

School Advisory Committee minutes 10-12-15, 6:30-7:50 p.m. meeting in MSCS Library

SAC-hosted public meeting for community input regarding Mountain Song Community School's UIP (Unified Improvement Plan)

SAC Chair Mary Ann Corey welcomed SAC committee members and community then gave an overview of the UIP and the SAC's role in the process. This was an open meeting for input by the community regarding the UIP before the document is written.

Mountain Song Community School was represented at the League of Charter School's workshop on the UIP process on September 22, 2015 by Executive Director Raj Solanki, Pedagogical Director Elizabeth Wildemann, SAC Chair Mary Ann Corey, and SAC member Debie Bennett. In this workshop, tools for data trends, guides for writing the UIP, and targets, goals, benchmarks, and assessments were discussed. Teachers will help the writers brainstorm ideas to make growth targets. The accountability timeline has not been established for the 2015-16 school year, but the UIP document writers will make plans based on last year's timeline in the interim.

Handouts with a summary about the UIP and elements regarding performance and assessment data in reference to the UIP were provided at the meeting.

Discussion regarding achievement and growth included the following subjects: staff retention and mentoring teachers, consistency of curriculum, alignment of Waldorf curriculum with Colorado Academic Standards, professional development, making data available and understandable to the public, writing rubrics for main lesson books, and finding best practices for accountability and communication. Comments also emerged regarding hopes that the UIP and data points do not overshadow the creativity of the Waldorf curriculum.

MSCS has already made progress in many areas by implementing a new math curriculum, serving teachers with professional development, providing ongoing mentoring for teachers, making time for grade-level meetings and discussions, ensuring healthy dialogue about processes and procedures in the classroom, sharing pedagogical practices, enacting a K-3 program to track growth and behavior, and offering an established training program for Board members. All of these are ongoing.

The group also discussed the need to inform parents about how the assessments and data will help their children transition into higher education. Further work on communication regarding organizational structure, assessments, and alignment of curriculum is a major goal.

Debie Bennett will take over as interim chair until the next regular SAC meeting November 9 from 6-7:30 p.m. where a parent chairperson will be elected. There will be one more public meeting for input to review the UIP draft on November 30 from 6:30- 8 p.m. in the library.

Recruitment of parents to be on the SAC is imperative in order to comply with state mandates. The SAC committee meets every other month, the second Monday of every uneven month, from 6-7:30.

SAC is primarily an oversight committee representing various segments of the community – parents, teachers, administrators, and community members.

Interested parents and community members who would like to assist the school in its growth and goals should contact Debie at DebieBennett@hotmail.com or Director Raj Solanki at rsolanki@mountainsongschool.com.