

she will ask for the Board of Education to pass a resolution on the subject. She asked for the committee's formal support as well.

Director of Assessment and Gifted Education Lori Benton said that assessment of school readiness is required by the READ act. Charter schools may refuse to participate, but public schools must use TS Gold or a similar assessment. Request for a waiver of the use of TS Gold is an example of local control on the part of the district.

Benton said that results of the assessment do not determine whether a student can move on in school. Once granted, the waiver is permanent.

Benton also pointed out that TS Gold will still be required for students with Individual Education Plans and those who are economically disadvantaged.

The waiver would begin with the 2016-17 school year.

The committee approved the request for a waiver.

Unified Improvement Plan introduction

Benton introduced the committee to the use of Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs) as a means of assessing school and district performance in the areas of academic achievement, academic growth, academic growth gaps and postsecondary and workforce readiness.

The form is generated by CDE with scores from the previous school year. Teachers are required to analyze various data to determine strengths, weaknesses, and trends in a school's performance. Following the analysis, schools determine challenges, set targets, and develop action plans.

The form includes a section in which

a school offers a narrative describing these issues. This narrative may include the population of the school, an analysis of the cause of challenges, and a general statement of proposed action.

The final stage is to plan actions to improve performance, including ways in which improvements can be quantified and the possible costs of these actions. These may include the hiring of additional resource staff, professional development, or change in curriculum materials.

In the past, the committee has reviewed UIPs at each of its meetings from January through April. This year, Benton and the co-chairs of the committee will instead attend meetings at the individual schools to analyze and discuss the documents.

At its April meeting, the documents will all be reviewed and approved for submission to CDE.

Technology update

Director of Institutional and Informational Technology Liz Walhof presented an overview of her activities.

She said that she is responding to concerns about data privacy by creating a form that teachers must complete before using any new software in the classroom. She then reviews the "fine print" in agreements to use the software, sometimes rejecting its use and sometimes requesting changes from the vendor to make the software acceptable.

Walhof said that there is now a technology advisory committee in place to determine which 21st-century skills will be required of students once they enter the workforce or higher education. Also examined are the proficiencies required of staff. A final portion of the plan is the goal

to enable students to try a number of different technologies before entering the workforce. A plan for this curriculum is under development.

Regarding data privacy, Walhof said that the district is required to send files to the state that include gender, economic status, and EL status. She said that all such data are encrypted when sent.

Benton also pointed out that the information developed from this data can only be used for research purposes and that the district withholds most of the information until the end of the testing window.

Principal Peggy Griebenow gave a brief introduction to Palmer Lake Elementary School, which was founded in 1934 and has been named a National Title I school, one of 100 nationwide, on the basis of closing the achievement gap among its students.

The next meeting of the District Accountability Advisory Committee will be held at 7 p.m. on Jan. 12 at Bear Creek Elementary School, 1330 Creekside Drive, Monument.

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Thank You Tri-Lakes Area!

Thanks to the following local businesses, organizations, communities, and individuals for making the 2015 Thanksgiving Day Community Coming Together event a great success. It was another great example of our Community Coming Together.

Eric and Madeline VanDenHoek
Monument Homemakers Club
Anonymous donors and volunteers