



MESA VALLEY
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Charter School Application

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While Mesa Valley Community School (MVCS) has only existed for fifteen years, it has had an unusual history. Because understanding that history can be helpful to explain some of the things MVCS is doing to adjust its program as it seeks a new charter from Mesa County Valley School District #51 (District 51), we include a brief overview of this history here.

The story of MVCS began when a group of people affiliated with a school named Delta Vision (a contract school in Delta County School District 50J) proposed that District 51 should open its own school serving homeschoolers. After District 51 approved its own version of this school, its doors opened for the 2008-2009 school year. Officially, the school was named “Mesa Valley Vision—Home & Community Program,” (MVV) but that mouthful was usually shortened to Vision. The nutshell of MVV’s educational program revolved around the idea of parents homeschooling their children with support from MVV staff who would oversee academic progress, connect parents to resources, and make sure requirements were being met. Staff members were assigned to each family and verified that students were logging enough time “doing school” and held monthly meetings to review student work, address concerns, and make sure parents had what they needed to complete their child’s learning plan. If parents needed to buy things like curriculum, school supplies and equipment, or needed educational services to complete their child’s learning plan, staff would help them document the expenses and be reimbursed for them out of an annual amount allocated to each student for this purpose.

MVV was set up as a contract school. It had its own board and state waivers similar to a charter school, but while it operated autonomously in many ways, it was quite connected to District 51 in others. Overall human resource matters were handled by District 51, since employees of MVV were employees of District 51, not MVV; however, day-to-day operations of staff were handled at the school level. Regarding finance, District 51 held the school’s funds in its own accounts, but the school managed its own budget. Twenty percent of the school’s Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) was retained by District 51 along with any other money not spent annually. In fact, MVV typically returned a significant amount of money to the District annually in the form of unspent funds. The school’s expenses were low, however, so this wasn’t a problem. There were no school-taught classes for students to attend—all classes were taught by parents at home or were attended in a community setting, so the only facility costs MVV had were for a small space where a few administrative staff had offices, while most staff worked from home. The monthly progress meetings were usually conducted at the home of the family. Large meetings or student testing was done at a District 51 facility or in a church rented for the occasion.

It didn’t look much like a “school,” but it was a school, and it worked. From its inception, MVV/MVCS managed to gain and maintain a performance rating from CDE. MVV students were successful, and many attended year after year. The school has now existed long enough that the graduating class of 2021 had two students in it who had begun attending as 1st graders (the second year MVV existed) and were now graduating with honors.

For the 2014-2015 school year, MVV/MVCS underwent some significant adjustments as it changed from a contract to a charter school. This came about because MVV had originally been set up to operate as if it had a waiver to teacher licensure requirements. However, because District 51 does not have the authority to grant a waiver of this nature for a contract school, the school could only get this waiver by

becoming a charter. At that time, CDE also mandated that the school shift from monthly to weekly check-ins for student academic progress. To meet CDE requirements, staff roles and most school procedures were significantly reworked at this time. Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, parents were now required to report details of student progress weekly via a custom-built website along with the monthly meetings which still occurred (during which physical student work was reviewed and Highly Qualified Academic Advisors met with parents to work through any issues that may have arisen).

The change from contract to charter school had many other ripple effects—at that point the school changed its name to Mesa Valley Community School (MVCS) and the school gained more autonomy from District 51. MVCS staff were no longer employees of District 51. The school opened its own bank account. The school's budget changed considerably because it now followed District 51 charter school practices which allowed MVCS to retain most of its PPR. This, in turn, allowed the school to acquire a large facility for the first time. The larger space allowed MVCS to begin offering optional blended learning classes on-site a year or two later.

An even larger permanent, non-leased facility was acquired during the 2018-2019 school year with the help of District 51 via a Certificates of Participation (COP) process. The acquisition of the current facility has made a dramatic difference in the types of services the school can provide. Since 2008, MVCS has gone from having a facility without enough space to even hold staff meetings, to instead having a building which has 10 full-size classrooms, several smaller classes and many other spaces serving the needs of staff, students and parents. While school-offered classes were originally non-existent and later on became an optional supplement to what was provided for students, today MVCS has moved toward using these blended learning classes as the backbone of its program. Through the years, MVCS has also significantly adjusted to improve how it works with special needs students—including those on IEPs, 504s, ALPs, READ plans, etc.

Between its beginning in 2008 and now, the school has undergone many changes. It is now in its 4th building. It is on its 4th Director. And it is on its 4th contract with District 51 (contracts signed in years 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2018). Though there have been significant changes, a constant for the school has been building strong connections with those in the homeschool community and with District 51. We have been the bridge between public schooling and homeschooling.

Mesa County has a strong homeschool population which contains parents seeking a different approach to education—one as unique as each of their children. Homeschooling parents come from all walks of life and backgrounds; they have different skills, different levels of education, and access to different resources. What they have in common is a mindset that prioritizes schooling over other activities the parents could be engaged in, and a mindset which embraces education as a way of life. Homeschool parents are committed to seeing each of their children as individuals and meeting their specific needs for character development while also attending to their educational needs. Students benefit from this greater connection to family and on-on-one instruction and interaction.

Through the years, MVV/MVCS has brought value to the homeschool community by providing training and accountability to parents (who are usually not trained specifically in education). The background that parents may be lacking in this way has been made up for by school staff who help parents identify and address areas of concern. The school has also expanded its offerings through the years to offer more than just support at home, and has grown to offer on-site classes, support for students with exceptional needs, and vital social connections for students. As challenges have arisen, MVCS has

actively engaged with CDE, education law, and education organizations (e.g. the Colorado League of Charter Schools, other charters in the area, and other alternative schools across the state), and continues to keep abreast of new research for alternative education and best practices for education—especially for students who learn at home.

Per CDE direction, MVCS is now being required to make its most significant change to date. In the fall of 2021, MVCS was notified by CDE that the school will no longer be allowed to be funded as a public school for any classes on student schedules which are taught by parents, as these are not in compliance with the Public School Finance Act of 1994 (Finance Act). As the majority of classes on the schedules of elementary students were in this category, for the 2022-2023 school year MVCS elected to claim no full-time funding for students in grades K-5, but to instead offer a homeschool enrichment program for students in these grades—something which allows MVCS to receive part-time funding for these students, and something that we believe still allows us to serve our target population of homeschool students.

CDE granted MVCS an additional year to become fully compliant with the Finance Act; MVCS will finish its transition for grades 6-12 for the 2023-2024 school year. Becoming compliant for grades 6-12 necessitates fundamental changes for these grades. MVCS is seeking to become categorized as a single-district online school. This is a technical designation for the purposes of becoming compliant with the Finance Act; MVCS students will take few (if any) actual “online” classes. Instead, the bulk of classes on student schedules will be made up of blended learning classes or those taken at WCCC or CMU. Most MVCS blended learning classes will be 75-minute classes offered on-site two days a week. These classes will require more parent oversight than those at a traditional school, as roughly 60% of a typical student’s school week will be overseen by the parent at home. This necessitates heavy parent involvement in the educational process—making sure their children are on-track for more than just the usual homework after school at a brick and mortar school. To be clear, student schedules will no longer include classes taught by their parents. Instead, the role of parents will shift to helping craft a schedule unique to their child, and then actively supporting and guiding their children through the portion of their child’s work that must be completed at home.

The timeline for full compliance with the Finance Act corresponds with MVCS’ need to negotiate a new contract with District 51 for the 2023-2024 school year. As there will be so many changes to MVCS’s educational program and finances, District 51 is requiring MVCS to submit materials for this contract as a new school rather than approaching it as a renewal. Throughout this application, we will be emphasizing what is new for our school and refer to existing documents for that which is not. We are also in a position to be able to draw on our past academic successes, strong enrollment history, and other assets we have as an established school rather than needing to try to establish that we have the capacity to educate students and have the ability to run the business side of the school.

Notably, we have always had a “performance school” rating, we have been a 501c3 since the 2015-2016 school year, and we have always had successful financial audits throughout our history. Additionally, the MVCS Board of Directors is both healthy and engaged, with a diverse makeup of both community members and parents. The administrative team (Director, Assistant Director, and Business Manager) has a combined 31 years of service at MVCS as well as additional time working in other school environments. This has enabled the team to develop strong working relationships, and the school has had many successes under this leadership, even through some major challenges. This speaks to the

stability and flexibility of MVCS, and the likelihood that our school will continue to perform well under a new charter, regardless of the changes we are required to make.

At this time, even though MVCS is shifting its educational program to be responsive to CDE guidance, MVCS has determined that there are many things that cannot change at MVCS. These are the things that give us our identity, which make us unique from other District 51 schools, and which we believe continue to bring significant value to students in Mesa County. As we move forward into our next iteration, these are things that set us apart:

We believe in personalized education that provides a gradual release of responsibility to the student, preparing all students for college and career opportunities.

We exist to serve the homeschool population in Mesa County—most of our students have a history of being homeschooled prior to high school, and because much of their time will be spent at home even in high school, they think of themselves as homeschoolers. This provides a distinct, common culture for our students and allows students to build supportive and positive social connections, allowing them to develop social/emotional stability and become well-adjusted, contributing members of society.

We believe that students should not spend the majority of their time in a classroom, and when they are in a class, it should be small enough to allow for individual attention. Our students will primarily be involved in blended learning classes rather than attending class daily on-site or taking fully-online classes. Instruction includes rigorous, scaffolded expectations that support students of all types. Curriculum is standards-based, includes a living book approach when possible, and emphasizes real-life applications.

We believe that each student should be treated as an individual. No two students have the same needs or trajectory, so it is fitting for them to have schedules built around these uniquenesses. We utilize an à la carte approach to building a personalized schedule for each student which involves the parent at all grades. MVCS on-site blended learning classes provide the backbone of student schedules, but parents may also opt for their child to fill in their schedule with off-site classes, fully online classes, crossover classes at traditional District 51 schools, or concurrent classes at WCCC or CMU.

We believe that students need a caring adult to guide them through the educational process. Our experience has shown us that students are most likely to be successful if their parents are strongly involved in educational decision-making and are engaged and connected to what their children are doing in school, supporting them to consistently engage with learning.

Even though there are some changes being made to the structure of MVCS, there is a great deal that will remain the same. MVCS knows its population well, has a versatile, talented, and committed staff, and has every reason to believe that these newest adjustments will result in an even more robust iteration of the school that continues to bring value to its stakeholders.

As MVCS is a K-12 school, there are really three distinct programs which will be discussed in further detail later in this application. A birds' eye view, however can be helpful. MVCS has created a continuum of educational options from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Seniors graduate with a District 51 diploma.

K-5th grade—Mesa Valley Enrichment Program. This part-time homeschool enrichment program is designed to meet the needs of homeschool students in Mesa County. Parents are in charge of their children’s primary schooling, and students attend enrichment classes once or twice a week on the MVCS campus. This allows the best of both worlds—parents direct their children’s education as they believe best, and it allows students an opportunity to participate in classroom and enrichment activities that prepare them to engage more fully in a school environment in later years. This program also connects homeschool parents with supports to ensure their children are on-track (optional NWEA, homeschool coaching, parent workshops, and Child Find).

6-8th grade—These grades at MVCS are designed to continue to support homeschool students and their parents while helping students begin to transition to become full-time students. There are class options which are for enrichment and there are full academic classes as well. Most students in these grade levels are likely to be homeschool students who are enrolled with MVCS part-time, but parents may choose a full-time blended learning enrollment option which will seamlessly integrate into the full-time program for high school students.

9-12th grade—A few students in the high school grades will be homeschool students attending part-time, but most will transition to become full-time students during these years. The backbone of MVCS’s high school program is two-day-a-week blended learning classes with a flexible third day available for electives or additional help. MVCS rounds out student schedules each semester by allowing enrollment on a per-class basis at District 51 schools (2 class limit), in a fully-online setting (2 class limit), or in an independent study class (1 class limit). Qualified students are encouraged to attend concurrent classes at CMU or WCCC as well, giving them a wide range of options. Because MVCS encourages its students to immerse themselves in the real world as much as possible during their school years, work experience and internships are also available and encouraged. We firmly believe that by structuring our classes in a way that is similar to what students will encounter on college campuses, we give them an excellent introduction to that type of environment. We also believe that our approach to schooling—which does not insulate students from the “real world” by corralling them within the four walls of a school building—benefits those who will pursue career directly out of high school.

As you review our application, we hope you will keep in mind that we have a strong track record of academic success, we have excellent staff retention, our financial standing is solid, and we have solid relationships with our students, their parents, and the community. Through the years we have built strong relationships with District 51 and we look forward to many more years of helping District 51 serve the needs of the homeschool population in Mesa County.

