



STEM School SAC Meeting Minutes April 2023

Meeting Date: April 26, 2023

Meeting Location: 8920 Barrons Blvd - Mechatronics Lab

Time: 5:40 pm - 8:10 pm

Meeting Logistics

Call to Order: 5:40pm

Present:

- D.J. Steines, Vice Chair, Parent Rep
- Ishmeet Kalra, Recorder, Parent Rep
- Ronalea Alleman, Communications Chair, Parent Rep
- Liz Berstch, Parent Rep
- Audie Rubin Parent Rep
- Andrew Mauger, Parent Rep
- Maria Pirvulescu, Parent Rep
- Stephanie Ramirez, Parent Rep (online)
- LynAnn Kovalesky, Executive Director STEM School Highlands Ranch
- Samantha Ackley, Elementary Teacher Rep
- Dr. Karen Johnson, Interim CEO KOSON Schools

Absent:

- Jason O'Rourke, Chair
- Bernadette Amaya, DAC liaison, Parent Rep
- Kelsey Farnan, Secondary Teacher Rep
- Tatyana Akhmetova, Parent Rep
- Heidi Peterson, PTO Representative
- Tula Zeng, Parent Rep
- Andrea Day, Parent Rep

Quorum Met: Yes

Guests: Kimberly Lander (online for part of the time); Michelle Gasser, Director of Professional Development, Dr. Jistine Harrison, Director of Student Support

Pledge of Allegiance and reciting of the Mission Statement

Motion to approve the February 2023 Minutes motion made by Andrew, motion seconded by Liz, motion passes unanimously

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Director Report:

LynAnn Kovalesky, Executive Director STEM School Highlands Ranch

- Testing went well, almost done
- Elementary: iReady shows lot of student growth, teachers are really excited and happy about results
- Secondary Musical: Little Mermaid in the gym: everyone really excited to use gym as theater
- Staff Retention: 5 going to other districts (mostly secondary); 1 retiring; 1 moving overseas; 2 in support services; Dr. Johnson retiring. 4 positions from last year. 16 total teaching vacancies; pay is in line with district payscale. Erin Kane came to PD day to explain MLO/Bond funding. Dr. Johnson speaks about school funding PPR increasing 9-11% projected by state, but DCSD doesn't get as much funding because we have larger tax base, however we don't get MLO/Bond passed regularly
- STEM is trying to incentivize staff in other ways, benefits, retention bonus, already got 6% for the year
- Will get additional data from staff survey end of year; STEM teacher care model for PBL; SBL
- Hiring is harder this year; candidate pool is leaner and less teacher applications. Comparing to last few years, the teacher retention is better, but still challenging because of housing costs; sign-on bonus; referral bonus; other factors
- Celebrations by Dr. Johnson: Graduating class going to a variety of very impressive colleges. 25 graduating seniors originally started at STEM as 5th graders (out of class of 100)

New Business:

Michelle Gasser

SBL/Mastery Connect

- SBL has been challenging because K-12 needs are different
- Using Mastery Connect in secondary because determining grades in Canvas on SBL didn't calculate grades as it should have (even though Canvas advertised it as such)
- Not a problem in elementary, but more complex in secondary (plus elementary had already been trained year earlier)
- A group of middle school/high school teachers were trained by elementary teachers. Pilot program was expanded to parents and students. (275, only 13 responded) Parents and students were notified through IC and a how-to guide to train with Mastery Connect and followed via email.
 - Most parents forgot they were part of the pilot program, even though multiple email/messages sent
 - 60% preferred Mastery Connect rather than Canvas and want to move forward with MasteryConnect.
 - Staff 14% neutral, rest agreed with MasteryConnect
- Moving forward: MasteryConnect in elementary and secondary will use Mastery Connect within Canvas
- Supported MasteryConnect with PD, so they are ready to go next year
- MasteryConnect parent nights upcoming (May and beginning next year) so that parents are able to see scope and sequence of Standards Based Learning (some standards will be covered over a longer period time; may skew percentages). Allows for a quick view of what standards and what percentage of standards have been mastered by students.

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- Question: are there other tools that have been analyzed and weighed.
 - Answer: Challenge for k-12 school; Canvas was committed to 5 years (next year would be the year to reassess); Schoology was analyzed, but secondary did not like it at all. MasteryConnect allows for SBL through Canvas
- Question: can you separate based on semesters?
 - Answer: elementary kids show growth throughout the year on a continuum
- Day in/day out users are the educators to help with SBL and grading. Parents need to be heard, but educators are the primary users (so might help with staff training). Want more intentional PD on SBL

Calendar Proposal (2024-2025 school year)

- At least every 3 weeks, discussion around M, W, F pros/cons
- Late starts (9:35am)
- Early release (12:30pm)
- Pros/Cons discussion
- Need 4 additional contact days to meet instructional minutes
- Other considerations: Staggered dismissal/lunch
- Aligns with need for Teacher care model/meaningful PD; needs balance with family need for childcare; concurrent enrollment schedule
- When surveying, connect back to teacher care model

Dr. Jistine Harrison: MTSS Update and Access

Need to have more support for SEL and building a comprehensive mental health program, especially because of increased rate of mental health/threat/suicide assessments in the past couple of years

- Reworking grant (\$135k) to bring in more resources and structure to SEL; data driven/assessment; over a couple of years
- In order to achieve, students and staff must have a sense of feeling safe (Maslow before Bloom)
- Opportunity to support all students to achieve their full potential. Want children to identify needs, talents, and independent self-actualization.
- Proposing Access (grades 6-12); 20-30 minutes; 2x per week for all students instead of study hall
 - More structured, delivered by mental health team (less burden on teachers)
 - Will follow MTSS model/system of supports
 - Tier 1: core instruction
 - Tier 2: targeted intervention
 - Tier 3: intensive intervention
 - Identify impact on access to education
 - Input from teacher is first step; if child is performing at level, then only need Tier1
 - 4-6 weeks support to help get child through hurdle/difficult time
 - If long term, then refer to outside services because of limited resources/capacity at school
 - Curriculum
 - SMARTS executive function curriculum
 - Merrell's Strong kids
 - Hatching Results (Tier 3, delivered by mental health professionals)

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- Capturing Kids' Hearts
- Love and Logic/Second Step (elementary)

Standing Reports:

- **Subcommittees**
 - UIP: No updates, will get test results in August
 - Parent Survey: Discussion on survey questions (SBL added), push out soon (this week or next), important to connect decision making to data from survey feedback might help buy-in and increased response rate
 - Student Survey: Led by Student Advisory Group
 - Communications: Need additional members, might recruit candidates who don't win BOD elections
- **Teacher Report:**
 - Elementary: Ms. Samantha Ackley
 - lots going on, field trips, teachers are excited about planning for next year
- **DAC Report**
 - DAC members discussed anti-bullying policy and charter school applications
- **PTO Report**
 - Heidi not present, LynnAnn provided highlights
 - \$10,000 provided for spring grant cycles (microscopes for secondary science)
 - STEMFEST doubled in participation and attendance from last year
- **DEI Report**
 - Jason led DEI training for all staff last PD
 - DEI committee looking for more stakeholders to join discussions
- **Community Report**
 - Still a vacancy on SAC
- **BOD Report**
 - CIO interviews concluded last week

May meeting needs to be moved due to High School Senior Night. Maria moved to change date, Liz seconds, passed unanimously

Open Forum: No public comments

Adjournment:

Motion to Adjourn at 8:10pm by Andrew, Ish second, passed unanimously
Next SAC meeting on May 16, 2023 in PTech Building