



Colorado's Unified Improvement Plan for Schools

Mountain Song Community School UIP 2019-20 | **School:** Mountain Song Community School | **District:** Charter School Institute | **Org ID:** 8001 | **School ID:** 5851 | **Framework:** Performance Plan: Low Participation | **Draft UIP**

Table of Contents

- Executive Summary
- Improvement Plan Information
- Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification
- Action Plans

Executive Summary

If we...

ESTABLISH A MULTI-TIERED BEHAVIORAL RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

Description:

Building on the Three Stream Student Support Model, which was our previous discipline and behavior support system, we will revise our disciplinary policies and practices school-wide to include more Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS), Social and Emotional Learning, and trauma-informed approaches school-wide.



INCREASE MATH ACHIEVEMENT AND GROWTH SCORES SCHOOL-WIDE

Description:

We will improve our math scores and will reduce the number of students on RTI plans, especially in the middle school grades, by creating consistent math instruction school-wide.



RETAIN AND RECRUIT STUDENTS IN GRADES K-8

Description:

We will reduce the amount of students who transfer from Mountain Song to other schools in the area and will recruit enough students to balance our budget and hopefully allow us to attain a double-tracked K-8 grade facility.



DEVELOP A PLAN FOR A NEW FACILITY

Description:

In the next 8 months, we will identify the preferred size, location, funding, investors, and next steps for a new double-tracked K-8 grade facility that will allow us to continue to grow and thrive in perpetuity.



Then we will address...

INADEQUATE FACILITY SPACE

Description:

Our old school building does not have adequate space to allow for us to continue to expand classes or programs



INCONSISTENCY OF MATH CURRICULUM DUE TO LOOPING

Description:

Our practice of teachers "looping" with their students, although very effective in creating cohesion in the classroom and reducing behaviors, has resulted in inconsistencies in the frequency and fidelity that teachers instruct math.



INADEQUATE CLASSROOM DIFFERENTIATION

Description:

We have historically offered inadequate and/or inconsistent differentiation for the range of student ability levels within each classroom.



LACK OF SET MATH CURRICULUM

Description:

In Waldorf education, there are curriculum guides and frameworks in which we instruct math, but no set of math curricula. Teachers are given autonomy in how they deliver the content to the students and prepare their lesson plans, but there are no text books, worksheets, or set curricula that they use.



LACK OF CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR PARENTS

Description:

Many parents seeking an alternative education for their students may come to our school with limited or no understanding about our processes, requirements, and our pedagogy. In the past, the school was not enforcing its policies consistently, which resulted in confused or frustrated parents and noncompliance with our policies.



INCREASING ENROLLMENT WITH STUDENTS NEEDING EXTRA SUPPORTS

Description:

We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.



INCONSISTENT AND UNEVENLY APPLIED CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Description:

Although it's supposed to be implemented using our pedagogy, we've not applied standard classroom management expectations school-wide in a consistent manner. Teachers, especially those who are new to Waldorf or new to teaching, sometimes struggle with managing behaviors, redirecting students, and enforcing discipline in the classroom.



TEACHER SUPPORT, TRAINING, AND RESOURCES

Description:

Although the school has dedicated its professional development dollars to Waldorf certification training for all its teachers, there is still a great need to provide the teachers with more classroom management assistance, training, and resources to better support them and their students.



Then we will change current trends for students

INADEQUATE OR INCONSISTENT DISCIPLINARY SUPPORTS AND ACTIONS

Description:

In the past few years, we've experienced more severe student behavioral needs and the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions, including for students with disabilities, has increased.



INADEQUATE RESOURCES, PERSONNEL, AND SPACE FOR STUDENTS WITH SEVERE NEEDS

Description:

Each year, we continue to experience an increase of students needing more behavioral or special education services, but our physical space, the resources, and personnel are limited and stretched beyond our capacity.



CONTINUOUS DECLINE IN MATH SCORES SCHOOL-WIDE

Description:

The past few years' academic achievement and growth scores, especially in math, reflect the need for increased academic rigor and consistency in the classroom.



STUDENT MOBILITY

Description:

Each year we struggle with attrition, especially in the middle school grades, which adversely impacts the budget, composition of the classrooms, and continuity of the curriculum.



Access the School Performance Framework here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/performance>

Improvement Plan Information

Additional Information about the school

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Narrative on Data Analysis and Root Cause Identification

Description of School Setting and Process for Data Analysis

Mountain Song Community School (MSCS), located in Colorado Springs, CO, is a charter school authorized by the Colorado Charter School Institute. The mission of MSCS is to develop healthy, confident, free-thinking, self-directed children who are passionately engaged with their education and empowered to contribute positively to the world. To achieve this goal, MSCS utilizes Waldorf educational methods and philosophy integrated with Colorado Academic Standards, and evidence-based curriculum.

We are entering our seventh year of operation and serve approximately 350 students in grades k-8, including a Waldorf-based Homeschool Enrichment Program for grades 1-8. Our school's population includes about 31% of students eligible for free/reduced lunch (FRL) and is predominantly White with approximately 68% of students identifying as White or Caucasian, 21% identifying as Hispanic, and 7% identifying as two or more races. The remaining 4% identify as Asian, Black or African American,

American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Approximately 17% of the student population has an Individualized Education Plan and are receiving Special Education Services. Our overall mobility rate (unduplicated) from last End of Year 2019 was 15%.

In September 2019, Mountain Song entered an agreement with Conejos Clean Water, a non-profit operating out of Antonito, CO to provide educational services to homeschool students in the San Luis Valley. The mission of Conejos Clean Water is to build public awareness and encourage advocacy and education around environmental, social, economic, and food justice issues in the Conejos Land Grant Region. The Justice and Heritage Academy, a program under Conejos Clean Water and with the institutional oversight of Mountain Song, provides justice-oriented (social justice, food justice, environmental justice, economic justice, and educational justice) educational services to a homeschool consortium of 21 students bringing the number of students receiving educational services through Mountain Song to 370.

In its first year, MSCS was given the accreditation rating of Turnaround due to the lower than acceptable performance in Academic Growth and Academic Growth Gap measures based on that year's TCAP scores. The school improved its status in SY15-16 to Performance with Distinction and has since maintained its Performance rating through SY18-19.

After experiencing administrative turnover in the school's first five years, which led to instability and subsequent faculty turnover, MSCS changed its leadership model to a three-fold governance model. In SY17-18, the MSCS Board of Directors established an Interim Administrative Team to temporarily execute the administrative functions of the school. This model provided stability for the school and was favored by the MSCS Board of Directors, faculty, and community members. Based on community and faculty feedback and support, the MSCS Board of Directors changed its bylaws and created an Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in SY18-19 to serve as the school's administrative leadership model in perpetuity. A new Principal, Dr. Teresa Woods, was hired in SY18-19 to serve as a member of the ELT. Dr. Woods, Mr. Dan Kurschner, the Director of Operations, and Ms. Sarah Kreger (formerly Sarah White), the Director of School Performance, work collectively to make consensus-based decisions for the main administrative functions of the school.

During SY18-19, the ELT focused on providing grounding and stability within the school while addressing some of the major improvement strategies identified last year, including: increasing rigor throughout the grades; strengthening and improving classroom management practices in the classrooms; providing professional development for teachers; maintaining positive teacher retention; developing fundraising and community development strategies and goals; and, continuing to build on the strategic identification of students with academic and behavioral needs and the interventions to help them succeed. This year, we will continue to implement these strategies while also strengthening our disciplinary policies and practices by utilizing more evidence-based strategies, increasing our enrollment of Gifted and Talented and English Language Learners, improving our test scores among our students with disabilities, and developing a plan for addressing our faltering CMAS math scores school wide. In addition to this, the MSCS Board of Directors is actively seeking a permanent location for the school, so that the school may continue to grow and maintain its quality educational programs.

The ELT will refer to last year's UIP action steps and goals, along with the goals outlined in the five-year strategic plan created in Spring 2018, as guideposts for making its executive decisions through the year.

