS / Google Meet