

WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

September 2024

Date | 9/23/2024 | Meeting called to order by Christopher Bauer

In Attendance

Allison Barker	Hal Grieb	Myetta Hoover
Christopher Bauer	Melissa Gutierrez	Miranda Tucker
Ashley Grieb	Kim Halingstad	Dominique van Noordenberg

Introductions and Minutes

Attendees briefly went around the meeting and introduced themselves. All attendees also attended the August meeting.

The August 2024 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 August 2024 minutes into record.

Old Business

SAC Calendar

It was noted that the fourth Monday monthly meeting date would put the May meeting on Memorial Day, and after the end of the school year for students. Moving the May meeting to the third Monday, May 19, would put the meeting during the last week of classes. It was agreed to move the meeting to May 12 and review whether there is a need to have a May meeting at the April meeting.

Principal's Report

Kim Halingstad gave the principal's report.

Enrollment

Our school has 498 enrolled students as of September 23, which is just below our projected enrollment of 499. This is down from the 506 reported at the August meeting due to a data cleanup, correcting items such as students that moved but had not yet completed a transcript request for transfer to their new school as of the August meeting.

CMAS Snapshot / School Performance Framework Data

Our school's 2023-2024 CMAS snapshot is available in [SchoolView](#). A summary of our School Performance Framework data was shared as a handout and is appended at the end of the September minutes as 2023-2024 School Performance Framework Data.

School performance ratings are based on two types of testing data, achievement and growth. Achievement is the percentage of students that meet or exceed expectations on CMAS testing (English Language Arts/Literacy, Math, and 8th grade Science). Growth is measured in a value called the Median Growth Percentile, which compares students at our school to other students nationwide that scored similarly the previous year to compare year-over-year growth. We want all students to show growth, even students that exceed expectations on testing. It is not atypical for growth on testing to plateau in middle school.

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Our final 2024 performance rating is 70.7% of points earned, which maintains our school on a Performance Plan.

It was noted that last year we saw a strong disruption in sixth grade scores. It was asked when last year's sixth graders were affected by remote learning during the COVID lockdown – second and third grade.

We had issues at different grade levels last year we believe to be due to changes in staff and a lack of cohesiveness in English/Language Arts learning, which has changed as we pilot the [Savvas myPerspectives](#) curriculum. We are hopeful that the focus on short pieces rather than whole-class novels will help students, although there are still options for classes to read an entire novel together.

Student Leadership Advisory Committee Update

The first Student Leadership Advisory Committee meeting is expected toward the end of the week of September 30. It has taken some time to identify students that are interested in participating on the committee.

School Resource Officer Role

Our new School Resource Officer, Deputy Dave Warner, has started at our school this week.

It was asked at the August meeting for the sheriff's office to clarify expectations for the School Resource Officer's role and interaction with students. Kim will follow up on that.

An attendee asked what a law enforcement officer can do with students that is not what would be done by school administration or counseling. A large part of the school resource officer program is for students to have the opportunity to develop positive interactions with and view of law enforcement.

Increase in inappropriate behavior off-campus and at King Soopers

We are continuing to hear reports of students engaging in concerning behaviors in the neighborhood and at King Soopers. A letter was sent to families via SchoolMessenger on September 14 about the situation; a parent noted that the letter gave them enough knowledge to reply no to their student wanting to walk to King Soopers after school.

Kim has spoken with residents of in the neighborhood around the school and shared strategies that they can use, such as taking photographs that can be shared with the sheriff's office. She noted that she learned that students cannot be ticketed for trespassing unless the property they are on has "no trespassing" signs displayed.

School administration will continue to assist law enforcement by reviewing security footage from businesses to help identify students and give information to the sheriff's office to issue tickets and/or file charges as appropriate. Businesses can continue to say that students cannot bring backpacks inside, and we may have local businesses say no middle schoolers without adult accompaniment (this has happened in the past).

The committee briefly discussed that behaviors may be exacerbated by herd mentality and crowd behavior. It was asked how we can discuss the long-term outcomes of actions with students. A parent noted that in spring 2024, we heard school and district responses to safety concerns at our school, but not actionable information about how families can have conversations with their students about consequences. Kim stated that principals had a presentation by doctors from Children's Hospital Colorado about the adolescent brain and asked if that would be helpful for families? It was suggested that the school could relay information, like conversation starters, for families to use with their students. PTA could sponsor a dinner-and-learn event with a speaker and a meal for families.

Cyber bullying and school safety threats

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The recent uptick in cyberbullying that an email was sent to families on September 17 about is still being investigated. An update will be provided when there is new information.

Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)

A draft copy of the 2024-25 Unified Improvement Plan was shared at the meeting. The Student Performance Priority Summary from the Plan is as follows:

Math Growth - Overall Math growth Meets with an MGP of 51.0. (6th grade MGP 30, 7th grade MGP 65, 8th grade MGP 58). While our overall achievement Exceeds, students are not demonstrating consistent math growth across grade levels. Although we met our goal from the 2023-2024 school year in 7th and 8th grade, we did not meet it in 6th grade. This shows inconsistencies in math instruction and implementation of Illustrative Math across grade levels. We plan to strengthen the instruction across all grade levels, keeping the 7th and 8th grade MGP 55 or higher and increasing the 6th grade MGP for an overall MGP of 55 or higher.

ELA Growth - Overall ELA growth was Approaching with an MGP of 47. (6th grade MGP 44, 7th grade MGP 57, 8th grade MGP 35). This was not a specific goal for WJMS in the 2023-2024 school year. While our overall achievement Exceeds, students are not demonstrating growth in ELA content and skills at an appropriate level to maintain those achievement levels. With a new curriculum resource, we plan to strengthen the instruction across all grade levels for an overall MGP of 55 or higher.

Belonging - On the Panorama Student Survey in 2023-2024, WJMS students rated their overall Sense of Belonging at 35% which is equivalent to the Jefferson County School District rating. However, having only a third of our students state that they feel they belong at WJMS is not acceptable. Research shows that students who feel they belong and matter to staff will learn better. Therefore, our goal is to increase the overall percentage for Sense of Belonging to 40% in our first year and to 45% in our second year.

The goals were discussed in more detail. A math teacher was added this year as part of strengthening math growth. The English Language Arts department is working to align their themes as they use the new myPerspectives curriculum. While the overall Sense of Belonging score from the student survey is close to the district average, our school does not find the score acceptable.

The scores on individual questions in the student survey suggest a mismatch between students feeling teachers have high expectations of them and students feeling teachers know them. It was asked if we can build on the questions to do our own school-level survey to ask students what we can do to help them feel a stronger sense of belonging. Yes, and this can be incorporated into the UIP before it is finalized.

One survey question particularly affected the Sense of Belonging score: How much do you matter to others at this school? Attendees reflected on how it is difficult in adolescence to contextualize situations and understanding that a conflict with a teacher often isn't simply the student being picked on. This is why the school is doing progress monitoring, interviews during the school year, and publishing our internal survey questions to families. Any way to solicit feedback from students for what would create meaningful change for them is encouraged.

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Chris Bauer will prepare and send out a Google Form by October 4 for committee members to approve or not approve of the 2024-2025 Unified Improvement Plan, noting that additional clarifying details will be requested for any non-approval votes.

New Business

Securly

An agenda item was requested to discuss when the school would be sending out information about Securly, which manages filtering for students' school-issued devices when they are away from school. Families can use the SecurlyHome app to monitor and control their students' internet and app activity on district devices at home. Once set up, families can opt in to receiving weekly or daily emails or use the app to monitor their students' internet use.

A parent stated that not providing information to families on how to monitor students' internet access is not in our best interest. Families receive information on how to check grades and student attendance, so they should also receive information on how to use SecurlyHome.

Information can be published with the Weekly Wednesday Update throughout the school year, and our librarian Amy Baker can be asked to create a video to be shown at Back-to-School Night and linked to throughout the year.

It was asked if we teach cybersecurity principles at the middle school level. The district provides resources around specific digital citizenship topics that may be incorporated into learning opportunities and family conversations; our school delivers this through the school library.

The following topics were tabled to the October meeting for discussion:

- Student/family handbook revisions
- What was learned of what the School Resource Officer should be doing from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office
- Meeting norms and bylaws

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 pm.

Next Meeting

Date: 10/28/2024

Time: 4:15 pm

Location: WJMS / Google Meet

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Appendix: 2023-2024 School Performance Framework Data

2024 School Performance Framework:

- Overall Points 70.7/100 - Performance School
- Academic Achievement - 84.7 % of points earned
- Academic Growth - 61.4 % of points earned

Mathematics

- Achievement:
 - Overall Rating- Exceeds
 - 6th grade M/E** 39%
 - 7th grade M/E 52%
 - 8th grade M/E 56%
- Academic Growth:
 - Overall Rating -Meets MGP* 51
 - 6th grade-MGP 30
 - 7th grade-MGP 65
 - 8th grade-MGP 58

English Language Arts

- Achievement:
 - Overall Rating- Exceeds
 - 6th grade M/E** 57%
 - 7th grade M/E 70%
 - 8th grade M/E 65%
- Academic Growth:
 - Overall Rating- Approaches MGP* 47
 - 6th grade-MGP 44
 - 7th grade-MGP 56
 - 8th grade-MGP 35

* MGP - Median Growth Percentile: Student growth compared to other students nationwide that scored similarly the prior school year.

**M/E - Meets/Exceeds: Percentage of students who Met or Exceeded proficiency on CMAS.