

District Accountability Advisory Committee, Feb. 10

# Committee discusses Monument Academy and Lewis-Palmer Elementary UIPs

By Harriet Halbig

The District Accountability Advisory Committee of the Lewis-Palmer school district discussed the Unified Improvement Plans (UIPs) for Monument Academy and Lewis-Palmer Elementary School at its Feb. 10 meeting.

Lis Richard gave a brief introduction to the Monument Academy campus, where the meeting was held. She said that Monument Academy is the second-largest school in the district with 950 students in grades K through 8 and is parent-run, with its own Board of Directors. The academy abides by the same laws as the traditional schools in the district. All teachers are certified. The contract between the district and the academy is renewed every five years, with the next renewal due next year. The district and the academy are pleased with their relationship, she said.

Monument Academy has no plans to include the high school grades, because the district's high schools are of high quality.

Class size is kept below 24 students. Special education services are offered, as are programs for gifted students. Parents are asked to volunteer at least 16 hours per semester. Middle school programs are segregated from the lower grades.

### Monument Academy UIP

Richard reported that this was a good year for the academy. In the previous year, the school was rated as "approaching" and "does not meet" in some areas and that is no longer the case. She said that part of the problem is that when dealing with high achieving students, showing growth is challenging. All of the targets created last year have been met.

Although all targets were met, there are a few initiatives being pursued. The first of these is to better align the curriculum vertically to avoid duplication of effort. The second is to stress reading more at the middle school level.

Monument Academy is rated as "exceeds" in academic achievement and "meets" in academic growth and academic growth gaps.

### Lewis-Palmer Elementary School UIP

Lewis-Palmer Elementary School (LPES) is rated as "meets" in academic achievement and academic growth and as "approaching" in academic growth gaps. The school is rated as "meets" in academic growth in the areas of reading and writing, and as "approaching" in mathematics.

In academic growth gaps, the school rated as "meets" in reading for those on free/reduced lunch. Among minority

students and English learners, it has a rating of "approaching" for students needing to catch up and a rating of "does not meet" for students with disabilities.

The school is rated as "does not meet" in math for all categories except students who need to catch up, which is rated as "approaching." In writing, minority students and English learners are rated as "meets," those eligible for free/reduced lunch and those needing to catch up are rated as "approaching," and students with disabilities are rated as "does not meet."

The narrative included in the UIP stated that the decline in performance in math is of particular concern and that analysis has shown that the students who were receiving extra help outside of the classroom were often missing important things inside the classroom. As students fall further behind, the amount of growth required in a given year increases.

Causes of the problems were identified as a lack of professional development and a tendency to teach to the general population rather than small group intervention.

In terms of target setting, the UIP states that LPES will

provide professional development focused on using best practices to embed progress monitoring in math and to plan for differentiated learning so the growth rate will increase. Implementation of this plan will include the use of the NWEA assessment several times a year to monitor progress.

Math in particular will be a focus of attention, with professional development offered and monthly meetings to adjust instruction based on discussion and analysis of data.

### Community Family Partnership update

Special Education Parent Liaison Michelle Nay spoke briefly on the subject of family, school, and community partnering in support of the Colorado Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

The rationale behind community family partnering is that students spend more than 70 percent of their waking hours in school and therefore activities in the home and community should support concepts taught in the schools. Therefore, responsibility for the success of students is shared among the school, family, and community.

Among the expectations of the program are that schools will

welcome all families, communicate effectively with families, share power over curriculum and other matters, support student success, and collaborate with the community. Some ways to apply these expectations are to offer flexible hours for meetings, use of partnering vocabulary, welcoming family participation on teams, and homework design focused on successful completion.

### Legislative update

School Board Liaison John Magerko spoke of ongoing efforts by the Colorado Testing Task Force to reduce the amount of testing, notably testing of high school seniors and testing of juniors except for the ACT test, and allowing more time for kindergarten students to take the first READ Act assessment. The task force also recommends allowing students to use paper and pencil for tests.

Superintendent Karen Brofft reported on the annual meeting of the Colorado Association of School Executives. The primary subjects of discussion were school spending and the governor's request for an addi-

tional \$380 million in 2015-16, and the fact that school districts should not accept current funding levels as the new normal.

Brofft said that District 38 has lost \$19 million in the past few years due to shortfalls in funding from the state level.

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The District Accountability Advisory Committee meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. Locations vary. The March 10 meeting will be at Prairie Winds Elementary School, 7909 Kings Deer Pt. E., Monument.

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## Celtic Countdown

<p><b>thurs 3/12</b></p> <p><b>irish tap takeover</b> <b>irish trivia: 6-8p</b></p> <p><b>mobile hangers boutique:</b> <b>6-8p benefits</b></p>	<p><b>frí 3/13</b></p> <p><b>7p</b></p> <p><b>leprechaun contest 8p</b></p>
<p><b>sat 3/14</b></p>	
<p><b>four miles for kenya race 7:30a*</b></p> <p><b>kegs, eggs-n-blarney scones:</b> \$15, 9a til sold out</p> <p><b>paddy o' the peak on nitro: 6p</b></p>	<p><b>irish dance troop: 3p</b></p> <p><b>bag piper: 4:30p</b></p> <p><b>the local food truck 5p</b></p> <p><b>the constant tourists: 7p</b></p>

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