B. VISION & MISSION STATEMENTS

MVCS has had vision and mission statements for many years, last updated when MVCS transitioned from MVV to become the charter school MVCS. For this new iteration of the school, it is appropriate to again update our vision and mission statements to capture our updated goals.

Vision

MVCS envisions producing equipped and confident graduates by bridging homeschool and public school, providing choice to parents, personalizing education for students, honoring community connectedness, and encouraging learning as a way of life.

Mission

MVCS offers a homeschool enrichment program and a full-time standards-based educational program which centers on small blended learning classes. Through both programs, we encourage students to be active participants in their own education and apply their learning to daily life, meaningful employment, and further studies.

C. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & PUPIL PERFORMANCE

MVCS is committed to meet accreditation requirements and embraces the Colorado Growth Model. We aim to meet or exceed District 51 and Colorado accountability standards for academic achievement, academic growth, gaps in academic growth, and postsecondary and workforce readiness. MVCS also has a number of organizational goals in the areas of finance, parent satisfaction, attendance and enrollment, and staff matters.

Across all of these areas, MVCS has created SMART goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant to the school's vision/mission, and are time-bound. All goals are designed to aligned with the school's vision and mission. The goals are drawn in part from the school's current Strategic Plan. It is important to keep in mind that our school is built to meet the needs of the homeschool community, so some of our school's goals will look a little different than they would for a more traditional school.

School Performance Goals

MVCS performance goals are different for its part-time and full-time students. This is because data collection for these groups is different, and reporting and accountability mechanisms differ.

Part-Time Students

Although our part-time students will not be measured by state accountability tests and our school will no longer have district and state accountability through our SPF and UIP processes for these students, we will use local data from these groups to inform our decision-making regarding our program for these grades, and will also include this data in the school's Strategic Plan process. Further details on this topic may be found in Section F: Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance.

Full-time Students

As an existing school, MVCS annually receives a School Performance Framework. The 2022 SPF—which is called the “2022 Preliminary Transitional Performance Framework”—is attached as Appendix A. MVCS annually writes a Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) to respond to this state accountability data. Results have always placed MVV/MVCS in the “performance” category. In the 2021-2022 school year we had Insufficient State Data (low participation rate) because many students who knew they would not be enrolling with us full-time for the 2022-2023 school year (due to our changes) elected not to test. We continue to work to address our challenges around opting, and we project much higher participation rates beginning next year. This is because the vast majority of our full-time students will be in grades 9-12 and historically our students and their parents value the PSAT and SAT tests and are less likely to opt out of them.

Since we are likely to have only a few full-time 6-8th grade students, at least in the first few years, we may not even meet the threshold for reporting this data. If this is the case, we will still use state and local data from these groups to inform our decision-making for our program for these grades even if it is not formally included in our SPF, and will also include this data in the school's Strategic Plan development process.

Throughout our history we have always met or exceeded state accountability measures and expectations. Going forward, there is no reason to expect any change to our history of strong achievement in our full-time students in grades 6-12. For these students, we outline the following goals.

Overall Academic Goals

1. MVCS will maintain its 14-year history of receiving a “performance school” rating.
2. MVCS will continue to work to reduce opt-outs so that we receive more meaningful SPF data.

Academic Achievement Goals

1. Students will meet or exceed state standards for mastery in reading, writing, and math.
 - a. 6-8th grade students will score at or above proficient on the CMAS tests in English Language Arts at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.
 - i. 2022 data for District 51 is 36 percentile rank.
 - ii. 2022 data for MVCS is 78 percentile rank.
 - b. 6-8th grade students will score at or above proficient on the CMAS tests in Math at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.
 - i. 2022 data for District 51 is 36 percentile rank.
 - ii. 2022 data for MVCS is 62 percentile rank.
 - c. 9-10th grade students will score at or above proficient on the PSAT tests in reading and writing at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.
 - i. 2022 data for District 51 is 32 percentile rank.
 - ii. 2022 data for MVCS is 81 percentile rank.
 - d. 9-10th grade students will score at or above proficient on the PSAT tests in math at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.
 - i. 2022 data for District 51 is 44 percentile rank.
 - ii. 2022 data for MVCS is 73 percentile rank.
2. Students will meet or exceed state standards for proficiency in science.
 - a. 8th and 11th grade students will score at or above proficient on the CMAS science test at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.

Academic Growth Goals

1. 6-8th grade students will meet or exceed the growth percentiles of the District in English Language Arts.
 - a. 2022 data for District 51 is 53 Median Growth Percentile/Rate.
 - b. 2022 data for MVCS is 51 Median Growth Percentile/Rate.
2. 6-8th grade students will meet or exceed the growth percentiles of the District in Math.
 - a. 2022 data for District 51 is 47 Median Growth Percentile/Rate
 - b. 2022 data for MVCS is 46 Median Growth Percentile/Rate.

Post-Secondary Readiness Goals

1. 11th grade students will score at or above proficient on the SAT tests in reading and writing at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.
 - a. 2022 data for District 51 is 491.9 mean score.
 - b. 2022 data for MVCS is 550.0 mean score.
2. 11th grade students will score at or above proficient on the SAT tests in math at a percentage equal to or greater than the district average.
 - a. 2022 data for District 51 is 478.8 mean score.
 - b. 2022 data for MVCS is 523.8 mean score.
3. 4-year graduation rate—MVCS will meet or exceed the District Performance Framework rate.

- a. 2022 data for District 51 is 87.7%.
 - b. 2022 data for MVCS is 95.8%.
4. Matriculation—A minimum of 70% of MVCS graduates will attend a 2-year, 4-year, or career technical institution after graduation.
 - a. 2022 data for District 51 is 53.2%.
 - b. 2022 data for MVCS is 68.2%.
5. ICAP completion rate—A minimum of 95% of high school students will complete all aspects of ICAP that are relevant to their grade.
6. Concurrent enrollment—A minimum of 35% of MVCS students across all high school grades will participate in concurrent enrollment opportunities (2022 data: 9th grade—0%, 10th grade—14%, 11th grade—53%, 12th grade—88%; total 9-12th grade—38%).

Academic Gaps

We are committed to meeting Academic Achievement and Growth Goals. Deficiencies in these areas will be addressed through the UIP process. Tools we may utilize include changing the curriculum for a class, making changes to the schedule (e.g. the length of our blended learning classes or how often they meet), and addressing professional development concerns with teachers. We are aware that our middle school academic growth is slightly lower than that of the District. As we continue to build out of the COVID era and adjust our full-time educational program to be controlled more by MVCS, we hope to be able to address these slight gaps.

We will be especially mindful watching for the impact that could occur in a few years when part-time students transition to be full-time students in high school. Since this will be a new experience for our school, we want to keep a close eye on the effect our overall programmatic changes will have on our student body’s academic achievement and growth.

As we expand our offerings for blended learning classes, we will include a special focus on meeting student needs for graduation requirements in the school’s Strategic Plan development process. Things we could adjust—if needed—include the options of adding more or different classes, changing or adding more online class options, and deepening our relationships with District 51 or IHEs to expand offerings.

The school’s Performance Management Plan is discussed at length in Section F: Plan for evaluating Pupil Performance.

Organizational Goals

In addition to educational goals, MVCS is committed to meeting several other goals for our school.

Financial Goals

1. Annual budgets demonstrate effective and reasonable allocation of financial resources as measured by balanced budgets submitted to and approved by the District.
2. Budget reviewed monthly by Treasurer of the MVCS Board of Directors and submitted for approval monthly at Board meetings.
3. MVCS will comply with all federal, state, and District financial regulations and deadlines.
4. Maintain financial reserves that will be no less than 10% of the annual PPR for the fiscal year.
5. Maintain the required Tabor reserve fund of 3% within a CSAFE account.
6. Establish a pay scale that is competitive and within 10% of the current District 51 pay scale with consideration to job title and duties.

7. Obtain and provide maintenance for a building that will serve the needs of the school.
8. For the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS will successfully transition from its current model which allows for parent reimbursement for educational student funds to a model which removes that element from its budget and instead transfers all educational spending to school rather than parent decision-making and control.

Attract and Retain High-Quality, Qualified Staff

1. Provide professional development and other staff training to keep current on educational practice.
2. 100% of MVCS teachers will possess the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) “Highly Qualified” designation or will be eligible to become highly qualified within one year of employment.
3. Continue current staff culture with multiple opportunities for collaboration and co-teaching.
4. After transition is complete (beginning in the 2023-2024 school year), MVCS seeks to maintain its current staff retention rate of 95%.

Student & Parent Satisfaction

1. At least 80% of MVCS parents will be satisfied with the operations and academic achievements at the school as measured by an end-of-year survey.
2. MVCS will have at least an 80% retention rate for enrollment across all grades (K-12).
3. MVCS will improve parent participation in planning by increasing the number of parents on the School Accountability Committee (SAC).
4. MVCS will actively pursue parent volunteers to encourage stakeholder involvement and enhance school community.

Attendance & Enrollment

1. By the end of the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS will have an average daily attendance of 90% or greater. The shift to require all full-time students to attend blended learning classes on-site will be a significant challenge for some of our families. We will work closely with families to educate them regarding the need for strong attendance, especially since our blended learning model places about 2/3 of the class content in the classroom, rather than at home (completed at student’s own time and pace, place). We will also use our first year to refine our alignment of MVCS attendance policy to District 51’s policies regarding attendance and truancy as the blended learning model does not directly correlate to the traditional schools in District 51, nor does it equate perfectly with the online Grand River Academy.
2. By the 2024-2025 school year 80% of our high school students will choose to enroll full-time rather than part-time.

Student Social/Emotional Goals

1. Prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year identify and purchase a screener to measure the social/emotional health of students (MVCS currently does not have one).
2. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, ensure that every MVCS student feels a sense of belonging and can access a variety of supports. To accomplish this goal, in addition to utilizing a screener, students will be given access to a qualified guidance counselor employed by the school. Additionally, MVCS will develop a strong system to work with parents to connect them to resources that support all students in their social/emotional well-being.

D. EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

Introduction

Because MVCS is an existing school which annually opens its application form on the first school day in January, MVCS does not have a body of “intent to enroll” forms from parents like a brand-new charter school would. Instead, we are projecting our enrollment based on historical enrollment information and surveys that have been sent to our parents. We are also supplementing this data by drawing on our understanding of our place in the community. Because of this, we are including an explanation of how we see ourselves in the Mesa County community—the specific community we serve, where our students come from and where they go, and how we fit in with other District 51 schools. This information is very pertinent to our thinking and our belief that we will continue to be a viable school and add value as one of District 51’s unique school options, while not significantly overlapping with District 51’s other schools.

Place in the Community/Analysis of the MVCS Population

MVCS has created a reputation in the community as a school which supports students who school primarily at home and which cares about its students and their families, seeing them as individuals. Because of our “small-town” feel, MVCS has continued to weather the vagaries of policy changes and the interpretation of law. Across all years of its existence—first as MVV and now as MVCS—students and their families feel connected to the school, seeing MVCS as something greater than a school. The strength of this community cannot be overstated. We have years of data from parent surveys which include statements like the ones below.

“The staff we have worked with at MVCS have been amazing. I just can’t speak more highly of the school.”

“I am impressed with the happy, positive environment that I always see when I am at MVCS. Everyone of the staff seem to get along well with each other, students, and I feel happier from having been there. What a great team of educators and caring people!”

“We are very grateful to be a part of this program. Wonderful staff and classes.”

“I greatly enjoy the staff at MVCS and find them all to be knowledgeable and helpful for my student. These are teachers who desire success for the students. The faculty we’ve experienced put in the extra effort, repeatedly, to ensure the education and success of our kids.”

“We love MVCS. Great teachers, supportive learning environment, and amazing new building!”

“I love and appreciate the entire staff of MVCS! I cannot imagine a better group of people to help facilitate my children's education. Everyone is personable and helpful, and I am so grateful for all of them!”

“We appreciate the school and are so very thankful for it!”

“MVCS is a wonderful resource for the homeschooling community. Allowing kids to experience education outside of the confines and restrictions of a traditional classroom and in ways that meet their individual needs is of incredible value to the families in the program.”

“It has been a wonderful program for our family to participate in. Thank you for providing this opportunity!”

“Just want to say that I have enjoyed each staff member. Each and every one of you do a great job and help us parents do that best we can. I love and appreciate very one of you. Thank you for all you do!!!”

