

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

November 2017

Date | 11/13/2017 | Meeting called to order by Sara Miller

In Attendance

<input type="checkbox"/> Jennifer Baker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Becky Brown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Beth Bunchman
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Cohan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steve Cox	<input type="checkbox"/> David Fennimore
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sara Gilloth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melissa Gutierrez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kim Halingstad
<input type="checkbox"/> Salesa Hancock	<input type="checkbox"/> Diane Lowry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patti MacLennan
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sara Miller	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clara Mizenko	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janet Moore
<input type="checkbox"/> Paul Pinarretta	<input type="checkbox"/> Shea Robinson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Seevers
<input type="checkbox"/> Kristy Sjogren	<input type="checkbox"/> Kyle Stielow	<input type="checkbox"/> Tammy Story
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heather Swegle	<input type="checkbox"/> Lynn Westfall	<input type="checkbox"/> Bridget Williams

Approval of Minutes

The October minutes were posted to the school website and the link distributed via e-mail. (The file was not sent as an attachment due to file size.) There was no vote to accept the October minutes.

Principal's Report

Becky Brown gave the principal's report. She began with two staff update items:

- 7th & 8th grade teacher Emily Wiechec had her baby last week. Cindy Klinker will be her long-term substitute beginning Wednesday, November 15.
- Becky Brown will be having her second hip surgery this Friday, November 17 and be out for 2-3 weeks before returning part-time shortly before winter break. She will be sending out a School Messenger so the community is informed of the situation.

We had a tremendous turnout for the Veterans Day celebration last week. Thank you to Amy Gutierrez Baker and Laura Garrison for their work organizing the event. We have a lockdown drill scheduled in December; staff have been notified in advance of the date and approximate time.

UIP Update

A single-page handout summarizing the school's 2017-2018 Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) was circulated; it is appended after the end of the minutes. Our goal is to increase the academic achievement percentile for students that have Individual Education Plans (about 13-14% of our overall student body) and students that are eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program (about 18% of our student body; there is some overlap with students that have IEPs) to improve by 3% in writing and 4% in math. We have found in the past that what works for targeted groups usually works for all students.

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It was asked how interested parties could see the entire UIP document. They can make an appointment with Mrs. Brown or Mrs. Halingstad, who can log into the Colorado Department of Education's website and pull the action steps for our plan. The total document is about 24 pages.

Problem-Based Learning Question

It was asked who comes up with Problem-Based Learning (PBL) units and how they work. Every core subject plans for one PBL unit per trimester; some are cross-curricular. Teachers plan with the support of district-level subject and PBL experts, then plan within the guidelines of curriculum and existing PBL parameters.

Follow-up questions included whether we are increasing our use of art in PBL units since we are a STEAM school (we are working on that) and whether it was clear what 7th grade students were supposed to get from The Martian PBL unit. It was asked if the student that was not clear on the expectation had checked teachers' websites; this was unknown. PBL work shifts the cognitive load onto the student, which works better for some students than others.

It is an expectation for teachers this year to communicate rubrics, intermediate and final deadlines, and other PBL unit expectations via their websites as well as in classes. We want families to understand that core concepts are not being skipped or compacted to accommodate Problem-Based Learning.

The committee will take a deeper dive into PBL at the January meeting.

Culture and Climate Issues

A few recent issues surrounding culture and climate were brought to the meeting for discussion.

Discipline

We have had a recent uptick in students with "vaping" or e-cigarette devices. There are consequences for students that bring these devices on a bus or campus as the items are considered smoking paraphernalia, regardless of whether the liquid in the devices contains nicotine. We are asking parents to talk with their students about these devices and possible health risks thereof. Parents are also encouraged to speak with their students about not trying alcohol during middle school as we have had a few alcohol-related issues this year.

Office of Civil Rights report

A Denver television station covered the Office of Civil Rights investigation report last week and the coverage was discussed on local community groups on social media. The news report suggested that the issues were pervasive and that the OCR report was not complete. If anyone has concerns about the issue, they may contact the school.

Student Behavior in the Community

A new frozen-yogurt business in Aspen Park posted security images of youth making poor behavior choices on social media. We cannot control what students do once they are off school grounds. Businesses need to contact the sheriff's office when students are misbehaving in public places. School administration can contact parents if the business identifies the student.

It is difficult when students do not have a safe place to go after school other than businesses. This happens in other communities as well, but the difference is that fewer students go to other students' homes after school due to geographic distance. We have great kids and they sometimes make poor choices, but students need to be called on those choices, not trashed on social media.

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We have looked at after-school programming options but money is an issue – e.g., we have been working with Boys and Girls Club, but getting that off the ground requires funding. We need to offer students opportunities but that requires adults to do the work, find funding, and arrange space. A parent asked if the committee can look at the feasibility of a public-private partnership to do something like building on the school property, but work like park and recreation districts do with other schools. This could be a great long-term option.

We would like parents to encourage their students not to go out to businesses after school without an adult. We also want to encourage families to patronize the businesses during times that students are having issues to dissuade students from making poor choices.

Dress Code

This was tabled for discussion to a future meeting.

Open Forum

Start Time Task Force Update

Dan Cohan was asked to provide an update on the Start Time Task Force; an e-mail was sent to our community members last week. The mountain area task force did modeling using West Jefferson Elementary School to look at how bus routes would work with early elementary and later middle and high school start times. It is possible this would require a different bus route model, like RTD's Park-N-Ride consolidated stops, compared to the current school bus routes that go through neighborhoods. Dr. Glass has looked at the mountain area modeling and expressed interest in looking at the start time issue at a district level. There will be a lot of planning with an expected first meeting in February 2018; if anything does change, it would not happen before the 2019-2020 school year. Interested parents may contact Julie Maus, who coordinated the mountain area task force, or Dan Cohan.

Meeting adjourned at 3:34 pm.

Next Meeting

Date: 1/8/2018

Time: 2:30 pm

Location: WJMS Library

WJMS UIP 2017-2018

Goal: To increase the academic achievement percentile of students with IEPs and students that are eligible for free or reduced lunch by 3% in writing and 4% in math.



FOCUS

Students will support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence, using accurate, credible sources to demonstrate an understanding of the topic.



On grade-level tasks, in major content strands, students will construct viable arguments, critique the reasoning of others, and attend to precision when making mathematical statements. (Math Practice Standards 3, 6)



Major Improvement Strategy #1:

Problem Based Learning

1

Teachers will have **PBL planning time** throughout the year, including early release days, staff meeting time, and up to two release days. Teachers will submit PBL unit plans twice a year.



Major Improvement Strategy #2: Differentiated Professional Learning

2

Teachers will engage in **differentiated professional learning** around PBL instructional practices, writing instruction, social-emotional learning, differentiated instruction, and choice sessions. Teachers can choose professional learning aligned to their goals and needs.



Teachers will **reflect on instructional practices** in PBL using the planning templates and teaching rubric. Reflections will be shared with administration.



Teachers will engage in **differentiated professional learning** around PBL instructional practices.

Evaluation team (Administration, Achievement Director, Evaluation Coaches) will do **classroom walk-throughs** to examine trends and set goals with teachers around research-based instructional strategies.



Major Improvement Strategy #3: Writing and Reasoning with Feedback

3

Teachers will **collect and evaluate writing samples** multiple times through the year in order to see trends in student writing and/or set individualized goals for writing.



Teachers will engage in **differentiated professional learning** around writing instruction and/or giving feedback.



Teachers will **confer with students, offer differentiated writing lessons, and/or participate in common scoring conferences** to help students set goals, measure progress, and improve achievement.

