

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

September 2017

Date | 9/11/2017 | Meeting called to order by Sara Miller

In Attendance

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Baker	<input type="checkbox"/> Becky Brown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beth Bunchman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Cox	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Fennimore	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sara Gilloth
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melissa Gutierrez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kim Halingstad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Salesa Hancock
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patti MacLennan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sara Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clara Mizenko
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paul Pinaretta	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shea Robinson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John SeEVERS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kristy Sjogren	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kyle Stielow	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heather Swegle
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lynn Westfall	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bridget Williams	

Welcome and Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves with their name and role in relation to the school (staff, parent, or community member). First-time attendees at the meeting included Sara Gilloth, Salesa Hancock, and Paul Pinaretta, all parents of current students, and Clara Mizenko, a teaching intern with Patti MacLennan.

What is Accountability?

The school accountability committee is the only state-mandated committee at the school level that incorporates school administration, teachers and staff, families, and community stakeholders to discuss the School Improvement Plan, safety and security, school budget, and other items that may need to be brought up for discussion in an open setting.

Please reach out to Sara Miller, Kim Halingstad, or Becky Brown when you need something added to the agenda.

Handouts used by the committee were circulated:

- [Issue/Concern Form](#) - a printable form that anyone can complete and turn in to the office, then reviewed by the chair(s) and administration before being brought to the committee;
- [Bylaws](#);
- [Meeting norms](#); and
- Intent to participate form - an optional form for potential members to opt in for receiving agendas and minutes via e-mail and to be counted for voting when a vote becomes necessary.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report. Becky Brown will be returning part-time later this week, then be cleared to work full-time in the next few weeks. She hopes to have her other hip replacement done closer to Thanksgiving so the holiday break can be part of her recovery time.

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Enrollment: We have right around 540 students right now, compared to about 560 at this point in other years. The 8th grade class is very small, about 160, and the 6th and 7th grade classes each have closer to 200 students.

Staff changes: We have several great new hires this year, including counselor Jen Baker, sixth grade ELA teacher Devon Bar Hoover, PE teacher Stephen Johnson, social worker Bridget Williams, and computer applications teacher Jason Wooldridge. We have chosen to offer Computer Applications as a required-once elective for sixth grade students to help our students become comfortable with many of the digital tools they will be using in middle and high school. This allows core classes to focus more on content.

Back-to-School Night: This year we tried a format that allows families to follow their student's schedule(s). We have heard uniformly positive feedback in response. Sara asked the meeting attendees if there was anything they wished they had learned at the event:

- Knowing where a student's lunch falls in their schedule, so families can encourage their student for planning the best times for bathroom breaks and locker visits. Teachers in periods just before and after lunch can say "students go to lunch from here" and "students come here from lunch".
- Knowing that Advise is shorter than other class periods.
- Unified communication on what students are expected to know or be able to do at the end of a course.

UIP Update

A single-page summary of the school's 2016-2017 CMAS data was provided as a handout; it is appended following the end of the minutes. Our students exceeded state and district performance at all grade levels. Writing and math will continue to be in our School Improvement Plan goals.

It was asked why our math scores trend downward in 8th grade math. Existing gaps in student knowledge become apparent in Math 8 and Algebra. As we enter the third year with this format of test, we have gotten better at finding and addressing gaps in response to areas where students have struggled with testing.

Clarification of the multiple 7th and 8th grade math options was requested. We have multiple math pathways based on a student's math placement needs; the accelerated pathways allow students to take algebra or algebra and geometry in middle school. This is assessed by a combination of a student's CMAS scores (high Meets or Exceeds), MAP scores (\geq 80th percentile), if a student's ALP includes the Quantitative strength area (which is preferred but not required), and the student's results on the WJMS math placement test. A copy of the math pathways is appended following the end of the minutes.

An explanation of median growth percentiles was requested. If a student scored at a certain value, they are compared to other students with similar scores the prior year. A growth percentile of 50 percent or higher shows good growth. All of our scores went up in the 2016-2017 school year; our staff worked last year to norm the vocabulary we use about writing to support our thinking.

We will dig more deeply into the data and how it can be practically applied in our classrooms at the October meeting. It was asked if we can address math alignment with elementary to high school at the meeting; this will be included on the agenda.

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New Business

Social-Emotional and Counseling

The social-emotional and counseling team were asked to present to the accountability committee. Their motto this year is WISE: Whole Child, Inspiration, Support, and Empowerment.

Social-Emotional Learning Specialist David Fennimore spoke to what the team has planned for students with social and emotional development. While it sounds like it could be touchy-feely, a lot of the teaching goes hand-in-hand with academics. For example, the SEL competency of self-awareness helps students see what they are good at, how to improve on it, and feel optimistic about the future. We talk about behaviors we want to represent ourselves, that represent a model student, and how to integrate those ideas. The school has purchased the [School-Connect](#) curriculum, which includes lessons that will be taught every other week through Advise classes, so students will be receiving this along with academic support to build up their social and emotional skills. We want to be able to support all students at all times and we have a strong team to do that. We look forward to having family support for our mental health mission.

