

# WJMS ACCOUNTABILITY MINUTES

November 2025

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*Date* | 11/11/2025 | *Meeting called to order by* Christopher Bauer

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## In Attendance

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Christopher Bauer	Tonia Lopez	JP Squires
Melissa Gutierrez	Susan Morgan	Dominique van Noordenberg
Anita Lizzi	Alan Skerl	Kari Vernon

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## Introductions and Minutes

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All attendees in the library and online had previously attended meetings. Four people attended via Google Meet. Attendees were reminded that anyone interested in being a voting member for the 2025-2026 school year should complete the [School Accountability Intent to Participate Form](#) for the committee's records.

The minutes from the October 2025 meeting were briefly reviewed for acceptance. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to accept the October minutes into record.

Neither our new community superintendent Tom Burns nor our new District Accountability Committee member were available to attend the November meeting. Both parties have a standing invitation to future meetings.

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## Principal's Report

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Dr. Tonia Lopez gave the principal's report.

### [Watch D.O.G.S. program](#)

About ten parents attended the recent Watch D.O.G.S. kickoff, which the school and PTA are jointly restarting. We have had a parent volunteer on campus nearly every day since the kickoff event. Volunteers are welcome at pickup or drop-off, during lunches, or whatever part of day they would like to volunteer. Our coordinator is Keith Alexander and volunteers are not limited to only dads. Volunteers receive a t-shirt.

There is a link to sign up, volunteers come to the school on the day they have signed up to receive a brief orientation, a Raptor badge and Watch D.O.G.S. badge, and then they're off and going. It was asked if we have a few-week turnaround time on background checks as we have in the past; no, we are using the Raptor visitor management system to handle that.

When our school hosted students from West Jefferson Elementary for Halloween activities, we had Watch D.O.G.S. volunteers from both schools.

Mr. Keith got an extra cheer at our school's Veterans Day assembly today.

### [Disciplinary process questions](#)

We have had some questions from families about how disciplinary actions are handled. If an issue escalates to the office or the situation is dangerous, JP Squires leads discipline process.

We cannot tell families the outcome for involved students. We can advise that it was taken care of. Examples of "taken care of" include an office visit, a restorative conversation, lunch detention, or out-of-school suspension (typically only used when there is harm to another student, the building, or major disrespect to an adult).

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If you read or hear that something happened, the school cannot share what specifically happened to other students, only tell families about their own student. Disciplinary records are among the types of student education records protected by FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, a federal law that grants students and parents rights to access their student's records and gives them control over the disclosure of that information.

We do have steps to follow and do participate in discipline processes. Nearly every time, families are very supportive of discipline actions taken. School staff investigate, use reports and videos to support decision-making.

It was asked if staff use Infinite Campus to log issues; yes, teachers and staff have access to a tab in Campus to document issues (disrespect, behavior, etc.) and nudge the user to document how they contacted family to advise of the issue. This can help reduce families being surprised by possible issues. The information is summarized in a dashboard so teams can see trends in grade level or team meetings and plan as a group to take proactive actions such as assigned seating or consider supports such as check-in/check-out, small group interventions, etc.

It was asked if vaping is an issue we are seeing. The number of students we have seen vaping has gone down drastically compared to past years. We think it might be related to education about safety. We see that students caught with devices often bring them from home. It is still an issue, but less common at our school in recent years. It was much more common 6+ years ago.

When students are caught with vaping supplies, the consequences are an automatic one-day in-school suspension, assigned research on vaping, meeting with the area nurse to have a conversation about vaping, and taking a form home for an adult family member signature agreeing that the next time their student has that issue it will result in an out-of-school suspension. When an item contains more than just flavored fluid or nicotine, it becomes a more significant issue due to illicit content.

It was asked what the process is when a classroom is regularly seeing behavior issues. The first tier is having the teacher address the issue with an action such as assigned seating. If that does not resolve the issue, the second tier is to have a counselor come in and work with the class about culture of care, and the third tier would be to have an administrator observe the class with the issue more frequently and see if additional coaching is needed.

There can be students that have disruptive behavior in some classes but not in others, which might be a classroom culture issue. How can we help that student behave in that class like they do in other classes? How can we help a teacher with management when there is a class with squirrely behavior?

It was asked if a parent can bring up issues they hear about and to whom they should. It's fine to email Dr. Lopez.

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## 2026-2027 Budget Survey

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Dr. Lopez presented a slide deck for school accountability committees on our district's Budget Reduction Blueprint process. (Copies of the presentations given at school board meetings are available on the [Budget Reduction Blueprint](#) page on the district website.) The contents are summarized following this meeting's minutes as *Appendix: Budget Reduction Blueprint presentation*.

Our current enrollment is 485 students, which is ten students below the number the 2025-2026 budget anticipated. The difference was covered from carry forward, but it needs to be kept in mind for next year's budget.