The primary authors of the UIP are the ELT members. The UIP goals and actions steps were identified and developed by the ELT, the faculty, Interventionists, Special Education Department, the Board of Directors, and the School Accountability Committee. The School Accountability Committee discussed the major improvement strategies and priority performance challenges on October 7, 2019 and will review the draft UIP in December 2019. The draft UIP will be presented to the MSCS Board of Directors on November 5, 2019 and reviewed again in December 2019. We will submit the final draft UIP to the Charter School Institute on or before October 31, 2019.

Prior Year Targets

Provide a summary of your progress in implementing the Major Improvement Strategies and if they had the intended effect on systems, adult actions, and student outcomes (e.g. targets).

Prior Year Student Targets

Academic Achievement:

In 2018-2019, our students with disabilities will meet the 15th percentile in ELA. We are continuing to work with our students with disabilities and helping that subgroup increase their achievement and growth scores. However, for the past couple of years, the number of students in this subgroup for CMAS testing has been too low for us to report publicly, and so it is unclear how we have done on reaching the achievement targets from last year based on CMAS scores. The most recent CSI Student Services Screener indicates that two years ago, in academic year, 2017-18, only 29% of our students with disabilities were at or above the 50th growth percentile in ELA. Upon reflection, these data indicate that we must continue to implement more evidence-based interventions with greater fidelity. One of our special education teachers was on extended leave last year, and while we hired a long-term substitute, we believe that the fidelity of implementation of interventions suffered.

Elementary school students will attain a mean scale score of 722.3 in elementary ELA and 724.1 in middle school ELA. In 2019, our elementary students attained a mean scale score of 738 in ELA, and our middle school students attained a mean scale score of 736 in ELA. Upon reflection, we see that our students do well in English Language Arts, especially after grade 2. While the Waldorf model does not align well with ELA standards in grades K-2, the strength of our model is shown in the strong ELA scores in later elementary and middle school grades. Our fifth graders continue to love to participate in, and compete well in, the regional Battle of the Books contest. For the past two years, our 5th graders have scored 4th and 5th place out of almost 100 schools in the Battle of the Books competition. This is definitely an initiative we will continue to implement as an incentive.

In 2018-2019, our students with disabilities will meet the 15th percentile in math. However, for the past couple of years, the number of students in this subgroup for CMAS testing has been too low for us to report publicly, and so it is unclear how we have done on reaching the achievement targets from last year based on CMAS scores. The most recent CSI Student Services Screener indicates that two years ago, in academic year, 2017-18, 42% of our students with disabilities were at or above the 50th growth percentile in Mathematics. Upon reflection, these data indicate that we must continue to implement more evidence-based interventions with

greater fidelity. One of our special education teachers was on extended leave last year, and while we hired a long-term substitute, we believe that the fidelity of implementation of interventions suffered.

Elementary school students will attain a MSS of 719.1 and middle school students attaining a MSS of 716.5 in Mathematics. In 2019, our elementary students attained a mean scale score of 719 in Math, and our middle school students attained a mean scale score of 718 in Math. Upon reflection, while our student scores generally hit our targets, they are well below the mean scores of the comparison district achievement. Mean scores of different classes varied widely, indicating that one of the characteristics of our Waldorf model in which teachers loop with their classes for multiple years may reveal a weakness in mathematics instruction. We believe we need to strengthen our focus on mathematics instruction. Research studies on schools implementing the Waldorf curriculum typically reveal a strength in student mathematics performance in comparison to comparison groups, leaving us to believe that fidelity to the Waldorf curriculum is not being maintained.

Academic Growth:

In 2018-2019, our elementary school students will achieve a median growth percentile of 50.0. In 2019, our median growth percentiles were 56.0 for ELA as compared to 48.0 in the comparison group, and 47.0 in Math as compared to 51.0 in the comparison group. Upon reflection, we see again where the Waldorf model shows its strength in our school in the subjects of ELA, but the Waldorf model needs to be strengthened in our school regarding mathematics instruction.

In 2018-2019, our F/R students will achieve a median growth percentile of 50.0 in elementary math. In 2019, our F/R students achieved a median growth percentile of 48.0 in elementary Math as compared to 47.0 of all our elementary students in Math, and 46.0 in the comparison group. Upon reflection, although our F/R students did not meet our target goal, they performed better than the norm in our school, and better than the comparison group. Not meeting our target goal here seems indicative that our overall mathematics curriculum needs strengthening rather than that we need to specifically target instruction to F/R students.

Student Engagement:

At the end of SY18-19, our yearly attendance rate will be 95% for both elementary and middle school students. According to our final End of Year report for SY18-19, our overall attendance rate was 92.5%. Despite our improvements to the ways by which we track students at-risk for being chronically absent or habitually truant and the frequency that we communicate with parents or guardians of students who are at-risk, we still did not attain our goal. Some possible contributing factors preventing us from attaining this goal include medical emergencies or prolonged or chronic illnesses of students, a lack of a school transportation system or the parents' lack of adequate transportation, and an atypical school year with many snow days and days with inclement weather.

We have anecdotal evidence that some of our chronic absences are a result of parents' relaxed attitudes about attendance. To help create a culture in our parent community that supports positive attendance, we regularly provide parent education about the importance of attendance and its effects on academic success in our weekly e-newsletters and meetings with parents. Over the past few years, our front office staff made substantial improvements to our attendance protocols or tracking, recording, and responding to absences. We have also improved our internal systems of sending notifications to families process by which we track and

record absences, with regular automatic letters being generated for and sent to students who are at risk of being considered habitually truant or chronically absent. We are revising our attendance contract, so that it is more substantive, meaningful, and effective in reducing absenteeism.

Student Behavior:

At the end of the year in 2018-2019, the number of out-of-school suspensions will decrease by 20% from the previous year. Last school year, we had a total of 57 out-of-school suspensions and 21 in-school suspensions school wide and 138 total behavior incidents, which is three times the amount of total incidents reported the year before. In SY17-18, we reported 32 out-of-school suspensions, 13 in-school suspensions, and 47 total incidents. Upon reflection, the actual increase of out-of-school suspensions indicate the need to revise our school-wide disciplinary approach, as well as the classroom-level disciplinary approaches. In addition, the increase of the number of students with physically aggressive behaviors, whether they are on an IEP or not, indicates the need for increasing the access to mental health professionals as well as improved training in evidence-based approaches to behavior management.

Other:

At the end of the 2018-2019 school year, our stability rate will be 95%. Our stability rate for SY18-19 was 84.3%. To attain 95% stability rate was a fairly lofty and unrealistic goal, as many of our families are in the military and move frequently. The mobility rate of students who are military connected was 31.3% last year, which is the highest mobility rate among our subgroups. The next subgroups with the highest mobility rate were students with disabilities and students who are economically disadvantaged. The supports we implemented last year and are continuing to implement for our students with special needs this year will hopefully result in fewer students with disabilities leaving our school. Without a transportation system or a meals program, it is difficult to ascertain whether we can significantly decrease the mobility rate for economically disadvantaged students. We will continue to work on services and supports for our economically disadvantaged students and we plan on providing more supports (e.g., a meals program) once we have a new facility.

Prior Major Improvement Strategies

Continuing to strengthen MTSS Process and Increase Differentiation in Classrooms:

Our MTSS Team will solidify and strengthen our MTSS process to better identify GT and students needing instructional and/or behavioral support, plan and provide accountability for targeted interventions by the interventionists, as well as provide support and strategies to the classroom teachers with the goal of increasing differentiation in the classroom. All three interventionists will work with teachers and mentor them to assist with students needing supports. Upon reflecting on our practice and the above data, these strategies have begun to be implemented and we believe we need more time to see their effectiveness. Our early elementary behavior interventionist resigned and was not replaced mid-year, and the impact of this loss was felt in the behavior issues the school experienced last year. That said, the academic interventionists are reporting this year that much of their MTSS work is beginning to show results as seen by a decreased number of students in Tier 2 last year being returned to Tier 1 this year, based on BOY MAP testing. Our GT teacher implemented the CogAT assessments in Grades 2 and 6 last spring, which have revealed a higher number of GT students to create ALP's for. In terms of providing support and strategies for classroom teachers, Dr. Woods created a guiding document on Classroom Management that included strategies in differentiation. She is continuing to work with those guidelines in professional development training, as well as targeted goal-setting, support, and accountability for teachers.