Counselor Shea Robinson (6th grade M-Z and 7th grade) wants students to know we hold their social skills in just as high esteem as their grades. We act as guides, but students are doing the work and we want to encourage them to make the best choice. We are intentional in our language and are working to be very positive in that language with students.

Social Worker Bridget Williams works with students with more intensive needs, such as students with Individualized Education Program plans (IEPs) and in the Significant Support Needs program. We bridge a lot of gaps to support our students and connect them to services.

Counselor Jen Baker (6th grade A-L and 8th grade) elaborated on the empowerment piece of the team's motto. We want to help our students build the skills they need to be successful and find relevancy to help them connect that to their own skills. We are practicing restorative justice, building a culture of respect and knowing others well enough to hurt one another less. We also run the WEB program - Where Everybody Belongs - to ease the transition to middle school for sixth graders and give eighth graders the opportunity to lead. We want to deliver our mission by building relationships with students, families, teachers and staff, and the community, through interactions from one-on-one to whole class, whole school, and community level.

The team will be delivering an online counseling needs assessment and in-person anti-bullying programming in the next few weeks through social studies classes. They will be going into classrooms every month covering different topics. If there's a topic you want the team to cover, please reach out and let them know.

Research has shown that every hour of work done on social-emotional learning, you get 11 hours' return on it. There is additional data on its effect on grades and test scores on [David's webpage](#).

Health/Wellness policy

Kim Halingsstad spoke about the updated food guidelines that have come from district, state, and federal requirements. She brought copies of two handouts from [Jeffco Healthy Schools](#):

- [Wellness Policy Requirements](#)
- [Family and Classroom Shared Food Resource](#)

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The school continues to have three exemptions usable for events, such as the school carnival. The PTA's school store also takes the guidelines into consideration.

Students are allowed snacks in middle school with a few exceptions: no snacks in science classrooms or computer labs, and students may only bring water into classrooms or in the hallways. (Other drinks can be kept in lockers until lunch.) We encourage families to send healthy snacks with their students and be mindful of allergies. It was noted that many families felt there was a disconnect at Back-to-School Night about no snacks due to allergies.

Sara will relay meeting information for families to attend the district wellness meeting and offer feedback.

[Jeffco Start Time Survey](#)

Sara reported an update on the start time survey from an involved party in the Evergreen articulation area. She summarized for the meeting that results from the spring survey will be communicated soon, there is overwhelming support for changing the start time, and that the district is planning a feasibility study. The superintendent is supportive if a cost-neutral solution can be found.

[Good News / Great Things](#)

Many seventh graders seem to be very happy this year. Not all are, but we are working on it!

[Open Forum](#)

A few concerns were expressed about the dress code. Bandanas cannot be worn as a hair accessory as a district policy; scarves and similar items are allowed, but bandanas are specifically prohibited. It was asked if dress code can be enforced more consistently as students are seeing peers get away with leggings with tops that do not completely cover the wearer's bottom and belly shirts. Dress code can be discussed at a future meeting.

We are not a closed committee; please feel free to invite anyone that may be interested in attending future meetings!

Meeting adjourned at 3:39 pm.

[Next Meeting](#)

Date: 10/9/2017

Time: 2:30 pm

Location: WJMS Library

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Appendix 1: CMAS Data

WJMS CMAS DATA

2016 - 2017

ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

WE EXCEEDED STATE AND JEFFCO PERFORMANCE

ALL GRADE LEVELS

ELA 6, 7, and 8 (includes Science and Social Studies Literacy)