The percentage of students eligible for Free & Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) was 7% below the expected rate. It was asked if the percentage went down because of [Healthy School Meals for All program](#); yes, in part. We get numbers

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from FRL applications (the Student Benefits Application) and Medicaid enrollment. When the Healthy School Meals for All program rolled out, the completion of that annual benefits paperwork went down and skewed data collection going forward. We want to improve rate of completion for Student Benefits Applications next year.

An attendee asked if the staff in school-based resources budgeted by departments were supported by state and federal funding. Most funding for special education providers does come from the federal government and is paid to districts. Safety and Security is not included in the reductions.

Administration will have the draft budget in January, and impacted staff will be notified around that time. This could be 1 – 2 positions in our school. Dr. Lopez noted that we have an unhired .5 FTE position in the 2025-2026 budget that might be able to ease some of our cuts.

Internal hiring activities means that affected staff will be given the opportunity to apply for other positions within the district before we hire from outside for anticipated open positions.

It was asked if we know what next year's sixth grade enrollment might look like. Most area elementary numbers seem to be pretty level, plus or minus about 15. A few years ago, we had a class of 205, but most years we see around 170 students per grade at our school.

It was asked if the school receives any extra financial resources when homeschooled families use school services, like math classes and band classes. Per Colorado Department of Education [guidance](#), home-schooled students enrolled in homeschool enrichment programs are eligible for a maximum of part-time funding statewide.

It was asked if the school advertises in area newspapers about our school information night. Mountain area principals have done a shared advertisement in the past. It was asked if the school advertises on social media.

It was asked if the PTA can help with some areas of the budget; yes, but not with funding staff. It was noted that staff laptops and student Chromebooks come out of the school-based budget.

It was asked if we know when there will be more information or specifics about what the budget impacts are going to be? The Operational Leadership Team is working on it and will have more to present in January. The school expects to get the percentage that must be cut next week. The district is trying to get schools to identify where they can cut and save rather than making broad cuts.

The committee's shared priorities for budgeting: class size, electives, digital teacher-librarian, sports and activities.

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm.

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## Next Meeting

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Date: 1/13/2026

Time: 4:15 pm

Location: WJMS / Google Meet

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## Appendix: Budget Reduction Blueprint presentation

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### Our Purpose Today

What we will do today:

- Understand what department budgets fund, and how reduction targets will be set
- Gather your input on our most important priorities

What we will not do today:

- Know what exactly will be reduced, and how that might impact our school
- Know our specific school reduction or budget

### School-Based Resources Budgeted by Departments

Departments fund critical staffing and resources for schools including people and items such as:

- CTE [Career and Technical Education] programming staff and resources for middle and high schools.
- Mental health staff: Social-Emotional Learning Specialist, school counselors, and mental health and suicide preventing teaching curriculum, school psychologists and social workers.
- Special education staff: 504 coordinators, learning specialists to support students with IEPs, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, braillists, interpreters and tutors, paraeducators.
- Health Services staff and equipment: school nurses, vision and hearing screening staff, medication and first aid equipment.
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education (CLDE) staff and equipment: CLDE teachers and tutors, Newcomer tutors, Dual-language instructional coaches.
- Family Community Partnership staff and resources: Bilingual interpreters, translators, language line support.
- Transportation Services vehicles and maintenance: Busing staff, services and vehicles.
- Custodial and School Building Services: School building maintenance, repairs, construction management and planning.
- Music, PE, Theatre and Visual Arts Coordination: Central leadership support to school programs.
- General Support: Guest (substitute) teachers for schools
- Math and English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum: material and licenses for core literary and math curricula

### Reduction Target

At the September 3, 2025 Board Study Session, district staff recommended a minimum \$45 million reduction target and seeking at least \$15 million in new annual revenue for capital uses.

We will strive to preserve resources that are closest to the classroom. Reduction targets will be lower in budgets (both departmental and school) that provide direct classroom instruction.

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## Department Reductions

Across all departments, budget allocations will be reduced by approximately ~\$26m. Department reductions will vary based on proximity to classroom instruction.

2% to 4%: Department budgets that most directly serve students

4.1% to 7.9%: Department budgets that serve students, but less directly instruction

8% to 10%: Department budgets that support staff and schools more indirectly and/or serve compliance purposes

\*Most, but not all division reduction targets do not exceed 10%. Note that many divisions provide services delivered to students and in schools; departments are not necessarily “central” or “administration”.

## Why Schools Need to Know What Departments are Doing

September 2025: Activate 2025-26 cost-saving measures

November/December 2025: Impacted Department-Based Staff Notified (this and following items are marked “Processes aligned with negotiated agreements”)

January/February/March 2026: Impacted School-Based Staff Notified

February/March/April 2026: Internal Hiring Activities for 2026-27

June 2026: Reductions Effective

Since some roles and services in schools are funded by department budgets, identifying department reductions in late 2025 lets principals see what’s changing and shift their school budgets accordingly to cover essential services.

## Our Next Steps

We are committed to timely communication and shared decision making.

Develop a survey to clarify priorities

January present our current best thinking to staff & SAC

## Your feedback and priorities

Thinking ahead: What are the most important priorities you want to share as we enter our annual budgeting process?