“MVCS has been an absolute blessing to our family. It has been a perfect hybrid school experience. I love the options and opportunities it has given our family. The staff has always given our family amazing support through the educational journey. This program has helped give my children the help and direction needed to help them excel.”

“I’m so thankful that we have MVCS as an option!”

Parent statements like the above (taken from 2018 and 2020 end-of-year parent surveys) demonstrate that parents who choose to enroll their children in MVCS have an emotional connection to the school as well as a strong sense of mutuality and respect with the staff. This helps to explain MVCS’s belief that many of our existing students will continue to enroll with MVCS in the future even as we make changes. Our staff cares about our students and their families, and our students and families reciprocate with care for our staff and school. History has shown us that if our parents aren’t quite sure about the changes we are making, they are likely to stick with us the following year and give us the opportunity to demonstrate that we can still meet their needs rather than just walk away.

It is also important to think about the uniqueness of the homeschool population, which MVCS has always served and will continue to serve. In general, homeschool parents are able to school their children without too much difficulty in the elementary years. This becomes increasingly difficult in middle school, and often becomes impossible in high school. This is because older students require more time being taught more specialized and difficult subjects. At some point, a student’s needs usually exceed their parents’ time and skills. Additionally, parents generally seek greater social connections outside their family for students as they get older. These are things that are difficult for the homeschool parent to provide for the student at home with no public school assistance. Many parents also believe that a District 51 diploma has more value for their child than a homeschool diploma. The conundrum for these families is that they value the homeschool experience, but need to find different ways to meet their children’s needs as they grow. If a homeschool student is abruptly placed in a traditional school with no prior experience in a public school setting, the student often finds this transition very difficult. Parents know this, either intuitively or by hearing the stories of others in their community. It is, therefore, vital for homeschool parents to have a school option that meets the very specific needs of their children as they grow.

There is generally not a lot of back-and-forth between homeschool and traditional public school for these students. Most homeschool parents actively avoid enrolling their children in traditional public schools. Our population is made up of students who are unlikely to ever be enrolled in another public school. MVCS has been the “compromise” school for such families—while we are a public school, we feel enough like homeschooling that our students’ parents feel comfortable enrolling them with us. They often are not comfortable placing their children at any traditional brick and mortar school and don’t usually even choose other at-home options like GRA or a multi-district online school. Generally speaking, these parents want flexible schedules which they can help direct, schedules which allow students to be

home more often than traditional students, small in-person classes, and an emphasis on personal connections for students.

Historically, when students leave MVCS it is because MVCS is “too much like a school,” and the majority of them leave to homeschool on their own. Only when parents find themselves unable to support their child sufficiently at MVCS (or through independent homeschooling) will that parent enroll their child in a traditional public school. This is often done with hesitation and because of true need—not because the parent believes this is ideal for their child.

While MVCS will technically be an online school beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS does not anticipate coming into direct competition with GRA or other online schools. MVCS parents are seeking a different experience from that which is generally found at online schools. MVCS will primarily focus on blended learning; students will not have an “online school” experience. MVCS intends to offer few fully-online classes. Historically, there has only been a very small amount of overlap between parents enrolling their children in MVCS and those enrolling in online schools (District 51’s GRA or multi-district online schools such as Colorado Connections Academy). For example, this year, four of our students had previously been students at GRA and one had been part of a multi-district online school. Based on parent feedback, we believe that the reason our parents do not favor true “online schools” is because the majority of our parents value in-person interaction between teacher and student. The blended learning offered by MVCS for its full-time program is something parents and students have valued. It allows students to be with others, but for a limited amount of time with the rest of their learning completed flexibly. Students who are not willing or able to attend regularly-scheduled in-person classes do not enroll in MVCS.

We do know that some of our families do not want any in-person classes and also do not want to be fully online, so we anticipate losing them completely for the 2023-2024 school year. Estimated numbers for the impact of this this are included below.

Impact of Transition on Enrollment

While MVCS has existed in some form or another since the 2008-2009 school year, MVCS has responded to challenges to its program multiple times and is doing so again. At this point in its history, MVCS is transitioning its 6-12th grade students to a new model, and its K-5th grade students have already made a significant shift for the 2022-2023 school year. This means that MVCS has an existing student body, but that body is likely to change for the 2023-2024 school year at the 6-12th grade level.

Current Enrollment (2022-2023)

As of the Count Date (October 3, 2022), MVCS had the following enrollment by grade:

Grade	Part-Time	Full-Time	Totals
K	13	0	13
1	18	0	18
2	20	0	20
3	21	0	21
4	18	0	18
5	17	0	17
Total K-5	107	0	107

6	0	22	22
7	0	31	31
8	1	32	33
Total 6-8	1	85	86
9	1	29	30
10	0	28	28
11	2	30	32
12	0	25	25
Total 9-12	3	112	115
12+ (ASCENT or In-Steps)	0	3	3
Total K-12	111	200	311

Elementary (K-5)

As of the Count Date (October 3, 2022), MVCS had a total of 107 students enrolled part-time in grades K-5. This fall, MVCS surveyed parents of students in its current K-5 program if they intend to enroll their children in the 2023-2024 school year. 91% stated that they will re-enroll next year. This is encouraging, as this enrichment program was new for this 2022-2023 school year and response this positive indicates we are moving in the right direction. We plan to slightly update the K-5 program based on parent feedback. After these changes are announced, we will hopefully retain even more than 91% of current students. In addition, we expect to obtain more students from the greater homeschool community in the Grand Valley as word has been spreading about how well things are going this year. Our anticipation of adding new students is based on feedback our staff have received from the community, calls our front office has received from interested parents, and parent statements like the following (from our parent survey)

I know several people who were not ready to start in MVEP this year, but plan on joining next year, and people who did not know about the program until after their school decisions had already been made. I realize that you have lost many families who did not feel like this change was right for them. However, as time goes on, I am sure the program will attract many other families who were never involved in MVCS before. This school in general, and the enrichment program in particular, has been such a gift to my family, and I hope it continues.

For the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS projects fairly stable enrollment in grades K-5 by retaining the majority of our current students (calculated on 91%) and by adding students who hear about the success of the program in the 2022-2023 school year (calculated on 10%). This would yield a total of 108 students next year.

Middle School (6-8)

Based on the September 2022 parent survey that asked parents of 6-12th grade students to rank their comfort level with continuing to enroll their children in MVCS based on a variety of scenarios, MVCS has determined that the majority of parents are not interested in enrolling their 6-8th grade students in MVCS full-time with the new structure that would be required. Consequently, the majority of the students in these grades will convert to part-time students or not enroll at all for the 2023-2024 school year.

Because some parents have expressed interest in a full-time option, MVCS will institute a pilot full-time program for a small number of students in these grades. We hope to enroll 20 total students across grades 6-8 in this pilot as full-time students. This is a manageable number for us to support, and it matches the interest we anticipate from the community.

As of the Count Date (October 3, 2022), MVCS had a total of 86 students enrolled in grades 6-8. To project our part-time enrollment for these grades next year (as they will undergo a transition similar to that for K-5 last year), we are looking at our historical data for how many of our K-5 students were retained during their transition. For the 2022-2023 school year, we retained 65% of our K-5 students. We expect our retention for these grades to be higher than this because we already had a greater-than-usual number of grade 6-8 students who left between 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 (because parents were concerned that we were going to be changing). If we retain 75% of our 6-8th grade students, that will be 65 part-time 6-8th grade students in the 2023-2024 school year.

To summarize, for the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS anticipates decreasing its enrollment in grades 6-8 to 20 full-time students and 56 part-time students. This would yield a total of 85 students next year.

High School (9-12)

As of the Count Date (October 3, 2022), MVCS had a total of 115 students enrolled full-time in grades 9-12. In September 2022, MVCS sent out a parent survey that asked parents of these students to rank their comfort level with continuing to enroll their children in MVCS based on a variety of scenarios. From this data, MVCS concludes that 70% of its currently-enrolled 9-12th grade students will continue to enroll with MVCS on a full-time basis (81 students). We anticipate 20% of our currently-enrolled 9-12th grade students to enroll as part-time students (23 students). We anticipate losing 10% of our current 9-12th grade students completely for the 2023-2024 school year (12). We also anticipate retaining our 9-12th grade part-time students who are currently enrolled (3 students). While we may enroll new students, we have no way to project what that number could be, so in the interest of being conservative in our figures, we are anticipating no enrollment of new students in grades 9-12 for the 2023-2024 school year.

To summarize, for the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS anticipates its enrollment in grades 9-12 being 81 full-time students and 26 part-time students. This would yield a total of 106 students next year.

Estimated 2023-2024 FTE Totals

Between the three grade groups, MVCS anticipates the following enrollment numbers for the 2023-2024 school year, with an expectation of that increasing year-over-year as the program becomes established and the community gains broader awareness and builds back trust.

Grade	Students	FTE multiplier	Total FTE
K	13	.58	7.54
1-5 Part Time	95	.5	47.5
6-8 Part-Time	65	.5	32.5
6-8 Full-Time	20	1	20
9-12 Part-Time	26	.5	13
9-12 Full-Time	81	1	81
ASCENT	4	1	4
TOTALS	304	N/A	205.54

Estimated Five-Year FTE Totals

As noted above, MVCS anticipates losing enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year, however, our enrollment history indicates that it is not unreasonable for us to gain back some of that enrollment once the impact of the transition has passed (e.g. some parents may choose not to enroll for 2023-2024, waiting to see how things work out, then re-enroll in the future). Consequently, we are projecting a 5% increase in FTE for each of the following four years as outlined in the chart below.

Projected FTE				
2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
205.54	215.82	226.61	237.94	249.84

Conclusion

After our school completes the transition of our educational program, we anticipate stability in our enrollment going forward. Our history tells us that our students and parents develop deep connections with our school which last for years. Even in this most recent transition year (last spring to this fall) enrollment data shows that the great majority of our student body (72%) was enrolled with us in previous years. Nearly half (46%) are students who have been enrolled for four or more years with MVCS. Most notable is that we have many students who have never enrolled anywhere else (26%). Three of the seniors we will graduate this year have been at MVCS for their entire K-12 career! This data is encouraging as we look toward the future and our plan to continue serving the needs of this unique population in District 51.

E. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Educational Philosophy & Culture

MVCS is built around the idea of personalized education. The school is not connected to any other school or movement; there are no major research studies upon which the MVCS educational philosophy was based. We are a school so personalized that we have always formed our entire educational philosophy as a response to our community and the needs we see in it. Rather than try to claim that MVCS is built around national educational models that are research-based (we're not), it seems more reasonable to list a few principles in the educational world that happen to align with MVCS practice. We have always based decision-making regarding our educational program on what we see working or not working in our own school with our own students each year. Because we are a small charter school, we are able to be responsive to issues as they arise and pivot quickly to address concerns or deficiencies. MVCS is accountable to the District and the State to cover the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) and to meet specific, measurable outcomes on state-mandated testing. MVCS does this, and excels. Ultimately, we believe, if we are covering the material we are required to cover and our students are doing well in learning this material, we are doing what needs to be done. Section C (Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Performance) clearly demonstrates that MVCS not only meets learning targets, but is among the better-performing schools in District 51. We continuously re-design our school around the best kind of data—actual students, with real-life experiences of successes and failures and measurable annual accountability results.

The major educational principles that MVCS will continue to use as it updates its educational program are listed below:

- Personalized education
- Blended learning
- Small class sizes
- Including the parent in planning and student support
- Schedules that allow for student/family flexibility

Applying these principles at MVCS has yielded a strong education for our students in the past and we fully expect that it will continue to do so in the future.

Evolution of the MVCS Educational Model

MVCS is not applying to become a charter school with District 51 for the usual reasons. There is no Founding Committee of like-minded community members seeking to create a new school based on educational principles new to the area. Instead, because of the issues explained in Section A (Executive Summary), we are transitioning a currently-existing school with an existing, successful educational program to a new model which retains the best features of the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 year models (since we are transitioning across two years). From this we will end up with a new model which remains solvent (meeting the requirements of the Public School Finance Act), accredited (meeting the requirements given to us by CDE), and meets as many needs as possible for our target population (meeting the requirements given to us by the MVCS Board of Directors).

Because we are drawing from past practice to create our future school, it is valuable to briefly recount how this model has evolved across the years to where we find ourselves in the present. This outline shows the school’s history of being responsive to needs placed on it from outside forces and from needs it has identified within itself. Note that this section addresses only the general education aspects of MVCS; matters pertaining to special education are covered in Section Q (Serving Students with Special Needs).

