

School Accountability Committee – SAC
Chipeta Elementary School WebEx and In-person
May 3, 2022

Attendance

Sarah Scott
Danielle Snelson
Ian Ratz
Jamie Wright
Jennifer Layher
Arin Holecek
Lindsey Szymaszek
Cara Woundy
Amelie Riendl
Lisa Siebert
Manu Chelladurat
CSD11 School Board President Parth Melpakam

A. Call to Order at 5:30

B. Welcome Ian Ratz

C. Reading of Minutes: Minutes approved

D. Administration

At the end of May a group of staff are going to create the One Plan. We want the voices of our community to fold into the One Plan.

Engage with our Community: Our school can feel isolated from the community and neighborhood around us. We have developed a good relationship with some members of the Mountain Shadows Community. They have been promoting the Bookfair fundraiser to provide books to students who experienced the Marshall Fire, on Facebook and some neighbors who do not have children at Chipeta came in to support the fundraiser.

Food Drive: Some community donations have been received.

Waldo Canyon Fire 10th Anniversary is June 26th. Chipeta is not directly involved in the anniversary, but we are providing some materials and activities for the park.

The Mountain Shadows Association is voluntary and is not an HOA. When they believe a cause is worth getting behind, they support it.

The Association is recommending Principal Scott and Chipeta Elementary for a Community Partnership Award.

Dialogue with School Board President Parth Melpakam (summarized)

Parent: I have never had a complaint since 2014. Teachers did their best during COVID-19. It was really hard, but it went really well. One of my children is being bullied, but the school has worked out a code word my child can use, and another student comes over to help.

Principal: When we strengthen the relationships between adults and students, we do not have a lot of problems with bullying, but we are having problems post-COVID, including bullying. A lot of kids have the perception that if they say something mean about student A, but they say the mean thing to student B, then it can't hurt Student A. We are working on helping students to understand and own what is and is not mean. If a student is mean, we work on repairing bonds and moving forward.

Parent: Appreciates having multiple classes per grade which allows the flexibility to move students if necessary. She knows Chipeta is going to stay open and not be closed which is a type of stability that doesn't exist everywhere. Kindergarten is very well organized, and all the teachers are on the same page. She never has to tell her child, that she knows they saw a poor behavior in class, but it isn't okay because the teachers take care of it. Wants to make sure teachers have the resources to deal with new behaviors and address them in a meaningful way.

Principal: We have never had a combination class, but we will have a 3rd and 4th grade combination class for the 22 – 23 school year. Mrs. Stenholm is excited to be teaching the class.

Parent: Wants to make sure that D11 understands the communities in the district and engages families. How do we help educators that are on their last straw and losing all the joy for their work? How can the district help them?

Parent: There are a lot of big and important parts of education that must come together for students to be successful. Middle school students are not okay. We need to ensure elementary students have a strong foundation leading into middle school. Would prefer so much communication from the School Board was not required since it implies a level of dysfunction on the board.

Mr. Melpakam: We want communication to be open, honest and, transparent. Want parents to know what is happening at the district level. It is a balance to avoid sending too much for parents to stay on top of.

Watch Dogs Update: Chipeta has been on hold but there is interest in bringing it back.

Parent: What can we do to help our students at home? Teachers can only do so much and we want our children to succeed and be ready for higher education. How do I help at home and how do I keep from stressing him out? It would be helpful to have a list of teacher approved resources and to know what he should know at age, etc.

Principal: We can work on that. There are lots of different philosophies about homework and we assign a lot less than we used to.

Parent: Students are not a test score, but we need to know if they can persist, be kind, be creative and, be a good friend.

Principal: We need to revise the HOW rubric, we currently do not address curiosity in the rubric. Currently reading *Thrivers: the surprising reasons why some kids struggle and other shine* by Michele Borba. The book talks about “strivers” who are motivated by grades and getting into a good college. Thrivers have different ways to cope with stress and respond differently to stress and pressure.

Parent: If we had some notice about testing beforehand, we could help them prepare at home.

Principal: A lot of our tests are designed to be taken without studying or preparation. The tests are still based, such as applying reading comprehension skills.

Parent: Is memory and attention tested?

Principal: Not Really.

Jamie Wright: We test on things like literacy skills and a student cannot study for it. Either they have the skills, or they don't. The student should be able to take those skills and use them in school and outside of school and in different subject areas.

Parent: Can't students benefit from memorization?

Principal: What is appropriate memorization. We have gotten away from it. Students do practice memorization while studying poetry and when learning math facts.

Parent: Is there a risk that students might look everything up and not actually know anything?

Parent: About 10 years ago the preschool accreditation board moved away from teaching math and reading and focused on Social and Emotional Learning. The focus on SEL has been very important in her family.

Principal: A teacher at Chipeta is taking a class for teachers on play in education k – 12. She became interested because she recently did a market in class as part of learning about financial

literacy. The kids had to learn how to manage money such as paying rent and buying groceries. One student in class engaged in a different way than he normally did, and it was like play for him because he was so engaged, but he learned a lot.

Parent: Critical thinking is being taught as early as kindergarten. Her child was excited about the day they brought flowers in for their teachers because they hoped the teacher would let them investigate the flowers.

Parent: Her child was excited about student produced play. He doesn't talk about schoolwork, but if she gives him something to read, he can read it easily. He has benefited from SEL. Pioneer Day was a joyful time for students and families.

Principal: A student wrote a play and they wanted to perform it. It was completely student directed. Adults were involved to allow people to be invited and Mrs. Glen offered support for sound. Students paid attention and despite audio challenges they were able to put the story together.

Mr. Melpakam: Hears a lot of good things about Chipeta. Phenomenal teachers and the benefit of the continuity of having the same principal for 11 years. Education is about the whole child. It is a balance between homework and SEL. Engagement from parents is very important. It is important that a child is reading and doing math at their grade level. If problems are not caught and corrected the student will only fall farther and father behind. District 11 has a summer enrichment program for kids that need help getting up to grade level.

District 11 has a shorter school day than other districts. How would families feel about a longer school day?

Parent: Question about perceptions about how district spends resources.

Mr. Melpakam: Make sure we divide money in the best way we can. Money does not come from the 53 teachers being cut. District 11 has lost over 4000 students, so we need fewer teachers. No staff cuts were made during COVID to make sure the district stayed at an acceptable staffing level. Must be nimble and respond when schools need another Full-time employee (FTE).

Parent: Teachers are adaptable. Will students be able to adapt?

Mr. Melpakam: Need to go back to the community and see what the district can offer. After school enrichment? Longer school Day? The School Board needs our help to figure out how to get parents to choose their D11 neighborhood schools instead of driving miles away to another district.

Parent: Eagleview (D20) has an arts program that Holmes does not have.

Mr. Melpakam: To fund programs, we need students.

Parent: Family chose Chipeta because of Great Schools website rating.

Ian: Thank-you to Mr. Melpakam for being an advocator for families. He always responds to e-mails.

Principal: We will incorporate his comments into our One Plan.

Adjourn