Improving classroom management practices in the classrooms: see above. In addition, three teachers were placed on improvement plans with targeted goals related to classroom management practices, which revealed results by the end of the year. These results are expected to be reflected in the current year's behavior and discipline records.

Increase and Strengthen Waldorf Curriculum Throughout Grades:

All parents, grades teachers, Kindergarten teachers, and Specials teachers fully understand and effectively implement Waldorf teaching methods and concepts. In the round of Spring and Summer 2019 hiring for this academic year, all Kinder and Grades teachers were explicitly expected upon hire to be enrolled in a Waldorf training program, or to be fully trained. This goal was met, and all our Kinder and Grades teachers are either fully trained or enrolled. The school supports the costs for these trainings, with some teachers enrolled in courses throughout the country. In addition, Dr. Woods started an in-house Waldorf training program this summer, bringing in national leaders for a 2-week immersion for teachers, with ongoing field mentoring and professional development throughout the year. Several special subject teachers, assistants, staff, and a SPED teacher also participated. Regardless of the specific training program that teachers are enrolled in, this academic year has started with what we perceive to be a much stronger grounding and fidelity to the Waldorf model.

Increasing academic rigor in all grades:

While we believe that the work of our academic interventionists have proved very successful, the academic rigor in the general education classroom is uneven, with mathematics being our area in most need of strengthening. Our model of teacher looping seems to reveal its weakness in this area, which has led us to budget the hire of a middle school math specialist, and increase mentoring for our elementary teachers in mathematics.

Based on your reflection and evaluation, provide a summary of the adjustments that you will make for this year's plan.

After looking at the achievement scores in math each year, we determined that the biggest contributing factor to the increase or decrease in math scores is the teacher. In Waldorf schools, teachers will "loop" with the same group of students starting in 1st grade to either the 5th grade or even all the way to the 8th grade. When looking at our achievement and growth scores in math year after year, we can see a notable trend of classes that consistently do well every year or poorly every year, which really follows the quality of the teachers' instruction. In order to provide consistent and quality math instruction and to hopefully raise our student math scores, we've hired a Middle School Math Teacher, to teach math for our middle school students. We will continue to track our students' achievement scores and growth scores in math to see how effective this approach is going forward. In addition, we have invested in field mentors to help support the elementary classroom teachers' mathematics instruction. Finally, we have invested in providing teachers with the research-based Mindset Mathematics curriculum, as well as the open-source CK-12 resources, to supplement the Waldorf mathematics curriculum.

We are using Title 1 funds for our grades 3-8 interventionist for mathematics and ELA.

Our Special Education Coordinator, Ms. Lauren Martinez, is enrolled in the RELAY Special Education Leadership Graduate Program, and she is piloting important evidence-based practices in the school this year. For instance, she is piloting a best-practice intervention of co-teaching in the fourth grade in which students with disabilities receive general education mathematics instruction in addition to pull-out small group interventions. Further, this year, we are implementing the research-based Language Arts HillRAP method with students with disabilities in small group interventions, delivering more push-in Language Arts services for students with disabilities in middle school classes, and using para-educators to provide more purposeful language arts instruction in the general education classrooms with targeted groups of students with disabilities on a regular basis. We will continue to monitor the student achievement and growth scores.

Our GT Teacher is planning to increase mentoring of teachers to differentiate instruction, as well as increase the time and intensity of GT after-school and pull-out groups to provide more academic and leadership challenges to these students.

We scheduled more professional development days in the academic calendar than last year, with an emphasis being on teachers participating in developing plans for implementing evidence-based classroom management strategies, social-emotional learning based on the CASEL model, and differentiation of instruction strategies. We have hired a Dean of Students to replace our Student Support Coordinator, with our new hire having a background in child, adolescent, and family counseling. Although she does not function as our school counselor, our Dean of Students is already implementing a number of proactive social-emotional strategies to deal with the students with behavior challenges informed by her background. We are contracting with a social worker this year to meet the mental health needs of students on IEPs, as well as effecting crisis-intervention with students in families in need. Finally, Dr. Woods is leading a book study in trauma-informed approaches based on the works of Dr. Bruce Perry and of Ms. Kristen Souers. She is also implementing targeted goal-setting, mentoring, and accountability structures for teachers in these areas. Further, she has implemented a school-wide positive behavior management system that aims to be more proactive than reactive.

Current Performance

- Our school made significant improvements since being placed on Turnaround Status in SY14-15 and has maintained its Performance Status since SY15-16. The more significant improvements have been around governance, Special Education, our MTSS process, teacher retention, and professional development for our faculty. Over the course of last year, the Executive Leadership Team, while trying to establish itself and create stability in the school, found that more focus needs to be applied this year toward student achievement, particularly around math, supports for student behavioral and emotional needs, supports for Special Education students, and more support for classroom teachers, particularly around classroom management and differentiation.

Academic Performance

2019 Spring CMAS Achievement:

In Spring 2019, our overall median scale score (MSS) for elementary students decreased from 741.3 in 2018 to 738.9 in ELA and from 720.1 in 2018 to 718.3 in

math. Science scores increased slightly from 604.2 in 2018 to 608.2 in 2019. The middle school MSS for ELA decreased slightly from 736.2 in 2018 to 735.8 in 2019 and in math the scores slipped from 722.9 in 2018 to 717.5 in 2019. There were too few students in middle school to calculate the science scores.

2019 Spring CMAS Growth:

Our elementary 2019 Median Growth Percentile (MGP) in ELA was 56.0. Our middle school MGP in ELA increased from 46.0 in 2018 to 49.5 in 2019 . Overall, 27% of our school had low growth, 38% had typical growth, and 35% had high growth in ELA. Approximately 52% of our students were at or above the 50th percentile in ELA.

SY18-19 BOY/EOY NWEA MAP Comparative Data:

Our 2018-2019 interim assessment data for students in grades 3 -8 showed a decline in percentages of students at or above the 50th percentile in math and a slight increase in reading from the Beginning of Year testing to the End of Year testing. The percentages of students at or above the 50th percentile in math, language arts, and reading are listed below:

BOY NWEA MAP Percentages

Language Usage:	Math:	Reading:
Grade 3 - 25%	Grade 3 - 25%	Grade 3 - 29%
Grade 4 - 57%	Grade 4 - 36%	Grade 4 - 39%
Grade 5 - 68%	Grade 5 - 33%	Grade 5 - 68%
Grade 6 - 57%	Grade 6 - 34%	Grade 6 - 65%
Grade 7 - 55%	Grade 7 - 33%	Grade 7 - 67%
Grade 8 - 59%	Grade 8 - 24%	Grade 8 - 69%

EOY NWEA MAP Percentages

Language Arts:	Math:	Reading:
Grade 3 - 25%	Grade 3 - 13%	Grade 3 - 25%
Grade 4 - 45%	Grade 4 - 15%	Grade 4 - 40%
Grade 5 - 59%	Grade 5 - 33%	Grade 5 - 68%
Grade 6 - 46%	Grade 6 - 31%	Grade 6 - 57%
Grade 7 - 52%	Grade 7 - 35%	Grade 7 - 65%
Grade 8 - 64%	Grade 8 - 43%	Grade 8 - 71%

The SY18-19 Spring MSCS mean RIT scores for language arts, math, and reading compared to the 2015 National Norms in each grade are listed below.