Date	Major Elements of the Educational Model
2008-2009	MVV’s classes were all taught by parents at home or by community educators chosen by the parent. Progress through classes was overseen by school staff.
2012-2013	MVV rented a space for a classroom and a former District 51 teacher began to teach high school math classes two days a week because of struggles in this area.
2014-2015	MVCS highly-qualified Academic Advisors took a significantly more active role in overseeing work done off-site by students; processes for tracking progress through classes were improved. A larger building was acquired and renovated to create classroom space that would be used in the future.
2015-2016	A few teachers (independent contractors) rented space from MVCS and taught a few classes two days a week on-site to meet the needs of high school students.
2016-2017	Several teachers were converted from independent contractors to employees, and more classes were added. The first year, there were 12 classes for high-school students, most of which ran year-long and were in core content areas. There were also 3 combined-grade ELA classes (grades 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8). All classes were 90 minutes long and students came two days a week.
2017-2018	A combined-grade ELA class for grades 1/2 was added.
2018-2019	Single-grade math classes for grades 6-8 were added, along with a drop-in Test Lab to allow for maximum use of class time for teaching all middle and high school classes (elementary ELA classes did not use the Test Lab).
2019-2020	Moving to an even larger building with more dedicated classroom space this year was a change calculated to allow for further growth of our classes while also addressing other school needs such as more space dedicated to students who needed to be on-site more often than in the past.
2021-2022	MVCS piloted an 8 th grade science class and a high school online computer science class. Test Lab times were expanded, and Study Hall was made available across the entire school day to meet the needs of students with erratic schedules or those requiring dedicated study time overseen on-site. Additionally, a Parent Support Team was added; this group exists to address problems with parent accountability for student progress (for schoolwork done at home) and ultimately improve outcomes for students.
2022-2023	By this year we have expanded to 17 high school classes, most of which are year-long. As they have been since the 2016-2017 school year, these classes are 90 minutes long,

	<p>and students attend two days a week. These classes were specifically chosen to be those which meet District 51 graduation requirements with a few additional academic electives of interest to our population. One of these classes is an online class taught by an MVCS teacher. MVCS students may also take online classes from CLDS, and this year we added an online class from Digital Savvy class for middle school students to meet the District 51 computer apps requirement. Middle school students may also take single-grade math and ELA classes which follow the same 90-min, 2 day/week format as that for high school classes. The middle school ELA classes were converted from mixed- to single-grade classes this year. Additionally, MVEP launched, converting all students in grades K-5 to part-time students who attend classes on-site for roughly 5-6 hours a week (possibly more). These classes are built around the previous framework of our successful ELA classes. Additional classes focus on enrichment topics from math, science, social studies, STEM, art, and drama.</p>
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The history outlined above demonstrates how MVCS has consistently continued to iterate its educational program to be responsive to needs. Some of those needs were identified by parents and students and others were identified by staff to ensure that students would receive a quality education. Additionally, some changes were made to meet changing District 51 requirements (e.g. middle school computer apps, updated graduation requirements, etc.), and from the state (oversight and Finance Act concerns). The next steps we take will be to iterate once again to a new program which learns from its past successes and failures (as we did when we realized a need to add our own classes and create strategies to improve parent support of students) while continuing to focus on goals (teaching CAS and meeting state accountability targets). We are still making decisions about the specifics of the exact changes we will make because this transition includes many shifts for our existing staff, changes to how we use the space in our building, and the introduction of new online platforms which need to be finalized and dovetailed together. After our final transition takes place for next year, something like the following row could be added to the history above.

<p>2023-2024</p>	<p>MVCS completed its 2-year transition to meet CDE/state requirements.</p> <p>Grades K-5 (part-time students)—MVEP was adjusted slightly based on information learned from its initial year to streamline offerings and offer content that was considered meaningful by parents.</p> <p>Grades 6-8 Part-Time Students—The majority of middle school students ceased to enroll full-time and instead enrolled as part-time students in the existing ELA and math classes on-site. These blended learning classes remained quite distinct from the part-time enrichment offerings for grades K-5 and continued to be full classes with additional work at home. While they continued to meet two days a week, the on-site time for these classes was shortened from 90 to 75 minutes per day.</p> <p>Grades 6-8 Full-Time Students—A few students remained enrolled as full-time students as part of a pilot program to determine if offering full-time enrollment for these grades would be a viable option for MVCS. These students took the same ELA and math classes as their part-time compatriots, and in addition took science and social studies classes</p>
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	<p>online with one-day-a-week 75-minute check-ins with teachers. An additional 1-2 electives were taken on-site (music and art) one or two days a week. The previous concept of a “home” class was converted to an “independent study” elective class with more school oversight and a limit of one per term. These students could substitute up to two crossovers at District 51 schools for any of these classes.</p> <p>Grades 9-12—The previously-low enrollment of part-time students increased significantly this year. Full-time students were transitioned to classes that are overseen directly by MVCS teachers (rather than Academic Advisors reviewing work that is reported and submitted by parents). The existing on-site blended learning classes were shortened from 90 to 75 minutes to deconflict with the WCCC schedule and to allow one more period to be added to the MVCS schedule. Online classes were added, some of which were fully asynchronous, and some of which required an on-site check-in with teachers one day a week. A few new teachers were hired to allow for electives to be added on-site (art, music, foreign language). Crossover and concurrent enrollment opportunities were maintained. The previous concept of a “home” class was converted to an “independent study” class with more school oversight and a limit of one per term.</p>
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Elementary Program Overview

In the past, MVCS has served elementary students who are primarily schooled at home by offering oversight and support to families choosing the homeschooling model and by offering one English Language Arts class that met twice a week on-site. According to the MVCS 2022 Preliminary Transitional Performance Framework, that model was successful; CMAS scores indicate that MVCS students are in the “Meets Expectations” category for English Language Arts and the “Approaching” Category for Math. Additionally, DIBELS testing done in the Fall of 2022 indicated that 70% of MVCS students are at or above benchmark for Reading while the District reported 52% at or above benchmark in the Beginning of Year data.

The transition of K-5 students from full- to part-time has allowed these students to continue the primary educational model that the parents of these students have chosen (homeschooling) while still supporting them in a variety of ways. Moving from a full-time school to an enrichment program has been a big change, however initial survey data indicates it has been a popular decision for the majority of the MVCS families that were enrolled with us for the 21.22 school year (91% satisfaction rating in a parent survey, October 2022).

Going forward, one of the bigger challenges we face for this grade group is making sure students are ready to transition from an elementary enrichment program to a middle school program which has a heavier emphasis on academics. MVCS plans to address the shift between these grade groups with the following strategies:

- Keep MVEP classes focused on academic subjects to help boost instruction taking place at home.
- Lengthen the class time of ELA for students in grades 4 and 5 so that they will increase their endurance for classes in general and for this key subject area in particular.
- Emphasize the importance of NWEA testing in the 5th grade and use that information to provide resources and guidance for parents whose children are below grade level.

- Require NWEA in the 6th grade to address areas of struggle and provide interventions as needed, responding early in the year to students who do not test at grade level and provide interventions to quickly close the gap.

Small adjustments will be made to the MVEP program next year; information below reflects 2022-2023 practice.

Elementary Program Annual Calendar & Daily Schedule

The elementary (MVEP) annual calendar is designed to fit within the calendar for 6-12th grades and allow students to meet brick-and-mortar part-time student October Count Audit requirements. Part-time students are required to be scheduled for a minimum of 90 hours in a semester. The 2022-2023 MVEP calendar may be found in Appendix B. The 2023-2024 calendar will be similar.

Students who attend MVEP come to classes selected by their parents for between 6-10 hours per week and their parent may register them for one of two tracks—Track 1 (which meets on both Mondays and Wednesdays) or Track 2 (which meets only on Fridays). The 2022-2023 MVEP schedule may be found in Appendix C. The 2023-2024 schedule will be similar.

Elementary Program Instruction & Curriculum

Student schedules are chosen by their parents and include classes from the following options.

- English Language Arts: This class uses a variety of genres to help students learn how to think and talk about a text, find deeper meanings and messages, and explore reading for different purposes. This class develops writing skills, including grade-level conventions, grammar, and mechanics. Students may have homework to round out a full ELA class, but spelling instruction is not included. Curriculum includes Voyages and Learning A-Z.
- Exploring Literature: This class is designed to encourage a love for literature. Students learn how to think and talk about a text, find deeper meanings and messages, and explore reading for different purposes. This class is especially suitable for students who will be completing a full ELA curriculum at home. Curriculum includes whole book selections.
- Science Activities: This class is designed to supplement regular home science instruction by expanding on major grade-level concepts. The class includes grade-level demonstrations, experiments, and group activities that are hard to do at home.
- Curriculum includes Bookshark and Generation Genius.
- Math Activities: This class teaches and reinforces major concepts for each grade and includes time to practice skills like skip counting, math facts, real-life math problems, and relevant logic puzzles. This class does not attempt to cover all grade-level expectations. Curriculum includes Mango Math.
- Art: This class encourages students to experience visual art through an art history framework. It builds fundamental skills such as drawing, composition, color theory, proportion, and perspective. Students create 2-D and 3-D pieces using a variety of media such as watercolor, pastels, clay, and papier-mâché.
- STEM Activities: This class has lessons exploring applied science, mechanics, technology, and computational thinking. It uses a variety of hands-on materials such as FIRST LEGO, Snap Circuits, K'NEX, LittleBits, etc. This semester-long class alternates with the “Intro to Theater/Drama Skills” class.

- Intro to Theater/Drama Skills: This class accustoms students to speaking and performing in front of a group, engages students in imaginative games, introduces them to extemporaneous performance, and exposes them to basic principles of theater. This semester-long class alternates with the “STEM Activities” class.
- Social Studies Activities: This class includes activities and projects to enrich learning (e.g. working with maps, cultural exploration, historical tie-ins, etc.). The focus for K-2 is Geography; the grade 3-5 focus is Colorado History. Curriculum includes Scholastic News and Colorado Studies Weekly.

Elementary Program Additional Matters

There is not clear guidance from the state regarding the obligation of schools serving students part-time in many areas. Accordingly, MVCS has sought advice from its lawyer to clarify requirements. Based on our most recent guidance, MVCS provides the following summary of how it addresses specific topics below. Additional information may be found in may be found in Section Q (Serving Students with Special Needs), Appendix O (“FAQ: Programming for Homeschool Students” (CSI)), and Appendix P (“SparksWillson Memo”).

- Classes to support struggling students—These are offered to all students who would benefit from a different format for instruction in a smaller group, and for students who would benefit from oral communication support or handwriting support. Support in reading uses the Foundations curriculum.
- Kindergarten School Readiness (KSR)—While there was confusion regarding the applicability of this to part-time students this year, MVCS will collect and report KSR data via a modified KSR process (per our state waiver) in the 2023-2024 school year after a one-year hiatus in 2022-2023.
- READ—MVCS follows all protocols required by the READ Act. Students are tested using the DIBELS test and follow up is done with the parent and classroom teachers.
- Gifted and Talented/Advanced Learning Plans—MVCS annually offers CogAT testing to MVEP students in 2nd grade. Information regarding ALPs may be found in Section Q (Serving Students with Special Needs).
- 504—MVCS writes and fully supports 504s for MVEP students in the same way as it would for any other student.
- Child Find—MVCS complies with its Child Find obligations to ensure that all children enrolled in Mesa Valley Enrichment Program who are suspected of having a disability or needing special education and related services are identified and evaluated.

While the parent is ultimately responsible for the overall education of homeschool children (which all of our K-5 students are), MVCS recognizes that providing optional support that extends beyond our classes can significantly benefit these students at a minimal expense to the school. We partner with K-5 parents to provide a quality education for their students—something that many parents have expressed that they have found invaluable as they transitioned from full- to part-time. To encourage and support quality homeschool education, MVEP offers optional resources to the parents of enrolled students:

1. Non-consumable curricula that the student may use throughout the year in subjects completed entirely at home. These items are checked out by the parent and returned at the end of the year. Curricula include titles across a variety of subject areas such as All about Reading, All about

Spelling, Saxon Math, Dimensions Math, 180 Days of Science, Science Studies Weekly, Social Studies Weekly, and Story of the World.

2. Educational platforms at no or low cost to the parent (e.g. Lexia, etc.)
3. Assessments such as DIBELS, NWEA, and CogAT
4. Staff who can help troubleshoot homeschooling problems.
5. Parent workshops which focus on a variety of issues that are pertinent to schooling at home, such as “Teaching Reading,” “Schooling Multiple Ages” and “How to Motivate your Child.” Additionally, MVCS offers workshops that give more in-depth information on topics such as Dealing with Autism or Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder.
6. Annual history, art gallery, and science fairs.
7. Field trips and social opportunities.