Math 6 and 7, Algebra, and Geometry

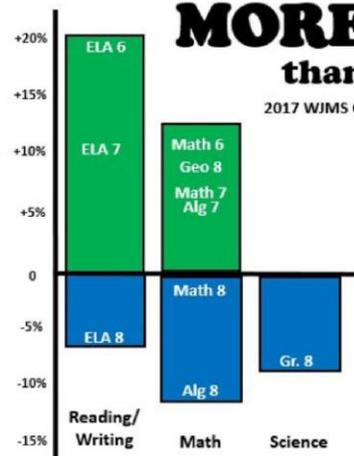


8th Grade Science

ACHIEVEMENT TRENDS

MORE Ups than Downs

2017 WJMS CMAS Achievement Trends



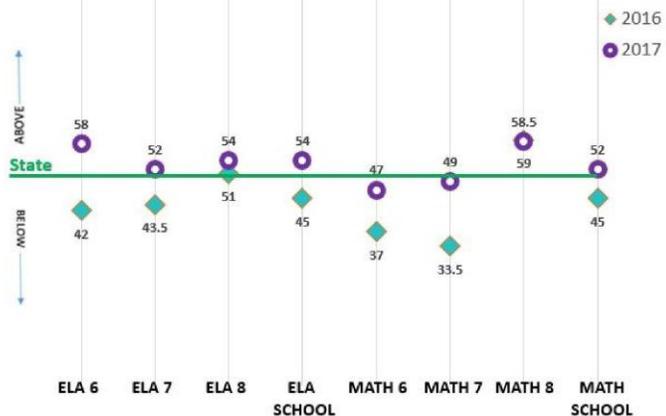
PERFORMANCE RATING

WJMS received a MEETS rating in the areas of Academic Achievement, Academic Growth, and Test Participation Rate



GROWTH

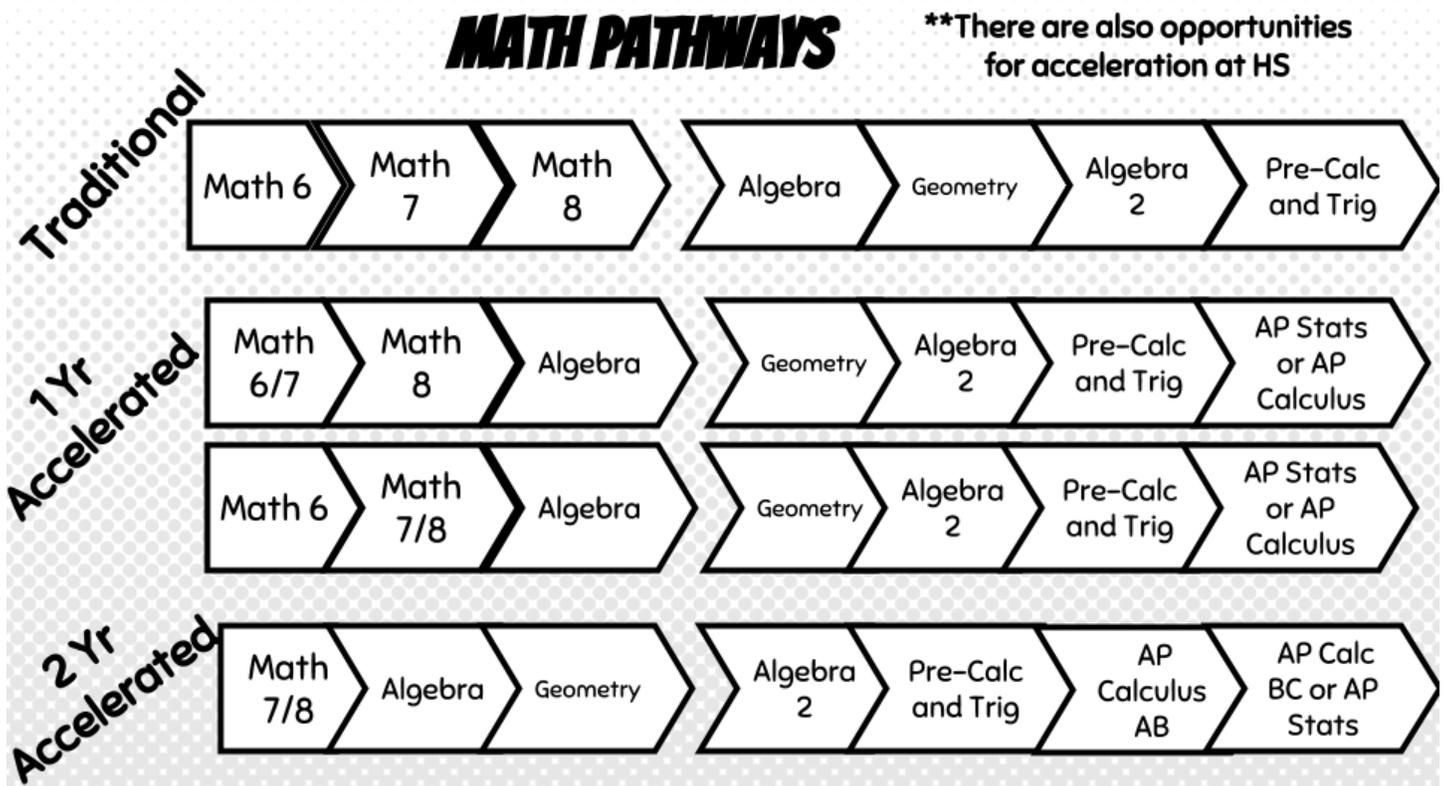
WJMS CMAS GROWTH (Median Growth Percentiles)



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Appendix 2: Math Pathways



(Source: Elementary Math Presentation, given by Mika Melvin to Conifer-area elementary schools in spring 2017)