MSCS Language Usage

Grade 3 - 193.75
Grade 4 - 200.45
Grade 5 - 213.21
Grade 6 - 214.49
Grade 7 - 213.52
Grade 8 - 224.14

2015 National Norm in Language Usage

Grade 3 - 200
Grade 4 - 206.7
Grade 5 - 211.5
Grade 6 - 215.3
Grade 7 - 217.6
Grade 8 - 219

MSCS Reading

Grade 3 - 193.71
Grade 4 - 201.15
Grade 5 - 215.78
Grade 6 - 214.57
Grade 7 - 218.78
Grade 8 - 226.86

2015 National Norm in Reading

Grade 3 - 196.8
Grade 4 - 205.9
Grade 5 - 211.8
Grade 6 - 215.8
Grade 7 - 218.2
Grade 8 - 220.1

MSCS Mathematics

Grade 3 - 190.79
Grade 4 - 203.45
Grade 5 - 216.85
Grade 6 - 220.31
Grade 7 - 217.17
Grade 8 - 227.21

2015 National Norm in Mathematics

Grade 3 - 203.4
Grade 4 - 213.5
Grade 5 - 221.4
Grade 6 - 225.3
Grade 7 - 228.6
Grade 8 - 230.9

K-3 READ Data:

According to our 2019 READ results, 79 students were identified as having a significant reading deficiency (SRD) compared to 47 end of 2018. To account for some of this increase, we added an additional kindergarten classroom last year which contributed to the increase in students identified as having a SRD. Our DIBELs scores, although much lower than traditional public schools in the state, are consistent with what we expect for our grades K-3. This was anticipated and explicitly explained in our Charter Application. Our approach to reading is a slower approach with foci on oral, aural, and comprehension skills through oral recitation and storytelling in the early grades. In Waldorf schools, letters and their phonetic sounds and writing aren't taught until the 1st grade. In 3rd grade, our students should start to approach the reading and writing averages compared to other public schools, but then continue to surpass those averages in 4th grades

and up. This is consistent with our reading and language usage MAP and CMAS scores reflect, which are listed above.

Percentages of Composite Benchmark Levels by Season:

BOY SY18-19

Above Benchmark: 31%

At Benchmark: 15%

Below Benchmark: 13%

Well Below Benchmark: 42%

MOY SY18-19

Above Benchmark: 18%

At Benchmark: 17%

Below Benchmark: 12%

Well Below Benchmark: 54%

EOY SY18-19

Above Benchmark: 17%

At Benchmark: 11%

Below Benchmark: 17%

Well Below Benchmark: 55%

Because of our approach to early education and reading, we will not be implementing any grade level or classroom level interventions for reading in K-3. However, we do work with students who struggle with reading, eye-tracking, and comprehension in the early grades and utilize a variety of interventions to assist those students including working in a group with a reading interventionist. We are revising our MTSS process so that we can identify early on any students who are falling significantly behind grade level expectations. We are also exploring integrating curricula in our K-3 grades that supports both the Waldorf pedagogy and improves reading in the younger grades. Our Reading Specialist for grades 1-3 will continue to work with small groups needing additional reading support.

Enrollment/Mobility Rates

As of October Count 2019, the number of students being served by Mountain Song Community School is 370, which includes 43 homeschool students who attend the Homeschool Enrichment Program at Mountain Song and 21 homeschool students attending the Justice & Heritage Academy in Antonito, CO.

Last school year, we experienced an overall decrease in our enrollment. Our projected enrollment was closer to 340 students and our October Count was around 315. The loss of students who've been with the school multiple years and the current influx of students needing extra supports and services impacts the school financially and academically as we struggle to maintain our student achievement scores and growth while balancing the increasing student demands with our limited finances and personnel. Possible factors that led to fewer enrollments and the loss of some students include: new charter schools that opened in the area and tapped into our same niche; dissatisfaction among some families because of the lack of classroom management and/or academic rigor in some of the classrooms; and/or students' dissatisfaction because of the lack of amenities that our school can offer. These factors leading to the drop in enrollment are being addressed. However, this dip in enrollment resulted in a financial shortfall that required us to use reserve funds to maintain a balanced budget in SY18-19. This use of reserve funds limits the school's ability to accrue enough funds for the procurement of a new school building, a major goal for this school year.

Staff and Teacher Turnover/Retention

This year, we've seen less teacher turnover than we had experienced in past years. Only two classroom teachers did not continue their employment with Mountain Song this year. Finding qualified teachers well versed in Waldorf pedagogy is not easy and we generally hire public school teachers who we then train in Waldorf education. Teacher turnover adversely impacts the transfer of knowledge, the quality of instruction from year to year, and disrupts the relationships between the classroom teacher and the students. This relationship building is the most integral part of our curriculum as the classroom teacher stays with the same group of students from grades 1 through grade 5 and sometimes even all the way to the 8th grade. Establishing a strong relationship between the teacher and students improves behavior issues and academic achievement.

In SY17-18, the Interim Administrative Team, the temporary school governance body established prior to the formation of the Executive Leadership Team, made Waldorf teacher training a top priority for the school and instituted a goal that all teachers at Mountain Song will participate in a Waldorf teacher training paid for by the school, if they are not already trained in Waldorf education. Because our Principal, Dr. Woods, has a great deal of experience in both public school teacher training programs and Waldorf training programs, the ELT stood up Mountain Song's first in-house Waldorf teacher training program in June 2019. This program allows not only classroom teachers to participate, but also teacher assistants, special education teachers, specials teachers, staff members, and anyone wanting to participate in this three-year Waldorf training program. All classroom teachers, who have not already attended a Waldorf training, are enrolled and participating in Waldorf training programs either outside of the school or are taking the in-house Waldorf training program provided by the school. This has helped create a culture of understanding of Waldorf education among the classroom teachers and staff members across the school that's more comprehensive and deeper than in previous years.

The Executive Leadership Team will continue to remunerate our hard-working teachers with the increased per pupil revenue and Mil Levy funds. Maintaining the shared governance model with a qualified Principal to support our teachers, students, and parents, will also stabilize the school and reduce teach turnover.

Student Support Services

Special Education

As in years past, we are still struggling in balancing the demands of writing, evaluating, and monitoring all the IEPs and 504s while meeting the IEP hours for all the students with disabilities. This year, we've hired another Special Education Teacher will assist with meeting our middle school students' IEP hours, which brings the Special Education staff to 2.5 FTEs. In addition, a new Social Worker and School Psychologist have been contracted to work with our students with special needs.

Last year, Lauren Martinez, our SPED Coordinator, was awarded with the Educator of the Year award by the CO League of Charter Schools, because of her work to improve our Special Education Department. With all of the improvements we've made and are continuing to make to our Special Education Department, we are attracting the attention of outside educators, experts, and parents. Anecdotal evidence suggests that we are being recommended by some pediatricians, specialists, and other educators in the area as a place to help students with special needs. While we recognize that our philosophy and pedagogy can be healing

and helpful for students with special needs and we really appreciate the recognition for our work helping students with special needs, we've had difficulty trying to budget and plan for the amount of new students needing services, especially for those who need one-on-one para support.

Like last year, we have experienced an increase in the amount of students needing more out-of-class supports and services. There are currently 42 students who have IEPs and 12 students who have 504 plans, representing approximately 18% of the school (not including the homeschool students). The Special Education Department is currently evaluated nine students for special education services who are not included in the aforementioned percentages. A handful of our students with special needs require one-on-one para support.

One of our goals this year is to provide more "push-in" services, meaning that more of the students' work is done in the classroom as opposed to them being pulled out of the classroom for group work. Although "pull-out" groups and services will still be offered, we are working with our classroom teachers and paras to provide more differentiation in the classroom, which is in keeping with our philosophy of inclusion. Lauren Martinez, in addition to her Educator of the Year award, was also given a CSI scholarship to participate in the National Special Education Leadership Academy through the Relay Graduate School of Education this year, which will include Inclusion Program Design.

EL Services

We have a slight increase in the number of students needing English Language services compared to previous school years, although our numbers are still very low with only approximately 1% of our students needing EL services. We hired a new EL Coordinator, Maria Webb, to screen our students and to provide EL services this year. One of our Student Service Goals for Improvement this school year is to increase enrollment of students Identified as English Learners by 2-3 percentage points by May 2020.

Gifted and Talented

To ensure that our higher achieving students also receive the support they need, Ms. Martinez is overseeing the Gifted and Talented program and supervising Claudia Martin, our part-time GT teacher. Ms. Martin will be supporting teachers with differentiation in the classrooms for the GT students. We currently only have a handful of students in the GT program, but we have a Student Service Goal for Improvement to increase identification of GT students by 2-3 percentage points by May 2020. To do this, Ms. Martin will continue to screen our 2nd graders and 6th graders.