Middle School Program Overview

Mesa Valley started offering on-site middle school classes twice a week in order to provide students with a classroom experience while still allowing plenty of time for students to learn at home with the support of their parents. This model has not only proven to be popular, but has also produced students who enter high school with the skills and background necessary to succeed at the high school level.

In the same way that the elementary program’s success drove the choice for courses, similar data was used to develop the middle school program. According to the 2022 Preliminary Transitional Performance Framework, middle school students “Met Expectations” in both reading and math in the Academic Achievement category, helping MVCS to achieve its Performance rating. Historically, Middle school students have shown a consistent pattern of approaching or meeting state standards in every category. For this reason, MVCS is choosing to keep the middle school program as similar as possible to the previous model. The strength of that program is the support of parents in the instruction of their children. This blended learning approach continues to allow for parental support while complying with the Public School Finance Act of 1994.

For 2023-2024, MVCS will transition the majority of its full-time students in grades 6-8 to a part-time program. Unlike the elementary program (Mesa Valley Enrichment Program—MVEP), this program is not designed to enrich the learning done in the homeschool environment (which has overlapping content), but is instead designed to entirely take the place of two classes that would otherwise be taken in the homeschool. Going forward, one of the bigger challenges we face is making sure students are ready to transition from our part-time middle school program to a full-time high school program which requires them to be on site for more hours, and has a significant impact on their trajectory after graduation (college and career). MVCS plans to address the shift between these grade groups with the following strategies:

- Require all students to enroll in full-content on-site blended learning classes in math and ELA (rather than simply enrichment classes) to increase endurance and prepare students to take full classes in high school.
- Conduct 8th grade orientations during the spring of the 8th grade year to ensure that 8th grade students understand high school expectations.
- Require NWEA for 6-8th grade students to assess their skills and provide interventions as necessary.

- Add a focus on accountability for individual students and their parents which will continue and intensify in high school, supporting students and helping ensure that school/home expectations are clear.

Information below reflects 2022-2023 practice for the ELA and math classes which are currently offered. Other class information is tentative, as these classes are being added next year and planning has not been finalized.

Middle School Program Annual Calendar & Daily Schedule

The MVCS calendar is designed to meet the October Count Audit requirements for both part- and full-time students in grades 6-8. All students are technically “online” students who will fall under the District 51 policy DIA (Online School and Online Program Documentation). MVCS will submit required course equivalency documentation for its online students if it differs from that of District 51. The 2022-2023 MVCS calendar may be found in Appendix B. The 2023-2024 calendar will be similar.

As compared to the earlier grades, there is less choice for classes at the middle school level. Part-time students may select from the following options:

- Both math and ELA on-site at MVCS.
- Either math or ELA on-site at MVCS and one crossover class of their choice at a traditional District 51 school.

Full-time students take all of the following classes:

- Both math and ELA on-site at MVCS 2 days a week (blended learning).
- Both science and social studies on-site at MVCS 1 day a week (blended learning).
- 1-2 elective classes (options include up to 2 on-site electives, up to one online elective, and up to one independent study elective).
- Note that full-time students may substitute up to two crossover classes of their choice at a traditional District 51 school.

While decisions have not been finalized for next year’s schedule, the tentative 2023-2024 6-8th grade schedule may be found in Appendix C.

Middle School Instruction & Curriculum

All middle school blended learning classes meet on-site either once or twice a week.

- **Twice-a-Week Classes**—ELA and math classes are 75 minutes long, with the rest of the instruction and material completed at home while being supervised by MVCS teachers. In this way, MVCS can offer maximum flexibility for students while providing high-quality instruction. Students who attend class twice a week will have their complete course requirements, as defined by the Colorado Academic Standards, delivered through the MVCS teacher. The MVCS teacher chooses the curriculum, does the grading, and offers all other instruction needed to successfully complete a year’s worth of course content. All middle school students enroll in these classes.
- **Once-a-Week Classes**—Science and social studies are 60 or 75 minutes long with the rest of the instruction and material delivered through an online platform, with the once-a-week class being used for reviewing content, monitoring progress, delivering instruction, and conducting

discussion-based activities. Students will be guided and instructed by MVCS teachers highly qualified in the course content. Only full-time middle school students enroll in these classes.

Elective options (full-time students select 1-2) include the following:

- Blended learning on-site elective which may follow the once- or twice-a-week format outlined above.
- Asynchronous online class—students may enroll in a fully-online elective course from a vendor such as CDLS or Digital Savvy. Limit of one at a time (one a semester or two quarter-length classes).
- Independent study class. Limit of one at a time (one a semester or two quarter-length classes).

Middle School English Language Arts:

MVCS believes that grammar instruction is critical to good writing skills and that it should be a significant area of focus in English Language Arts through at least the 8th grade. There are two grammar curricula used at these grade levels:

- Voyages in Literature is used as a supplement to support grammar skills or to provide variety in writing assignments. This is used in 6-7th grade.
- The sequential method that Hake Grammar uses lends itself well to classes that only meet twice a week for teaching the skills necessary for future success. This is used in 7-8th grade.

The bulk of the curricula used for middle school ELA, however, is not found in a textbook. MVCS uses a literature-based approach. Some advantages to using whole books (sometimes called living books) include:

- Students become familiar with a variety of genres and authors.
- Students develop an interest in reading, if they previously thought they didn't like reading, because of the high interest level of the books chosen.
- Differentiating for multiple levels of reading ability can be accomplished through use of audio books or graphic novels to support struggling readers.
- Writing assignments may be differentiated, and this approach lends itself well to more complex writing assignments for GT students.
- In-depth literature studies lead naturally into student-created writing.
- Instruction has a focal point to revolve around, allowing for a cohesive and meaningful syllabus that meets all of the Colorado Academic Standards.

In its earliest days, MVV/MVCS staff noticed that incoming students lagged behind their peers in writing skills, while scoring much higher than peers in reading. By choosing the literature-based learning method, we were able to capitalize on the high reading levels of our students while using instructional time to emphasize writing skills. Creating writing assignments that tie in with a book all of the students have read allows students to have an interest in their writing piece, feel they have the background to write about it, and it develops a common language and content base for students to interact about their writing pieces. Additionally, using literature allows the teachers to incorporate discussion, critical thinking, and literary analysis in speaking activities, covering the writing and oral language standards at the same time. A typical week of instruction in an MVCS language arts class includes reading several chapters, answering questions about the reading, grammar activities, short written assignments

(alternating with longer essay assignments), vocabulary exercises, self-editing, reading responses, class discussion, and additional class activities.

ELA courses at MVCS are developed by the MVCS teacher with complete texts as the backbone for the course. The texts were chosen after considering the Lexile level of each book, the genre, the maturity level of the content, and alignment with District book choices in similar grades. Titles are chosen in each grade to encompass a wide variety of reading levels and subjects. Additionally, titles represent a wide variety of protagonists' point of view, age, culture, and gender. Titles are also chosen with the goal of preparing the student for the level of work required at the next grade level and to provide the means for students to develop all of the skills required to be a proficient reader and writer. Previous test scores and in-house NWEA testing indicate that this model is well-rounded and effectively teaches English Language Arts.

Titles used in middle school include:

- The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, William Kamkwamba, 860L
- Playing for the Commandant, Suzy Zail, 700L
- The Giver, Lois Lowry, 760L
- Fever 1793, Lauri Halse Anderson, 580L
- Going Solo, Ronald Dahl, 1080L
- Murder on the Orient Express, Agatha Christie, 640L
- Island of the Blue Dolphins, Scott O'Dell, 1000L
- Mythology, various texts, mixed Lexile levels
- Phantom Tollbooth, Norton Juster, 1000L
- Midsummer Night's Dream, William Shakespeare, ~1080L (depending on the version used)
- Boys in the Boat for Young Readers, Daniel James Brown, 1000L
- Brown Girl Dreaming, Jacqueline Woodson, 990L
- Wednesday Wars, Gary Schmidt, 990L
- Monsters on Maple Street, Mark Kneece, GN540L
- Golden Goblet, Eloise Jarvis McGraw, 930L
- The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Mark Twain, 570L
- The Hobbit, J.R.R Tolkien, 1000L
- A Long Walk to Water, Linda Sue Park, 720L
- Out of the Dust, Karen Hesse, NP

Middle School Math

Middle School math classes use Saxon Math. The Saxon Math approach has been embraced by our families and is best explained by Saxon's self-description: "To master mathematics, students need to build on prior learning—what new concepts they can learn depends on which concepts they already know. Saxon Math provides a learning structure proven to advance students steadily and assuredly to higher levels of understanding." ¹MVCS internal research has repeatedly confirmed that Saxon math works for the majority of our students.

¹ <https://www.hmhco.com/programs/saxon-math#overview>.

Middle School Science & Social Studies

Full-time students will take science and social studies classes which use the online platform of Edgenuity as the backbone of the instruction. MVCS teachers will build additional course content according to student need as it is encountered in the curriculum. Edgenuity is built on research-based strategies that have been proven over time to be effective:

Edgenuity is committed to developing innovative courses that are grounded in research and best instructional practices. Edgenuity courses are based on four well-established, evidence based principles:

- *Instruction is systematic and explicit, designed to help students acquire, practice, and apply skills and knowledge.*
- *Courses promote deep learning and metacognition.*
- *Courses incorporate multimedia and graphic organizers in ways that reduce cognitive load and help students learn more effectively.*
- *Courses implement principles of Universal Design for Learning, incorporating multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement to meet students' individual needs. (Interactive Educational Systems Design, Inc., 2013 p. 3)²*

Middle School Program Additional Matters

The MVCS middle school part-time program will follow the same guidelines as those outlined above for the elementary program in the areas of 504, GT/ALP, 504, Child Find, and READ (if appropriate). For full-time students, MVCS will fully-support all of these programs as outlined by law for full-time schools. It is important to note that while part-time middle school students will not be eligible for IEPs, full-time students who meet eligibility requirements will be fully supported with IEPs and related services.

Additional things that all middle school students will participate in or have available as optional opportunities are the following:

1. Optional Math and Writing Labs to support students struggling in ELA and Math.
2. Optional limited classes or in-class time with students who would benefit from oral language support and fine and gross motor development support.
3. Non-consumable curricula that the student may use throughout the year in subjects completed entirely at home. These items are checked out by the parent and returned at the end of the year. Curricula include titles across a variety of subject areas such as All about Reading, All about Spelling, Saxon Math, Dimensions Math, 180 Days of Science, Science Studies Weekly, Social Studies Weekly, and Story of the World.
4. Educational platforms at no or low cost to the parent (e.g. Lexia, etc.)
5. Assessments such as DIBELS, NWEA, and CogAT, (+ CMAS for part-time students)
6. Staff who can help troubleshoot homeschooling problems.
7. Parent workshops—offered to all parents and include topics relevant to schooling at home or matters specific to the middle school years.

² Interactive Educational Systems Design, Inc. (2013). "How Edgenuity Courses Align with Research on Effective Instruction: A Summary of Independent Research". In Edgenuity. IESD Foundations. <https://www.edgenuity.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Foundations-Report.pdf>.

8. Student workshops—offered to all students on social/emotional topics, preparing for high school, etc.
9. Annual history and science fairs.
10. Field trips and social opportunities.

High School Program Overview

In much the same way that blended learning courses will be the backbone of the middle school program, they will be the foundation of the high school program. MVCS currently offers a much wider variety of courses on-site for high school students, and we plan to expand the offering even more. The data supporting the blended learning model at MVCS is even stronger at the high school level than it is at the middle school level. MVCS 2022 Preliminary Transitional Performance Framework results report that MVCS meets the state expectation for Colorado SAT Evidence Based Reading and Writing, as well as for Math. The MVCS graduation rate exceeds state expectations for all students. Additionally, MVCS outperformed District 51 students in every area according to the 2022 School Performance Framework data.

MVCS will offer a complete high school program that allows full-time students to graduate with a District 51 diploma through a unique à la carte combination of blended learning, crossover (District 51), concurrent (WCCC and CMU), asynchronous online, and independent study classes. Students meet state requirements for graduation proficiency. It is worth noting that, while MVCS has been able to meet NCAA requirements for the past few years, because of the significant transition of our high school program next year, MVCS students will not be NCAA eligible in the 2023-2024 school year; as time allows, MVCS will look into ways it can meet NCAA requirements in the future.

High School Program Annual Calendar & Daily Schedule

The MVCS calendar for grades 9-12 is identical to that for grades 6-8 and it meets October Count Audit requirements in the same way (including course equivalency documentation). The 2022-2023 MVCS calendar may be found in Appendix B. The 2023-2024 calendar will be similar.

