

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

October 2023

Date | 10/23/2023 | *Meeting called to order by* Christopher Bauer

In Attendance

Christopher Bauer	Kim Halingstad	Abby Redwine
Susan Bergkamp	Tim Krug	Miranda Tucker
Melissa Gutierrez	Dominique Prizgint	

Introductions and New Business

It was agreed to skip introductions as all attendees had been present at the September meeting.

The September 2023 minutes, a draft of which was made available the day after the meeting, were briefly reviewed for acceptance. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the September 2023 minutes into record.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report.

October Count Results

Our annual October pupil count was about 482, down about 16 students from the budget projection. The trend is on par with the elementary schools in our articulation area. Our enrollment projection for the 2023-24 school year expects a slight increase in enrollment. While the lower-than-expected count does affect the amount of funding we receive for student-based budgeting, we have always done our best to save unspent funds to cushion future years. The mountain area schools have pooled funds to take out an ad in the *Canyon Courier* during the [Enroll Jeffco](#) 2024-2025 Round 1 enrollment window, which opens on December 5, 2023.

UIP Update

We have set math and reading goals for our [Unified Improvement Plan](#) (UIP). Kim Halingstad will share out the 2023-24 draft UIP once available.

Conversation with PTA about bullying

Kim attended the September 27th PTA general meeting. She reported that there were good conversations about ways to get more volunteers into the building. In response to families asking about whether the school can share out information about bullying incidents, the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) prevents staff from speaking about specific discipline incidents.

We have started the process of deploying the [No Place for Hate](#) program. Counselor Craig Enlund has already completed their first adult training and will be completing the second adult training soon. We have to create an application for student leaders, as the program is student-led. It was asked what the cost of the add-on staff training is; Kim will double-check on it but believes we have purchased that. It was suggested that PTA could include support for the No Place for Hate program as one of the goals for their upcoming Raise Craze fundraiser. Kim will speak with the PTA board about that after the meeting.

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

October 2023

As part of implementing No Place for Hate, we will work with Conifer High School to align activities planned for [Day Without Hate](#), observed in April.

It was noted that the Mizel Museum offers [free programming for schools](#) on cross-cultural understanding, social justice, and Holocaust education. Susan Bergkamp is interested in helping bring their programs to our school.

District SAC Survey

The annual SAC survey that all Jeffco school accountability committees complete is expected to be released in late November. It was agreed to work through the survey as a committee at the November meeting.

CMAS Results

Spring 2023 CMAS results have been released. Major themes identified to support continued student growth include communicating the value of increasing rigor and challenge when there are gaps from past years, communicating that it is okay for students to fail in the process when the end goal is growth, and discussing the value of letter grades at the middle school level relative to the value at the elementary or high school level.

A discussion of ways to support student growth focused on developing executive functioning skills. It was suggested to develop communication pieces about skills like time management, organization, and checking grades that can be echoed in ongoing communication. It was agreed that it is vital in middle school to acquire skills like using a to-do list, using an organizer, and setting reminders. An example given in the meeting was a parent that asks their student what they could do that evening to make their next day smoother, such as sending an email to a teacher to reduce the cognitive load on the student to remember to speak to that teacher the next day at school.

School Enrollment Survey

The district has a [School Enrollment Survey](#) open through Friday, November 17. The anonymous survey will inform the district about how families choose the school their student(s) attends and which school programs matter most to families. It was noted that while the district communication states the survey takes 10 to 15 minutes to complete, many people only need around 5 minutes to complete the survey. We encourage anyone interested to complete the survey but understand that the number and cadence of district surveys can be fatiguing.

New Business

Community Conversations with the Superintendent

Chris Bauer attended both the Conifer and Evergreen conversation on September 27 and the Bear Creek and Green Mountain conversation on October 11 and shared his takeaways from the events.

The Conifer event felt confrontational in tone and ran over its scheduled 90 minutes to a full two hours. Much of the first hour was about school security. Superintendent Dorland responded with information about the Jeffco Public Schools Safety Team and shared that the district is inventorying individual schools' camera systems to see what is needed where and develop a plan to address needed updates.

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

October 2023

There is a specific concern that Conifer High School is the only high school in the district that does not have a separate auditorium, instead having a cafetorium (its cafeteria has tiered flooring and a stage area). The school was supposed to receive an auditorium from the 2018 bond and capital improvement program, but it was cut due to emergent needs such as HVAC units that needed to be replaced in other schools. It was noted that Jeffco is among a few districts in Colorado whose mill levies are not maxed out and not tied to inflation, so it is possible that Conifer High School's auditorium may come from a future bond and mill levy ballot initiative.

Another concern raised at the Evergreen and Conifer community conversation are bus route cancellations. Families expressed that some routes are affected more often than others. At full capacity, West Transportation should have 53 drivers and they are currently operating with 19. In addition, a route in Conifer needs to be served with a smaller bus due to the road topography making it difficult to serve with a full-sized bus. It was noted that the district did not charge a bus fee this year due in response to the closures and consolidations of some underutilized elementary schools. It cost the district \$1.9 million to not have a bus fee this year.

In comparison, the Bear Creek and Green Mountain conversation felt calmer. Families provided feedback on hub stops (a system that reduces having buses going into all neighborhoods, instead picking up more students at a designated location); consistent AMP (arts, music, PE) offerings and teacher assignments; improving the equity of school instruction time (our district had a difference in school day length of up to 32 minutes between schools; it is now down to 18 minutes); a concern with Green Mountain High School leadership that was redirected to contact the community superintendent outside of the event; and the negative perception of Bear Creek High School. Rumors persist that the school has gangs and daily police visits, yet the school had no visits during the 2023-24 school year as of October 11. Such a negative reputation can affect school budget due to families living in the articulation area choice enrolling their student away from neighborhood school.

Furry culture concern

The issue was tabled for further discussion.

Open Forum

PTA Fall Fest

The PTA is hosting a student social event on Friday, October 27. Adult volunteers are needed to make the event a success! Please see the Weekly Wednesday Update for more information.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

Next Meeting

Date: 11/27/2023

Time: 4:00 pm

Location: WJMS / Google Meet