Student Behavior and Discipline and Attendance:

One of our major improvement strategies is to lower the number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions, especially among students with special needs. Last year, we had 57 out-of-school suspensions and 21 in-school suspensions. About half of those incidents involved students with disabilities. A major goal for Mountain Song this year is to reduce the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions across the grades and especially for students with disabilities and K-2 grade students.

After receiving feedback from our faculty and community regarding the consistency of our disciplinary policies and practices and after losing our full-time Student Support Coordinator, we hired a Dean of Students, Ms. Cori Karasiuk. She's working with the Principal in developing discipline policies and procedures that are more consistent, clear, and effective. We have also adapted our disciplinary policy and practices to include more trauma-informed strategies and Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS). During our in-service training in August, Dr. Woods and our Dean of Students trained the staff in PBIS, trauma-informed education, and social and emotional learning techniques. In addition, we hired an Elementary School Field Mentor, Katherine Lehman, to provide professional development and mentoring to our teachers throughout the year. During a professional development day, she provided our teachers a lesson to our teachers about meeting the needs of all our children.

Attendance continues to be an issue for the school, despite our efforts to improve our attendance policies and procedures and communication to the parents about the importance of attendance. Last year, we had 53 counts of chronically absent students and four counts of habitually truant students. We do not have an accurate account of tardies, but consistent tardies adversely effect the learning environment on a daily basis.

Trend Analysis



Trend Direction: Decreasing

Notable Trend: Yes

Performance Indicator Target: Academic Achievement (Status)

The achievement scores in math have precipitously decreased school-wide since 2016 and are well below the state expectations with elementary students hovering around the 13th percentile and middle school students hovering around the 17th percentile. (2016 = 722 MSS in elementary/741 MSS in middle school; 2017 = 726 MSS in elementary/736 MSS in middle school; 2018 = 720 MSS in elementary/723 MSS in middle school; and 718.3 MSS in elementary/717.5 MSS in middle school)



Trend Direction: Decreasing

Notable Trend: Yes

Performance Indicator Target: Academic Growth

The middle school growth scores in math have significantly decreased since 2016. (2016 = 79.0 MGP; 2017 = 62.0 MGP; 2018 = 62.0 MGP; and 2019 - 39.5 MPP)



Trend Direction: Increasing

Notable Trend: Yes

Performance Indicator Target: Student Behavior

The amount of out-of-school and in-school suspensions, including for students with disabilities, has increased from 32 out-of-school suspensions and 13 in-school suspensions in SY17-18 to 57 out-of-school and 21 in-school suspensions in SY18-19.

Additional Trend Information:

Priority Performance Challenges and Root Causes



Priority Performance Challenge: Inadequate or inconsistent disciplinary supports and actions

In the past few years, we've experienced more severe student behavioral needs and the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions, including for students with disabilities, has increased.



Root Cause: Teacher Support, Training, and Resources

Although the school has dedicated its professional development dollars to Waldorf certification training for all its teachers, there is still a great need to provide the teachers with more classroom management assistance, training, and resources to better support them and their students.



Root Cause: Lack of clear expectations for parents

Many parents seeking an alternative education for their students may come to our school with limited or no understanding about our processes, requirements, and our pedagogy. In the past, the school was not enforcing its policies consistently, which resulted in confused or frustrated parents and noncompliance with our policies.



Root Cause: Inconsistent and unevenly applied classroom management practices

Although it's supposed to be implemented using our pedagogy, we've not applied standard classroom management expectations school-wide in a consistent manner. Teachers, especially those who are new to Waldorf or new to teaching, sometimes struggle with managing behaviors, redirecting students, and enforcing discipline in the classroom.



Root Cause: Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports

We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.

Priority Performance Challenge: Inadequate resources, personnel, and space for students with severe needs



Each year, we continue to experience an increase of students needing more behavioral or special education services, but our physical space, the resources, and personnel are limited and stretched beyond our capacity.



Root Cause: Inadequate Facility Space

Our old school building does not have adequate space to allow for us to continue to expand classes or programs



Root Cause: Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports

We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.



Priority Performance Challenge: Continuous decline in math scores school-wide

The past few years' academic achievement and growth scores, especially in math, reflect the need for increased academic rigor and consistency in the classroom.



Root Cause: Inconsistency of Math Curriculum Due to Looping

Our practice of teachers "looping" with their students, although very effective in creating cohesion in the classroom and reducing behaviors, has resulted in inconsistencies in the frequency and fidelity that teachers instruct math.



Root Cause: Inadequate Classroom Differentiation

We have historically offered inadequate and/or inconsistent differentiation for the range of student ability levels within each classroom.



Root Cause: Teacher Support, Training, and Resources

Although the school has dedicated its professional development dollars to Waldorf certification training for all its teachers, there is still a great need to provide the teachers with more classroom management assistance, training, and resources to better support them and their students.



Root Cause: Lack of Set Math Curriculum

In Waldorf education, there are curriculum guides and frameworks in which we instruct math, but no set of math curricula. Teachers are given autonomy in how they deliver the content to the students and prepare their lesson plans, but there are no text books, worksheets, or set curricula that they use.

Priority Performance Challenge: Student mobility



Each year we struggle with attrition, especially in the middle school grades, which adversely impacts the budget, composition of the classrooms, and continuity of the curriculum.



Root Cause: Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports

We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.



Root Cause: Inadequate Facility Space

Our old school building does not have adequate space to allow for us to continue to expand classes or programs



Root Cause: Inconsistent and unevenly applied classroom management practices

Although it's supposed to be implemented using our pedagogy, we've not applied standard classroom management expectations school-wide in a consistent manner. Teachers, especially those who are new to Waldorf or new to teaching, sometimes struggle with managing behaviors, redirecting students, and enforcing discipline in the classroom.

Magnitude of Performance Challenges and Rationale for Selection:



Continuous decline in math scores school-wide:

Math appears to be the academic area needing the most attention and support. The frequency and consistency of mathematics instruction among some classrooms was determined to be insufficient, and efforts were made last year to improve math instruction. In 2018-2019, our Upper Grades Math and Reading Interventionist worked to improve our MTSS process. She identified, created Response to Intervention Plans for, and worked in small groups with approximately 50 students in the areas of math and reading. With such a hefty RTI caseload in the upper grades and with declining CMAS math results year after year, the ELT recognized that major improvements need to be made to quell the overall downward trajectory of school's math achievement and growth scores. It was determined that the system of teachers "looping" with their classes year after year and the lack of a set curriculum, pose potential obstacles in establishing consistency and frequency in math instruction. In August 2019, we hired a Math Specialist, Mr. Eli Peake, to help create a consistent and rigorous math program in middle school math. Across all grades 1-8, we will be implementing the Mindset Mathematics curriculum, and using the CK-12 Math Curriculum to supplement our math instruction.

Inadequate or inconsistent disciplinary supports and actions:

Last school year, Mountain Song had 57 number of out-of-school and 21 number of in-school suspensions and 138 number of reportable incidents. It was a very demanding year for all classroom teachers, special education teachers, and ELT members handling so many disciplinary incidents. The number of incidents, especially those resulting in out-of-school suspensions, is incongruous to the school's philosophy and our Three Stream Student Support Model,

the school's model of disciplinary action and behavioral support. Based on feedback provided by the teachers through the TLCC survey, only 26% of our teachers agree or strongly agree that rules for student behavior are enforced in a consistent manner and 35% of teachers disagree that students know how they are expected to act in the school. Upon further reflection of our disciplinary policy, the ELT determined that the Three Stream Student Support Model, although very aligned with the school's philosophies and effective in providing strategies for minor behavioral incidents, does not provide enough practical and consistent strategies to support teachers and administrators in handling more severe behavioral incidents. Furthermore, the ELT determined that some classes that sent more students out of the classroom for behavioral incidents than others. This is due in part to the greater number of students with behavioral needs in some classes than others, but also because of the inconsistencies in the classroom management practices among classroom teachers.