To maintain program integrity, part-time students are excluded from signing up for independent study classes. They select from the following options:

- Two on-site blended learning or asynchronous online classes.
- One on-site blended learning or asynchronous online class and one crossover class at a traditional District 51 school.
- One on-site blended learning or asynchronous online class and one (3 credit) CMU class.
- One module at WCCC.
- 3-11 credits at CMU.

Full-time students take 6-7 classes each semester, depending on their progress toward meeting their graduation requirements. To reach this total, students schedule from the following options:

- On-site blended learning class that meets twice a week.
- On-site blended learning class that meets once a week.
- Asynchronous online class with on-site check-ins once a week (limit of two).
- Independent study class with on-site check-ins once a week (limit of one).
- Crossover class from a traditional District 51 school (limit of two).

- Students may substitute WCCC/CMU for any of the above if appropriate for the student’s ICAP plan.

While decisions have not been finalized for next year’s schedule, the tentative 2023-2024 9-12th grade schedule may be found in Appendix C.

High School Instruction & Curriculum

Most high school blended learning classes meet on-site twice a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) with some electives and labs scheduled once a week (Wednesdays).

- **Twice-a-Week Classes**—The majority of the blended learning classes will meet twice a week. These classes are 75 minutes long, with the rest of the instruction and material completed at home while being supervised by MVCS teachers. In this way, MVCS can offer maximum flexibility for students while providing high-quality instruction. Students who attend class twice a week will have their complete course requirements, as defined by the Colorado Academic Standards, delivered through the MVCS teacher. The MVCS teacher chooses the curriculum, does the grading, and offers all other instruction needed to successfully complete a year’s worth of course content. Two-day-a-week classes will be offered in the following subjects:
 - Comp/Lit 9, 10, 11, and 12
 - Algebra I, II, Geometry, and Pre-Calculus
 - US History, World Geography, American Government, and Psychology
 - Intro to Chemistry & Physics, Biology, Earth & Space Science, and science electives
 - Spanish I and II
 - Additional elective courses (likely to include art, music I and II, etc.)
- **Once-a-Week Classes**—A few of the blended learning classes will meet once a week. These classes are 60 or 75 minutes long with the rest of the instruction and material delivered through an online platform, with the once-a-week class being used for reviewing content, monitoring progress, delivering instruction, and conducting discussion-based activities. Students will be guided and instructed by MVCS teachers highly qualified in the course content.

In addition to blended learning on-site classes, elective opportunities include the following:

- **Asynchronous online class**—students may enroll in a fully-online elective course from a vendor such as Colorado Digital Learning Solutions (CDLS), Edgenuity, and the Ramsey Institute (Personal Finance). Limit of two at a time (generally one a semester, or two quarter-length classes).
- **Independent study class.** Limit of one at a time (generally one a semester, or two quarter-length classes).

High School English Language Arts:

The high school program follows the same structure and philosophy as that outlined in the middle school section. Grammar studies are phased out as teachers incorporate grammar into the writing assignments. Teachers also include SAT prep materials as part of their instruction. Students complete a minimum of four full-length essays per year, one of which is a research paper. All writing goes through the rough draft, revision, and final draft process as well as peer editing and presentation along the way. Titles used in these classes include:

- The Odyssey, Homer, 1130L
- Funny in Farsi, Firoozeh Dumas, 1030L
- Scarlet Pimpernel, Baroness Orczy, 1140L
- The Outsiders, S.E. Hinton, 750L
- The House on Mango Street, Sandra Cisneros, 870L
- Endurance, Caroline Alexander, 1180L
- Fahrenheit 451, Ray Bradbury, 890L
- Audacity, Melanie Crowder, 1120L
- 1984, George Orwell, 1090L
- Animal Farm, George Orwell, 940L
- Much Ado About Nothing, William Shakespeare, 690L
- Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald, 1010L
- Red Scarf Girl, Richard Mason, 950L
- Poetry and short stories, various authors, various Lexile levels
- To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee, 790L
- Cry the Beloved Country, Alan Paton, 860L

High School Math:

High school math classes use Saxon Math, with the exception of pre-calculus which uses [Openstax](#), an online curriculum which meets Colorado Academic Standards and provides excellent problem sets. Relevant SAT prep and review is rolled into math classes on a regular basis.

High School Science

High school science classes use a variety of curricula including [Holt Science Spectrum: Physical Science with Earth and Space Science](#), [Prentice-Hall Biology](#), [Cengage Forensic Science](#), [Essentials of Human Anatomy and Physiology](#) by Marieb & Keller, and [Environmental Science: Toward a Sustainable Future](#) by Wright & Boorse.

High School Social Studies

High school social studies class curricula includes Glencoe [Geography](#), and [We the People](#) by Center for Civic Education.

High School On-site Elective Courses

MVCS plans to employ at least one music and one art teacher to provide blended learning elective courses in the arts for our students. Instructors will develop course content in Schoology to provide instruction and practice for when students are not in class. Each course is a semester long with enough content to equal a .5 credit class.

MVCS also plans to employ a foreign language teacher (likely Spanish) to begin offering Spanish 1 and 2 classes. These classes will be in the blended learning two-day-a-week format.

High School Crossover Classes

MVCS has many students already participating in crossover classes with the District, an arrangement that will continue to allow students access to classes and experiences that are unique to District schools. MVCS has a financial and procedural relationship with the District that will continue. Students are limited to two crossover classes at a time.

High School Higher Education (Concurrent) Classes

The proximity of Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) and Colorado Mesa University (CMU) make them fabulous assets to all students enrolled in District schools. Working closely with these institutions enables MVCS students to take courses from WCCC and CMU for concurrent credit, or—working through the ACSCENT program—get a jump on their first year of college coursework. Currently, of the 110 high school students at MVCS, 23 are taking a total of 42 classes at CMU and 33 are taking classes at WCCC. MVCS will continue to offer concurrent classes to all students who are interested in and ready for college work.

High School Work Experience

As with other District 51 students, MVCS students may receive a limited number of elective credits through documented work experience in the community.

Career and Postsecondary Preparation

Because MVCS has such an individualized focus for its students, the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) is something that happens organically as a matter of course. MVCS has an Academic Advisor assigned to each full-time student to oversee their progress through the school, and this includes regular discussion and exploration of high school and post-secondary options. MVCS also benefits from District 51's use of the School Links online platform to work through planning tasks and to track progress prior to graduation. In addition to the ICAP process, the high school guidance counselor personally meets with each high school student to help develop their post-secondary plans. MVCS conducts a Senior Night, where students and parents are walked through the college application process and the details of applying for scholarships and federal financial aid. Because of our small class size, students receive individualized attention as they form their post-secondary plans. MVCS staff also direct students to scholarships and write recommendation letters for college entrance and scholarships.

MVCS also offers senior work days, when seniors can come to the school and fill out job and college applications, using MVCS staff for help and support. This allows us to encourage and assist students who are not familiar with the process or don't have a parent who has navigated the system before. Offering this additional level of support helps improve college attendance rates.

A unique feature of MVCS's high school program is Senior Interviews. These interviews are set up as mock job, scholarship, or college interviews, where the "applicants" are required to dress as they would for an interview and be interviewed by a panel of people. The range of questions start with those about their personal goals and plans, and end with at least one impromptu question that requires them to think on their feet. The team fills out a rubric for the student and gives feedback about his or her performance. This exercise helps students learn valuable interview skills in a risk-free environment as they prepare for the transition from the school setting to the job market. These are required for graduation. Students are also highly encouraged to participate in a preparation session prior to the interview where they are trained in best practices for interviews and given time to create a professional resume to bring with them to the interview. Students can use the resume they create for this exercise when they actually seek employment.

High School—Determining and Documenting Credit

MVCS policy EDU.350.7 outlines the process used to determine credit which is placed on a high school transcript at MVCS. This policy is heavily based on District 51 policy, with adjustments to account for the differences in the MVCS educational program. This policy will be updated for the 2023-2024 school year

to address the changes being made to the high school program. While in previous years, MVCS has used its own website to house transcripts, going forward, MVCS transcripts will be developed in Synergy using courses specific to MVCS.

The matter of evaluating incoming homeschool credit is likely to become more common and complex for MVCS in the upcoming years. Since our school will be built around a population of homeschool students and it is likely that we will have more part-time students who transition to become full-time students during the high school years, MVCS will be formally documenting its method of evaluating incoming credit to be placed on a high school transcript and to count toward graduation requirements. We believe that it is in everyone's best interest to have a clear policy on this prior to beginning the 2023-2024 school year. We will finalize this policy in the spring of 2023, but the tentative principles to be included in this policy are outlined in Appendix E ("Determining and Documenting Incoming High School Homeschool Credit").

Senior Acclaim & Graduation

One exciting aspect of having a larger building is that it allows us to host special events like Senior Acclaim. During the last quarter of each school year, MVCS celebrates seniors at its Senior Acclaim award and recognition ceremony. This event allows MVCS to acknowledge each senior personally, recognizing each for notable accomplishments that have occurred during their four years of high school, including recognizing scholarship recipients and WCCC Technical Scholars. Parents attend with their students, everyone dresses in their best attire, and it is one of the highlights of the year.

The graduation ceremony allows the MVCS administration and BOD, along with a representative from District 51 to acknowledge and confirm the completion of the graduation requirements in compliance with District 51 Policy and the Colorado Department of Education.

Continuous Development of Instructional Staff

All MVCS employees—including instructional staff—are enabled to remain trained within their field, and are required to take the appropriate classes to maintain licensure if applicable. In addition to mandatory annual trainings (e.g. safety, mandatory reporting, etc.), each employee participates in a minimum of two trainings that will be beneficial to the employee in his/her position at MVCS that year. One training is provided to the entire staff at the beginning of the year. To determine the content of the other training, the employee is asked to select a learning goal for the year which is of interest to them and relevant to areas where they need or would like to grow; in some instances, the employee's supervisor may suggest or choose the goal. This learning goal and a training to support it are documented in a Professional Growth Plan. Training options include those provided by District 51, but may also be sourced elsewhere (e.g. webinars, seminars, courses, etc.) or personally developed by the employee (e.g. reading books the employee chooses on a specific topic). Funds are available for tuition, materials, travel expenses, substitutes, etc. MVCS will contribute a designated amount for such trainings (determined annually for the budget). Details about what expenses qualify are outlined in the Employee Handbook.

Review Cycle

All instructional staff are reviewed with the following cycle, ensuring that all receive regular feedback and are given opportunities for professional growth. MVCS is committed to hiring and maintaining high quality staff who are dedicated to the success of their students. The high staff retention rate of MVCS

(95%) supports continuity of learning for students and allows the school to focus on growth rather than starting from the beginning again with new hires. Staff are encouraged, trained, supported, and challenged to reach their own potential to be quality educators.

1. Early Fall—Teachers are given the rubric appropriate for their position and are asked to identify a growth goal. This goal is documented on the teacher’s Professional Growth Plan along with the teacher’s choice of personalized training for the year. The Director approves all Professional Growth Plans.
2. Fall—The Director conducts class observations.
3. December—The Director and teacher meet to discuss progress towards the goal, review the spring timeline, and discuss other issues or areas of needed improvement as identified by the Director or teacher. This meeting is documented with a meeting summary which is signed.
4. Spring—The Director conducts class observations.
5. April/May—The teacher conducts a self-assessment using the rubric they were given in the fall. The Director also completes the rubric. The Director and teacher meet to compare and discuss these completed rubrics and identify potential goals for the following year. MVCS has a waiver and replacement plan for C.R.S 22-9-106 (Performance Evaluation System) which allows MVCS to meaningfully evaluate its teachers in accordance with its unique educational program while still meeting the intent of state law.

F. PLAN FOR EVALUATING PUPIL PERFORMANCE

In alignment with the District 51 priority of “prepared and supported students,” MVCS seeks to maintain its status as a Performance school. We positively contribute to the District 51 goal of 100% of District 51 schools will be in the performance category by 2025.

Assessments

As a K-12 school with a mixture of part- and full-time students, MVCS has developed strategies for evaluating pupil performance in ways that are meaningful to the school (especially relevant for part-time students) and to the district and state (most relevant for full-time students).

Within the classroom, teachers of MVCS classes implement formative and summative assessments as needed. Because MVCS utilizes a blended learning format for its full-time students, class time is especially precious. Teachers may give brief quizzes or other short assessments during class time, but rather than giving full tests during class time, teachers utilize the MVCS “Test Lab.” This allows students to take tests in a drop-in setting according to the needs of their schedule. Test Lab is proctored by staff who verify test integrity. This provides a good use of class time while also providing a discreet and non-threatening environment that allows for differentiation.

Additionally, as a school, MVCS uses many assessments as local measures, and others which are used for state accountability purposes. A full overview of MVCS assessments may be found in the detailed MVCS Assessment Schedule, included in Appendix D. This assessment schedule is for the 2022-2023 school year; dates for future years will be similar, but be adjusted to fit the calendar of that year. An overview of the assessments used by MVCS is listed below:

- Concepts of Print—used to measure reading readiness (kindergarten only)
- DIBELS—used to measure reading skills, primarily grades K-3.
- NWEA (Math, Reading and Language Usage)—used to measure student growth and determine scheduling goals
- CMAS (English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science)—used for state accountability (full-time students only, in 7-11th grades).
- PSAT and SAT—used for state accountability and graduation proficiency (9-11th grade)
- CogAT testing—used for universal screening to help identify students with exceptional needs (2nd and 7th grade).
- High School students may also take additional tests to demonstrate graduation proficiency or college-readiness (e.g. WorkKeys, Accuplacer).
- Progress monitoring assessments will be utilized as needed for MTSS intervention and Special Education purposes.

MVCS has an assessment coordinator on staff and those staff who are involved in testing continue to keep informed about opportunities and changes to assessments that are available and best practices about how to give tests in a valid way and integrity of the test data. Students with documented accommodations are tracked with 504 and IEP plans, and staff has a systematic way to address their needs as they set up for tests and proctor them.

Data Management & Data Support for Teachers

As part of District 51, MVCS uses the Synergy Student information system to house its assessment data and MTSS plans. Over the past few years, District 51 has housed assessment data in many places: Class-at-a Glance/Odin, then Alpine, then EduClimber, and now Synergy. This frequent transitioning has been difficult for staff to navigate, so while records from CMAS and other state assessments provide useful data and staff will work with that information as needed, MVCS staff have leaned toward going directly into the NWEA platform and relied on that data for much of its work with students. We look forward to having the new data platform add-on to Synergy when that is rolled out in District 51 this year. We anticipate being able to see both student and school data in one place; that will be very helpful to make decisions on both the student and the school level.

Part-time Student Assessment Data

It is important to note that part-time students will not take state-mandated tests with MVCS—this pertains to all of our grades K-5 as well as the part-time 6-12th grade students. This is because parents who choose to homeschool their child assume the responsibility for their child’s education (C.R.S. § 22-33-104.5(2)(a), (3)(a), (b), (e), and (g)), such that a homeschooled students’ test results are not attributable to a school (C.R.S. § 22-33-104.5(3)(f), even one that enrolls the student in an enrichment program. It is also worth noting that parents of homeschool students are legally required to provide written notification of the intent to establish a homeschool program to a school district, and then to submit nationally standardized test results to either an independent school or to the district to which the parent submitted the notification of intent to homeschool (generally District 51, for our students). Test results must be reported in grades three, five, seven, nine, and eleven. NWEA tests meet this requirement and we will continue to have NWEA testing for our part-time students. This meets parent needs for accountability and can also help them track their children’s academic progress for their own purposes in their homeschool. Additionally, MVCS will continue to offer DIBELS testing because it provides invaluable information for our teachers to be responsive to student needs.

Because part-time student assessments are not included in the school’s SPF/UIP, data from part-time student assessments (local measures) will be used to inform our decision-making on our program for these grades, and we will also include this data in the school’s Strategic Plan development process. Our overall use of DIBELS and NWEA data will be to guide curriculum and class/scheduling choices to ensure that we effectively partner with parents to add value to their homeschool experience in academic ways in addition to helping students make social/emotional connections and participate in elective activities. We also want to make sure that the data reflects the goal of our program which is designed to create a gradual shift from pure homeschooling in the younger grades to the possibility of full-time enrollment beginning in 7th grade.

Full-Time Student Assessment Data (Performance Standards)

As MVCS is not a new charter school, it has many years of SPF data and has created UIPs annually. The 2022 Preliminary Transitional Performance Framework for MVCS is attached as Appendix A and historical school UIPs are posted on the CDE website under School View, Mesa Valley Community School 5828. Selections from the most recent MVCS Unified Improvement Plan (fall 2022) are included below to show how MVCS works with its real-life data to analyze performance and plan for future improvements. Please refer to the 2022 SPF for more specific details.

Growth Measurement Metrics

Past performance indicates that the most immediate need for growth is in the academic growth areas on the School Performance Framework. As Elementary grades will be dropping off our SPF in the future, only Middle and High School Grades are included in the SPF excerpt below:

	2019		2021		2022	
Middle School						
Academic Achievement						
ELA	59	Meets	68	Meets	78	Meets
Math	62	Meets	64	Meets	78	Meets
Science	48	Meets		Meets		Meets
Academic Growth						
ELA	64.5	Meets	N/A	Meets	51	Meets
Math	71.5	Exceeds	N/A	Exceeds	46	Approaching
High School						
Academic Achievement						
ELA	74	Meets		Meets	81	Meets
Math	50	Meets		Meets	73	Meets
Science	87	Exceeds		Exceeds		Exceeds
Academic Growth						
ELA	56	Meets	N/A	Meets	49	Approaching
Math	61	Meets	N/A	Meets	52	Meets
Post-Secondary Workforce Readiness						
Drop out	0	Exceeds	0.70%	Meets	0.70%	Meets
Matriculation	64.5	Meets	41	Approaching	68.2	Meets
Graduation	100	Exceeds	95.8	Exceeds	100	Exceeds

One-year Growth Goals

1. Middle School Math growth

Goal: Middle school math growth scores will increase from 46th percentile to 55th percentile as measured by CMAS scores in 2023.

Method: Students will experience higher grades in MVCS math classes as a result of filling previous knowledge gaps. MVCS will do this by providing a high quality math curriculum with many years of research behind it in a classroom setting where progress can be monitored.

Describe the research supporting this strategy and why it is a good fit for your school:

Middle school teachers and advisors have chosen the MVCS curriculum after comparing several math programs and choosing one that is not only acceptable to our culture, but also aligns

closely with the Colorado Academic Standards. Parents have also approved of this curriculum over the years, which increases their involvement in helping their children learn at home.

2. High School Reading and Writing Growth

Goal: CO PSAT Academic Growth in Reading and Writing will increase from 49% to 53% on the 2023 PSAT test.

Method: MVCS will address this issue by increasing the use of writing prompt practice in onsite classes and offering SAT workshops for all students. This strategy was developed by high school advisors who have witnessed the pattern of missed problems on PSAT and practice tests. Onsite teachers will add writing prompt practice to their classroom instruction at the rate of one per month. SAT workshops will be offered to all high school students, thereby targeting those who are new to receiving instruction from MVCS.

Describe the research supporting this strategy and why it is a good fit for your school:

This is a good fit for our school because it addresses learners in different environments: at home, in classes, and those who attend concurrent classes. In-house research demonstrates that before and after scores on practice SAT tests reflect the benefit of explicit instruction on SAT questions and overall testing strategies.

3. CMAS opt-outs:

Goal: Fewer than 5% of MVCS students will opt-out of CMAS.

Method: Parents choose to opt out due to the independent nature of parent education, their belief that the test has no value to their educational plan, and their belief that assessment reduces their available instructional time. Additionally, more parents opted out in 2021 because of the mask mandate and in 2022 because the model of the school was changing and they were uncertain that it would matter. 75% of the students who opted out either did not return for the 2022.23 school year or enrolled in the homeschool enrichment program. MVCS plans to address this by developing the school plan for the 23.24 school year in a positive way, thereby reassuring parents that it is worth their time to take the test. Further, MVCS plans a parent education program to increase the value of the state tests to their student and his or her education.

MVCS strives to maintain and improve upon its current track record of academic success in order to produce competent, contributing, confident graduates. We are committed to equipping students with the content standards and skills necessary to master the Colorado Essential Skills and be prepared to enter the 21st Century workforce. We strive to provide an academic program that is rigorous, appropriate, individualized, and engaging that will result in ever-increasing success on all necessary Colorado assessments.

G. BUDGET & FINANCE

Overview

Mesa Valley Community School (MVCS) produces a yearly budget that reflects the school's unique mission, vision, priorities, and strategies for optimal learning within the educational model. These financial systems are well established and are reviewed and approved by the District Finance Department to ensure appropriate fiscal responsibility. MVCS creates a yearly balanced budget that considers revenue estimation based off of Per Pupil Revenue (PPR), mill levy dollars, and categorical grant funding. Expenditure estimation is based on review of previous year spending with the appropriate modifications as projected by need or anticipated increase of cost. MVCS makes every effort to be financially transparent by providing the initial budget and any re-adoptions to the District Financial Department and District 51 Board of Education, as well as the MVCS Board of Directors and stakeholders. The school complies with the Public School Finance Transparency Act and has developed internal financial controls, policies, and procedures that are aligned to charter school best practices. All required elements are posted on its website, and financial information is provided to the District for inclusion in its financial transparency postings.

Revenue

Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) is the main source of funding for MVCS in accordance with the School Finance Act of 1994 and applicable state statutes. Revenue will continue to be based off of the calculated FTE in association with October count. As in previous years, MVCS anticipates having 3% withheld by District 51 for administrative costs as a separate line item.

MVCS receives mill levy dollars through District 51 within the monthly equalization. These dollars are calculated by the District Finance Department and are incorporated into the upcoming fiscal year budget upon notification in the spring.

State categorical funding will be included within the budget in the case that MVCS is eligible to receive these dollars. MVCS anticipates receiving special education dollars for all full-time students that qualify and acknowledges that these funds are adjusted based on numbers and eligibility. READ Act dollars are also anticipated to be allocated to the school for students in grades K-3.

MVCS will continue to research the availability of other grant funds that would assist in the mission and vision of the school. MVCS also acknowledges that the District Finance Department must be notified of any grants that would need to be distributed to the school by means of the monthly equalization.

At this time, MVCS has selected a zero fundraising plan for future budgets. Although the school anticipates participated in some light fundraising projects, these funds will not be included or assumed within the budget.

Expenses

Expenses are calculated using the prior year figures and making the appropriate adjustments as necessary. MVCS has an established salary schedule as well as a benefit package for those working 30 or more hours weekly. Salaries and benefits make up approximately 65-70% of the annual expenditures. MVCS fully contributes to the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA). Current contribution

rates are at 21.4% per employee. MVCS also has a Certificate of Participation (COP) with District 51. This is paid to the district through the monthly equalization and is approximately 8% of the total fiscal year budget. MVCS uses the Colorado Department of Education's Chart of Accounts to record all expenditures.

Current Cash & Fixed Assets

MVCS currently holds two checking accounts with ANB Bank, one general and one SBA. Required Tabor funds are held in a CSAFE account and a second CSAFE account holds additional savings funds. MVCS currently has \$800K in cash assets and will seek to continue to build additional reserves over time. All fixed assets are associated with the building located at 609 25 Road. At this time, the total amount of fixed assets is \$3,450,732.

The above information is formalized by inclusion in the MVCS Policy BDG.100.2.

Systems & Procedures

Overview

Mesa Valley Community School (MVCS) has established a set of systems and procedures in the MVCS Policy Book (BDG.150.1). The most significant pieces of this document are summarized in this section.

The Board of Directors of Mesa Valley Community School has reviewed and adopted the following policies and procedures to ensure the most effective use of the funds of Mesa Valley Community School to support the mission and to ensure that the funds are budgeted, accounted for, expended, and maintained appropriately.

1. The Board of Directors formulates financial policies and procedures, delegates administration of policies and procedures to the Director, and reviews operations and activities on a regular basis.
2. The Director, along with the Business Manager, have responsibility for all operations and activities related to financial management.
3. The Board of Directors will commission an annual financial audit by an independent certified public accountant who will report directly to them. The Board of Directors will approve the final audit report, and a copy will be provided to Mesa County School District 51. Any audit exceptions and/or deficiencies will be resolved to the satisfaction of the Board of Directors and the District. The audit is also and posted to the school's website for financial transparency.
4. Financial Duties and responsibilities must be separated so that no one employee has sole control over cash receipts, disbursements, payrolls, and reconciliation of bank accounts. Disbursements are reviewed by the Financial Administrator or Designee and sent to a third party accountant. Payroll is reviewed by the Business Manager. Reconciliation of accounts is performed by a third party accountant.