Building on the integration of social and emotional learning in the classrooms that we started last year, Mountain Song will extend its Three Stream Student Support Model to include more PBIS and similar evidence-based strategies in handling students with trauma or behavioral needs. These evidence-based strategies will be implemented on a school-wide basis as well as within individual classrooms. The teachers have also received and will continue to receive PBIS and trauma-informed educational training and classroom management training. Dr. Woods, the Principal, Mr. Donald Sampson, the Pedagogical Director, and Ms. leeda Banach, a newly hired Waldorf-teacher mentor, will monitor teachers and help them with classroom management and behavioral supports.

Last year, Dr. Woods established the Student Behavior Rules with clear expectations of student conduct (Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible) that all students are taught in the classroom and recite at each school assembly. This will continue this year and in perpetuity so that we can create a culture of safety, kindness, and respect among the student population. We are working diligently with our Special Education teachers to provide more classroom behavioral supports for students with special needs and are providing more de-escalation and trauma-informed education training to our special education staff and classroom teachers in order to mitigate crisis situations with some of our students with severe needs.

Attendance continues to be an issue for us to resolve. Last school, we had four counts of habitually truant students and 53 counts of chronically absent students. Although we strongly promote positive attendance and punctuality in order to maintain the rhythm of our classes, we still have quite a few students who are consistently tardy or absent. Our front office staff have developed better procedures for calling absent students, informing the parents about our attendance policy, and monitoring students who have attendance issues. We also meet with families and have them sign attendance contracts if their child exceeds the limit of unexcused absences or tardies. The school does not have the means to provide a transportation system and our families travel from all over the Pikes Peak region, so many of the absences and tardiness are due to families struggling to transport their children in the morning on time. However, more work needs to be done in order to create a more structured culture of timeliness and a set of incentives and clear consequences for absenteeism and tardiness that our families support and abide by.

Inadequate resources, personnel, and space for students with severe needs:

Similar to what Mountain Song experienced last year, this year we have had an increase in the amount of students needing more out-of-class supports and services. There are currently 42 students who have IEPs and 12 students who have 504 plans, representing approximately 17% of the school (without including homeschool students). Of our students who have special education services, approximately 16% of the students on IEPs require 40-79% of the day in General Education. Some of these services include full-day one-on-one para support, emotional/behavioral supports, and academic supports. The remaining 84% of students on IEPs require less pull-out services with 80% or more of the day in General Education.

This recent uptick of students needing additional services has presented challenges for our Special Education Team who are equipped to handle students with mild to moderate needs and do not currently have the personnel, resources, and space to accommodate some of our more intensive needs students. Last year, in order to accommodate some of our students with severe needs, our Special Education Team restructured their classrooms and created a sensory room, which has been tremendously effective in providing a calming space for students who need emotional or sensory breaks. Some of our students require services and supports from outside experts or entities. This year, we are partnering with the Pikes Peak BOCES, which we hope will provide us with access to the BOCES's services, technical assistance, providers, and its center-based program for students with severe needs.

Even with this partnership with the BOCES, we are still seeking solutions to balance the needs within each of the classes with students with special needs. Strategic placement of paras in the classrooms provide better contact time with our students with IEPs and academic improvement among our students with disabilities, but the costs associated with providing either one-on-one paras or classroom paras for all the numbers needing that support are becoming increasingly more difficult to plan for and sustain.

Student Mobility:

Although we met our projected enrollment numbers, we are still recovering from having to dip into our funding reserves last year because of our drop in enrollment. We now have 306 students enrolled in our full-time classes, 43 students meeting on our MSCS Homeschool Enrichment Program, and 21 students who are being served by the Justice & Heritage Academy (JHA). Despite these positive numbers, we are still under the ideal target of 400 students that will help us meet our budget goals. Because of our limited physical space, it is unlikely that we will meet this 400 student target this next year.

Enrolling new students to replace students who are leaving is also like adding water to a bucket with a leak. This school year, we've added approximately 118 students (not including the 21 students in JHA), but we lost approximately 80 students from last year's October Count to this year's October Count. The majority of these students, approximately half of them, transferred to schools out of district or to another CSI school in the area. Many of these students left because of the lack of amenities or programming, lack of academic rigor, or dissatisfaction of the teachers, school, or curriculum. Keeping our currently enrolled students instead recruiting new students saves professional hours, marketing dollars, and helps maintain consistent and cohesive classroom dynamics and relationships that develop year after year.

Some of the students we gained this year are returning students and some of our homeschool students from last year transferred to the full-time program this year, but most of our new students are completely new to Waldorf education. We typically see attrition in our middle school classes, as students in those grades often want amenities and programs that we cannot offer. Adding new middle school students, although beneficial the majority of the time, can be difficult in maintaining the continuity of the curriculum that builds on itself from year-to-year. We've found, too, that many of our new middle school students may have had academic, behavioral, or emotional issues in previous schools and arrive at our school having been to multiple schools before us. Although most of our new students acclimate to our school and embrace our hands-on curriculum, other students require more supports, services, or personnel to help them with the transition to our school. This created a situation for our 8th grade class, which last year was a condensed class of two 7th grade classes with low numbers, now has 40% of the students on IEPs. Keeping two classes per grade can help us balance the number of students needing special services in each class, but again, space is a key obstacle in ensuring that we can accommodate two classes per grade. The number of students with high needs, especially in the middle school grades, is another major factor for families in keeping or enrolling their children at Mountain Song.

Magnitude of Root Causes and Rationale for Selection:



Inadequate Facility Space and Resources:

- The most pressing issue facing the school is the lack of facility space needed to provide quality programming, classroom space, teacher space, and rooms for students needing services.
- This lack of facility space unfortunately resulted in the school temporarily halting a much beloved specials program, the Cooking Arts Program, in order for us to have two 1st grade classrooms. This is the second year in a row that the school had to drastically cut a hallmark program in order to accommodate double-tracked classes. The year before, we had to sacrifice our music classroom for another 1st grade classroom and now our music teachers have to carry music equipment to each classroom.
- By suspending programs in order to accommodate students, we inadvertently create a cycle of students leaving, especially in the middle school grades, because of programming changes or lack of programming due to space, and then the school tries to recruit new students to fill classrooms and support our budget. The loss of students presents additional challenges for us trying to attract funding for a new school building and the addition of students entering in the older grades without having gone through the Waldorf elementary model presents additional challenges for the teachers of trying to maintain the integrity of their Waldorf instruction and integrating new students unfamiliar with our model. We are actively trying to work on student retention through community building, parent education, and by providing a more rigorous academics in the middle school while also pursuing resources to find another location for our school.

Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports:

- About 17% of the students at MSCS are identified as having a disability and are receiving special education services. We currently have 2.5 FTE Special Education Teachers and five para support staff. Our Special Education Team has historically had issues with balancing the needs of the students in the building and meeting all the IEP minutes.
- We've identified that classroom instruction needs strengthening to accommodate all ability levels across the grades. Not all of the classroom teachers were as well informed or equipped to handle differentiated instruction for their special education students. Some teachers had not adequately implemented accommodations in the classroom to ensure academic success for those students. This year, the ELT is continuing to work on revising and restructuring the Special Education Department to ensure that our students with disabilities are receiving adequate instruction and services.
- Our current enrollment of students on IEPs is about 42 students, with about nine students in the process of being evaluated for special education services. The number of severe needs students continues to grow and we're struggling to understand the level of need for these students and provide them the space, services, and staff support they need. Some of our severe needs students require one-on-one support throughout the day, which presents staffing problems for us. We've found that local pediatricians, special education teachers, and schools refer students with needs to our school because of our nurturing and holistic approach to education.
- We're running out of space in our old historic building and struggle to find places that our contractors, interventionists, and teachers can use on a consistent basis. Being resourceful, flexible, and creative, our Special Education Department has restructured their classrooms and created a sensory room for students who need sensory breaks throughout the day. We also converted a commons room into a space for middle school pull-out groups. Although we continue to be flexible and resourceful, we recognize that our ability to continue to provide separate spaces for pull-out groups

Inadequate or inconsistent disciplinary supports and actions:

- Over the past couple of years, we've noticed an increase in violent behaviors, suicidal ideation, physical threats, trauma-informed incidents, and crisis situations among some students. Although we feel that we are not unique among public schools experiencing these types of behaviors, we are realizing that more training and resources are needed for our teachers, staff, and parents to help address and hopefully prevent these behaviors. In addition to our Waldorf training, which includes therapeutic educational practices that are innate in Waldorf education, staff and faculty have participated in trauma-informed educational training, suicide prevention training, crisis prevention intervention training, safety and threat assessment training, and positive behavioral intervention strategy training. However, more training and implementation of our strategies continues to be a need as students with these needs continue to enroll here.
- The Waldorf approach to classroom management is highly effective in creating a rhythmic, calm, and connected classroom. This works best when teachers are clear about their learning objectives, have established relationships with their students and know what their students need from them,

confident in themselves, and know and take advantage of the resources and supports offered to them by administration. For teachers new to teaching or new to Waldorf methods, managing classroom behaviors can be overwhelming and can become disastrous if the rules, rhythm, and classroom expectations are not communicated clearly and regularly. In the past, classroom management practices were inconsistent among our teachers with varying levels of teaching experience and supports from the administration were not in place to help struggling teachers. This led to frustration among parents, teachers, and students.

- Despite the increased training and focus on a holistic approach to disciplinary actions, we still experienced an increase of out-of-school and in-school suspensions last year and some incidents that involved police intervention. Our major goal is to reduce the amount of missed class time due to classroom removals and suspensions, especially among students who have special needs.

Inconsistency in Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction:

- The methodology and time-frame of the introduction of Waldorf math concepts do not align exactly to the state expectations and standards. There is also no set Waldorf curriculum that we use. Because of this, we have to supplement our math instruction with non-Waldorf math materials in order to meet the state standards. This year, our teachers will be using Mindset Mathematics and CK-12 curricula in addition to Waldorf math materials.
- Because our teachers "loop" with the same group of students from 1st grade through the 5th grade or even to the 8th grade, in some cases, the consistency, quality, and frequency of math instruction varies from teacher to teacher. Having one specialist teacher to teach math, especially in the middle school grades, will help us ensure the consistency and quality of the math instruction.

Student mobility, absenteeism, and parent involvement:

- Unfortunately we do not have bus service, a meals program, or a before care program making it difficult for some of our low-income families to keep their children at the school or transport them regularly and on-time to and from school. Absenteeism and student mobility rates are higher among some of our F/R students, which may also effect student achievement scores and growth scores for this subgroup.
- Until SY17-18, the school's enforcement of its Attendance Policy was applied unevenly and inconsistently. This may have inadvertently created an assumption among our families that attendance is not as important to us and therefore adherence to our attendance policy among families was a struggle for the school to attain. With the addition of automatic letter generation for students with unexcused absences, better parent education, attendance contracts, and meetings between the Director of School Performance and families who have students with attendance issues, the number of unexcused absences have lessened, although our habitual trancies and chronic absences continue to be much higher than we want them to be. More up-front parent education about the importance of positive attendance will continue to be an important factor in curbing absenteeism going into the future.
- In order to curb the "revolving door" effect with families coming into the school with little knowledge or appreciation for the approach to Waldorf education and then withdrawing their students because of dissatisfaction with the school, we hosted monthly parent information sessions for enrolled families and weekly parent information sessions for prospective families throughout the year. The Director of School Performance, who is

responsible for enrollment, conducts weekly tours to educate families interested in Waldorf education and meets with incoming families to discuss the enrollment process, parent expectations, and the approach to education at our school.

- Last year, we had to sacrifice our Cooking Arts Classroom and convert it to a regular classroom in order to make space for our incoming 1st graders. This was an unpopular decision, as this program was much beloved and locally recognized as a hallmark program. This is the second year in a row that we had to compromise our programming because of the lack of space in the building. During our strategic planning sessions in during the spring of 2018, our 8th grade students provided input that the school needs to offer more amenities (e.g., clubs, sports, student council, activities, etc.) like other middle schools offer. Because of the limited space in our facility, we are unable to offer additional programs and amenities that are offered in other public schools and Waldorf school, which is a contributing factor for families choosing to leave or not enroll their children in Mountain Song.
- As stated before, the increase of the amount and severity of behavioral incidents in the school has caused other students to feel insecure and unsafe in the classrooms and causing some of them to withdrawal from the school and contributing to the decline in enrollment. Unfortunately, we are combatting a perception among some parents in and outside of our community that we are a "last resort" school for behavior issues or a special needs school.

Action Plans

Planning Form



Establish a multi-tiered behavioral response framework

What will success look like: Building on the Three Stream Student Support Model, which was our previous discipline and behavior support system, we will revise our disciplinary policies and practices school-wide to include more Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS), Social and Emotional Learning, and trauma-informed approaches school-wide.

Associated Root Causes:



Teacher Support, Training, and Resources:

Although the school has dedicated its professional development dollars to Waldorf certification training for all its teachers, there is still a great need to provide the teachers with more classroom management assistance, training, and resources to better support them and their students.

Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports:



We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.



Inconsistent and unevenly applied classroom management practices:

Although it's supposed to be implemented using our pedagogy, we've not applied standard classroom management expectations school-wide in a consistent manner. Teachers, especially those who are new to Waldorf or new to teaching, sometimes struggle with managing behaviors, redirecting students, and enforcing discipline in the classroom.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
 PBIS, SEL, and Trauma-Informed Training	All classroom, subject, special education teachers and paras will be trained on PBIS, SEL, and trauma-informed interventions	08/26/2019 06/05/2020	Dean of Students, Principal	
 Incorporating SEL in Classrooms	All classroom and subject teachers will incorporate Social and Emotional Learning frameworks in the classrooms	09/03/2019 06/05/2020	Dean of Students, Principal, Teachers	

Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
 Hire a Dean of Students	Hire a Dean of Students to provide social, emotional, and behavioral support to students and to work proactively with teachers in handling or lessening classroom behavioral incidents.	06/01/2019 07/01/2019	General budget	ELT	



PBIS, SEL, and Trauma-Informed Training

The Dean of Students and the Principal will provide training in Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS), social and emotional learning, and trauma-informed intervention training to teachers and staff during our yearly in-service training days

08/26/2019
08/28/2019

General budget

Dean of Students,
Principal



SEL Goals

Each classroom and subject teacher will work with the Principal to create measurable SEL goals each year as a part of their yearly evaluation process.

09/03/2019
06/05/2020

Principal, teachers



Increase math achievement and growth scores school-wide

What will success look like: We will improve our math scores and will reduce the number of students on RTI plans, especially in the middle school grades, by creating consistent math instruction school-wide.

Associated Root Causes:



Lack of Set Math Curriculum:

In Waldorf education, there are curriculum guides and frameworks in which we instruct math, but no set of math curricula. Teachers are given autonomy in how they deliver the content to the students and prepare their lesson plans, but there are no text books, worksheets, or set curricula that they use.



Inadequate Classroom Differentiation:

We have historically offered inadequate and/or inconsistent differentiation for the range of student ability levels within each classroom.



Teacher Support, Training, and Resources:

Although the school has dedicated its professional development dollars to Waldorf certification training for all its teachers, there is still a great need to provide the teachers with more classroom management assistance, training, and resources to better support them and their students.



Inconsistency of Math Curriculum Due to Looping:

Our practice of teachers "looping" with their students, although very effective in creating cohesion in the classroom and reducing behaviors, has resulted in inconsistencies in the frequency and fidelity that teachers instruct math.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
 Differentiation Training	Train all classroom teachers on differentiation.	08/26/2019 06/05/2020 Quarterly	Special Education Coordinator, Principal	
 Establish Consistent Math Instruction	Establish consistent math instruction and use additional math curriculum school-wide	09/03/2019 06/04/2020 Weekly	Classroom teachers, Pedagogical Director, Principal, Middle School Math Teacher	
 Test Preparation	Teachers in grades 3-8 will better prepare students for the CMAS math tests in the spring.	09/03/2019 04/06/2020 Weekly	Classroom teachers, Middle School Math Teacher, Math and Reading Interventionist	
 Teacher Mentoring	Elementary Field Mentor to work with teachers who are a part of the MSCS Waldorf teacher training program cohort	09/03/2019 06/30/2020 Quarterly	Principal, Pedagogical Director	
 Review Interim	The math teacher and upper grades Math and Reading Interventionists will review NWEA MAP math scores to assess what students need additional math support	09/09/2019 06/04/2020 Monthly	Grades 4-8 grade Math and Reading Interventionist, Middle School Math Teacher	

Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
 Hire a Middle School Math Teacher	Hire a part-time middle school math teacher to consistently teach math in grades 6-8.	06/01/2019 08/30/2019	General Budget	ELT	
 Mindset Math Curriculum	Teachers will implement the research-based Mindset Math Curriculum, in addition to Waldorf math materials and resources.	08/19/2019 06/05/2020	General Budget	Principal, Classroom Teachers, Middle School Math Teacher	
 CK-12 Math Curriculum	Teachers will use the free CK-12 math curricula to supplement Mindset Math and Waldorf math materials and resources	09/03/2019 06/04/2020		Classroom teachers, Math and Reading Interventionist, Middle School Math Teacher	
 Test Preparation	The Math and Reading Interventionist, Middle School Math Teacher, and classroom teachers in grades 3-8, will prepare students for the CMAS math tests by introducing sample test questions and concepts and will provide them with test-taking skills to improve performance.	09/03/2019 04/06/2020		Math and Reading Interventionists, Middle School Math Teacher, classroom teachers	
	The Math and Reading Interventionist for grades 4-8 will screen	09/09/2019		Math and Reading Interventionist for Grades 4-8,	

Identification of students needing math supports	and identify students who are at or below the 25th percentile in math for MTSS.	06/05/2020	Title 1 Funds	classroom teachers
 Identification of GT math students	Based on the interim assessment math data, the Math and Reading Interventionist and GT teacher will identify the students who qualify for GT services in math.	09/09/2019 05/24/2019		GT Teacher, Math and Reading Interventionist for Grades 4-8
 Professional Development	Katherine Lehman, Elementary Field Mentor, will train all teachers on Meeting the Needs of All Our Children.	10/14/2019 10/14/2019	Title 2 Part A	Principal, Elementary Field Mentor, Classroom teachers, Pedagogical Director



Retain and recruit students in grades K-8

What will success look like: We will reduce the amount of students who transfer from Mountain Song to other schools in the area and will recruit enough students to balance our budget and hopefully allow us to attain a double-tracked K-8 grade facility.

Associated Root Causes:



Inadequate Facility Space:

Our old school building does not have adequate space to allow for us to continue to expand classes or programs



Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports:

We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.

**Lack of clear expectations for parents:**

Many parents seeking an alternative education for their students may come to our school with limited or no understanding about our processes, requirements, and our pedagogy. In the past, the school was not enforcing its policies consistently, which resulted in confused or frustrated parents and noncompliance with our policies.

**Inadequate Classroom Differentiation:**

We have historically offered inadequate and/or inconsistent differentiation for the range of student ability levels within each classroom.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
 Increase Marketing Efforts	Outreach to various digital and printed publications in the Pikes Peak region	09/03/2019 06/30/2020 Quarterly	Director of School Performance	
 Survey Families	Survey families about their experience at Mountain Song and gather feedback about how we can improve our programing	09/03/2019 06/30/2020 Monthly	Director of School Performance, SAC, ELT, Board of Directors	
 Outreach	Increase outreach efforts to various areas in the Pikes Peak region to recruit new students.	09/03/2019 06/05/2020 Quarterly	Director of School Performance	

Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
				Director of School Performance,	



Website

Redesign the MSCS website to include up-to-date information about school and enrollment process. Redesign website to be more mobile friendly.

08/01/2019
11/01/2019

General budget

Director of Operations, Communications Consultant



Parent Communication

Teachers will improve the quality and consistency of communication with parents through regular newsletters, correspondence, phone calls, parent-teacher conferences, and report-writing.

08/19/2019
06/30/2020

Principal, Teachers



Exit Survey

Develop a process for interviewing exiting families that increases exit survey responses.

10/07/2019
06/05/2020

Director of School Performance, Parent Council, SAC, Communications Consultant



Parent Outreach

Train parent volunteers to talk about Waldorf education to interested families in the community.

10/07/2019
06/06/2020

Director of School Performance, Parent Council, SAC



Develop a plan for a new facility

What will success look like: In the next 8 months, we will identify the preferred size, location, funding, investors, and next steps for a new double-tracked K-8 grade facility that will allow us to continue to grow and thrive in perpetuity.

Associated Root Causes:



Inadequate Facility Space:

Our old school building does not have adequate space to allow for us to continue to expand classes or programs



Increasing enrollment with students needing extra supports:

We've experienced an increase of students needing additional behavioral, emotional, and special education services that challenges us, because of the amount of hours, types of services, staff, and physical space that is needed for these students.

Implementation Benchmarks Associated with MIS

IB Name	Description	Start/End/ Repeats	Key Personnel	Status
 Mobilize Development and Futures Committees	The Development and Futures Committees of the Board of Directors will combine forces for the year to mobilize efforts to secure a new building site.	09/14/2019 08/15/2020	Board of Directors, Executive Leadership Team	

Action Steps Associated with MIS

Name	Description	Start/End Date	Resource	Key Personnel	Status
 Communication	Communicate regularly with MSCS community to describe ongoing actions, plans, and efforts.	09/14/2019 08/15/2020		Futures Committee, Development Committee, Board of Directors, Executive Leadership Team	
 Consultation	Meet with consultant to discuss desirable square footage, available funding sources, and next steps for acquiring a new facility	10/08/2019 10/08/2019	General budget	Futures Committee, Director of Operations,	

				CSI/CO League of Charter Schools Consultant
 Realtor	Identify a realtor to assist in finding commercial real estate properties in Colorado Springs.	10/08/2019 12/01/2019	General budget	Futures Committee, Director of Operations, Board of Directors
 Funding	Review and explore grant funding options, including BEST Grant process.	10/15/2019 02/24/2020	General Budget	Futures Committee, Director of Operations, Development Committee, Consultants, Board of Directors, ELT

School Target Setting

Priority Performance Challenge : Inadequate or inconsistent disciplinary supports and actions

 **PERFORMANCE INDICATOR:** Student Behavior

MEASURES / METRICS:

2019-2020: By the end of 2019-2020, the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions will be reduced by 20% compared to the 2018-2019 academic year.

2020-2021: By the end of 2020-2021, the number of out-of-school and in-school suspensions will be reduced by 30% compared

ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
TARGETS

to the 2018-2019 academic year.

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2019-2020: Number of Behavioral referrals to Dean of Students, number of reportable incidents, number of suspensions



Priority Performance Challenge : Inadequate resources, personnel, and space for students with severe needs



Priority Performance Challenge : Continuous decline in math scores school-wide



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Academic Achievement (Status)

MEASURES / METRICS: M

ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
TARGETS

2019-2020: In 2019-2020, 35% of our elementary students will meet or exceed state expectations in math with the goal of meeting the local district's current percentage of approximately 50% of elementary students meeting or exceeding state expectations in math the year after. In 2019-2020, 35% of our middle school student will meet or exceed state expectations in math with the goal of 50% of middle school students meeting or exceeding state expectation in math the year after.

2020-2021: In 2020-2021, 40% of our elementary students will meet or exceed state expectations in math with the goal of meeting the local district's current percentage of approximately 50% of elementary students meeting or exceeding state expectations in math the year after. In 2020-2021, 40% of our middle school student will meet or exceed state expectations in math with the goal of 50% of middle school students meeting or exceeding state expectation in math the year after.

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2019-2020: NWEA MAP Math scores, CMAS scores



Priority Performance Challenge : Student mobility



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR: Other

MEASURES / METRICS:

ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
TARGETS

2019-2020: At the end of the year in 2019-2020, the student mobility percentage will be reduced to 12% from the 15% mobility rate in 2018-2019 academic year.

2020-2021: At the end of the year in 2020-2021, the student mobility percentage will be reduced to 10% from the 15% mobility rate in 2018-2019 academic year.

INTERIM MEASURES FOR 2019-2020: Number of withdrawals throughout the year, percentage of parent/guardian attendance at teacher conferences, climate survey results