Procedures

Annual Requirements

In addition to the annual fall audit process, the Business Manager prepares the anticipated annual budget for review and approval from the Board of Directors the spring prior to the following fiscal year. This budget is submitted to District 51 for final approval. Quarterly budget revisions are provided to the school's finance committee and mid-year revisions are presented to both the Board of Directors and to

the school district for approval. The 5-year budget is included in Appendix F and an electronic copy of the Excel document with formulas and comments has been submitted to District 51.

Purchasing

The Director or Business Manager authorizes all expenditures. Purchases must be within budget, funds must be available and allowable, must be in accordance with the mission and vision of the charter, and must follow any related laws or applicable regulations. All purchases made are supported by the appropriate documentation for the purchase. Staff members that purchase an item on behalf of the school are reimbursed for that purchase with the exception of any tax that has been charged.

MVCS currently has six credit cards through ANB Bank that are assigned to specific staff members. School credit cards may be used to make an authorized purchase on behalf of the school. Each card bears the name of Mesa Valley Community School along with the name of the staff member in charge of the card. All receipts must be turned in within 30 days of purchase and must include the necessary information for proper recording purposes.

Contracts

All contracts are signed by the Director or Business Manager. Competitive bids are obtained where required by school purchasing law or otherwise deemed appropriate and in the best interest of the school. Contracts must clearly define work to be performed and must follow the Davis Bacon Wage Laws if applicable. Proof of license and being bonded must be received before work is begun, as well as adequate liability insurance and worker's compensation insurance. Any contracts that involve construction must be pre-approved by district 51 due to the current COP obligation. Conflicts of interest will be disclosed upfront and these individuals will excuse themselves from discussion and voting. The Director and Business Manager are responsible for ensuring that the terms of the contracts are fulfilled.

Accounts Payable

All original invoices are presented to the Business Department for approval. These invoices are reviewed and approved by the Director or Assistant Director on a weekly basis. Invoices are then forwarded via spreadsheet to the accountant for payment and are filed for permanent record.

The Director authorizes the opening and closing of all bank accounts. The list of authorized check signers is approved at the July business meeting. In the case that a check needs to be written for \$50,000 or more, the Board President and Treasurer are notified of the transaction. All checks are written in the office of the accountant and MVCS does not hold checks for the general checking account on-site.

Bank statements are received directly at MVCS. The Financial Administrator or Designee and the authorized accountant prepare the bank reconciliation. The authorized accountant prepares a monthly summary report for approval by the Business Manager and Board Finance Committee.

Accounts Receivable

MVCS may on occasion receive a cash or check for deposit. These items are given to the Financial Administrator or Designee and deposited within three days. Any deposit that is \$2000 or more is deposited within 24 hours. A returned-check processing fee is charged for checks returned as non-sufficient funds (NSF) equivalent to the amount charged by the depositing bank.

Personnel

MVCS has adopted a pay scale that reflects a commitment to pay teaching staff a professional salary that is within 10% of the salary schedule used by District 51. All contracts are written for the full fiscal year and are on an at-will basis. This salary base, along with additional benefits will allow MVCS to employ individuals who support quality education within our model. Contracts are reviewed every spring by the administration with consideration to the need of the school and to ensure that salaries are held to the available anticipated budget.

The Business Manager is responsible for onboarding all new employees in regard to contract, W-4, direct deposit, and I-9. The contract specifically states the salary amount and associated hours.

All employees complete a monthly timesheet with their weekly hours, including any vacation or sick time that was taken. Employees are notified if they are considered exempt or non-exempt employees and are given an explanation regarding overtime pay. Timesheets are submitted to the Business Manager by the 5th of every month for payment on the 15th of the month.

Any additional stipend for work that was not outlined in the original contract will be authorized by the Director and given to the Business Manager to add to the payroll.

The Business Manager submits the monthly payroll to the accountant including all salary amounts, stipends, and vacation and sick time deductions. A payroll file from the accountant is reviewed by the Business Manager prior to the actual deposit.

The authorized accountant prepares the payroll check summaries, tax and withholding summaries, and other payroll tracking summaries. All state and federal quarterly and annual payroll tax forms are prepared by the authorized accountant who then sends them to MVCS for signature of the Business Manager who then mails them to the appropriate agency.

Expenses—Travel

MVCS may approve travel for the purpose of professional development. If an employee drives a personal vehicle, the employee is reimbursed for mileage at the government-mandated rate as of the beginning of the school fiscal year for distance traveled. A travel reimbursement form is completed and a map is attached to verify mileage.

The Business Manager is responsible for making all travel arrangements for the staff, including all hotel and rental car arrangements if applicable. Employees are reimbursed at an established per diem rate for any meals while traveling that are not provided by the event or within the hotel package. All expenses must be listed on a reimbursement form which will be given to the Business Manager for approval before moving on to the Financial Administrator for payment processing.

On occasion, a board member may need to travel for professional development or other school related purposes. When this is necessary, the travel expense guidelines are followed as listed above.

Finance

The Business Manager prepares the annual financial budget which is reviewed and approved by both the Director and Board of Directors prior to submission to District 51. A monthly Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances as well as a Statement of Revenues and Expenditures is reviewed with the Finance Committee on a monthly basis and then given to the Director, Assistant Director, and Board of

Directors prior to the monthly BOD meeting. The Business Manager provides the Director, Assistant Director, and Board of Directors any additional financial reports as needed.

Loans

In the case of a loan, such as the current COP, the MVCS Board President will sign on behalf of the school. Any long-term loan is approved by District 51 prior to the signing of said loan. MVCS has no current loans with the exception of the COP for the building at 609 25 Road.

Financial Institutions

All funds that are held for the benefit of MVCS are in FDIC approved financial institutions, such as ANB Bank and CSAFE. Funds are maintained or invested in high quality, short maturity, or liquid funds. Physical evidence of these accounts and all transactions are kept on-site.

Retention of Records

All transaction ledgers, canceled checks, attendance, payroll records, student related financial records, and any other necessary fiscal documentation are retained on-site for a minimum of seven (7) years. Some financial documents may be kept for longer than seven (7) years if they are considered important information in regard to the background of the school. All financial records that are disposed of by MVCS at the end of the seven (7) year period are shredded.

Funds Balance Reserves

MVCS maintains a minimum of \$250,000 as a funds balance reserve unless the Board of Directors approves to lower that minimum. Additionally, MVCS currently holds \$100,000 in the Contingency Reserve Tabor account. A minimum amount of \$150,000 is maintained in the general checking account which is reviewed on a weekly basis.

Grant Specific Procedures

MVCS may receive federal funds for specific programs. Each grant has a set of individualized requirements that must be followed per the authorizing legislation. At this time, MVCS has received the Coronavirus Relief Fund and the ESSER Fund Grants within this category. MVCS has established a Policy and Procedure in regard to these funds which is included within the Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual. These funds are distributed to MVCS through the District Finance Department. All budgets, expenditures, and reporting have been and will be presented to the district for approval in accordance with the regulations and requirements of the grant.

Significant Changes from Previous Years

For its entire history, MVV/MVCS has given parents access to a limited amount of student funds allocated to each child at the beginning of the year. These discretionary funds were used to pay for a variety of educational activities and materials for students. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, parents will no longer have access to discretionary student funds. Instead, tuition, curriculum, and materials will be paid for directly by MVCS just as those things are paid for by other schools. Other things such as school supplies, educational trips, and support expenses (e.g. internet service, mileage reimbursement, etc.) will no longer be paid for by MVCS and will be the responsibility of the parent. This is a significant shift in how MVCS operates. Money that is currently budgeted for student funds is being reallocated to appropriate sections of the MVCS budget, allowing for student needs to be met in accordance with the new educational model.

H. GOVERNANCE

Overview

MVCS governance documents are found in the MVCS Policy Book. This section of the application will not attempt to include all available information, but will highlight the main points. Please refer to the MVCS Policy Book for specifics.

MVCS Board of Directors

MVCS is overseen by a school Board of Directors (BOD). As an existing and successful charter school, MVCS will retain its governance structure and all school and governance documents that are in use in the 2022-2023 school year. Additionally, its BOD membership from the 2022-2023 school year will be maintained for the 2023-2024 school year. The only changes that will be made are those pertaining to replacing BOD members whose term is up. There is currently one such member, and the MVCS BOD will be actively seeking a replacement member prior to the term's end (June 30, 2022).

The MVCS BOD is made up of 5-9 voting members, with no more than one-third of its members having children currently enrolled in MVCS. This limitation helps avoid conflicts of interest. However, MVCS recognizes the value of including the unique perspective of parents on the BOD. Consequently, MVCS often seeks to add BOD members from the ranks of parents who have graduated students from MVCS and no longer have children enrolled in MVCS; this allows for parent perspective while avoiding conflicts of interest. In addition to its voting members, the MVCS BOD also includes the Director as a non-voting member. A quorum is defined as two-thirds of the voting members being present.

BOD terms are for three years and members may serve two consecutive terms. If a BOD member serves two terms and leaves for a year, they may begin their term count over again. Likewise, previous staff members may serve on the BOD after not being employed by MVCS for a year. The MVCS Board has offices of President, Secretary/Vice-president, and Treasurer. These roles are annually elected from within the BOD.

MVCS BOD Purpose & Process

The MVCS Governance section of its Policy Book outlines its philosophy which emphasizes the value of personalization for each student, providing a thoughtful environment for learning, and encouraging participation in community. Operating principles emphasize looking out for the best interests of students, acting with respect, valuing input from all stakeholders, operating in integrity, embracing accountability and flexibility, and accepting responsibility. MVCS follows Robert's Rules of Order in its meetings and votes are taken. However, the BOD always strives for consensus in decision-making.

MVCS BOD group members will be held to and will hold themselves to:

- Upholding the mission and vision of the school at all times and support student achievement.
- Create and update policies for the governance of the school in collaboration with the school leadership team.
- Hiring and holding the Director accountable for results, completing an annual Director evaluation
- Address student, parent, and staff complaints

- Act on recommendations made by the Director.
- Make policy and budget decisions.
- Provide financial oversight through monthly review of financial documents.
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
- Being ultimately responsible for accountability for the school’s academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to the terms of its contract with District 51.
- Compliance with Open Meeting Statutes (Sunshine laws)
- Compliance with Open Records laws and FERPA
- Understanding charter’s corporate documents
- Sign substantive agreements with outside entities (lease, contracts, etc.)
- Parent/staff/student grievances. (District 51 dispute process is a later section of this doc)

Individual BOD members are expected to sign an annual agreement which outlines these key expectations and particularly addresses conflict of interests. The BOD annual agreement is included in Appendix G.

MVCS BOD Member Nomination & Resignation/Removals

Currently, the BOD member selection process is directed by the “MVCS Board Nominating Procedure.” This procedure states that the BOD Nominating Committee operates on an as-needed basis and is made up of one BOD member, two staff members, and one parent member. When the BOD seeks an additional member, BOD Vacancy Notices are posted in public and staff areas as well as on the website; word-of-mouth is also used to discuss openings with individuals who have been identified as potential nominees. Potential nominees are given information about MVCS and serving on the MVCS BOD; they are also interviewed by the BOD Member Nominating Committee. Once nominees have been identified and there is mutual interest in joining the BOD, the name of those candidates is posted publicly for 30 days to solicit input and identify concerns about the fitness of the nominee. The nominee is also required to attend two BOD meetings during this process. Once these steps have been taken, the BOD Member Nominating Committee makes a recommendation to the BOD concerning whether the BOD should appoint the nominee as a full BOD member. The BOD votes on the appointment of the new member.

BOD members may resign at any time by delivering a written resignation to the BOD. The only reason specified in the MVCS by-laws for removing an MVCS BOD member is that of missing three consecutive monthly meetings. However, BOD members may be removed for any reason if the BOD determines that the best interests of MVCS would be served by this removal, and the BOD utilizes its regular decision-making process for this purpose. MVCS has never had occasion to remove any BOD member in its 14-year history. The 2022-2023 BOD member directory is attached in Appendix H.

MVCS BOD Meetings

The MVCS BOD meets monthly, on the fourth Monday of each month at 5:30 PM unless there is a conflict due to holidays or scheduled breaks. If a quorum is not possible at a regularly-scheduled meeting and voting is required, a rescheduled meeting will occur as close to the original meeting date as possible. Occasional as-needed additional BOD meetings or work sessions are called to work on more involved issues or for BOD training purposes.

All meetings other than executive sessions are open to the public in compliance with Open Meeting Statutes (Sunshine laws). Agendas and minutes are posted on the publicly-accessible MVCS website, and agendas for upcoming meetings are also posted 24 hours in advance on public and staff bulletin boards at the school. The MVCS BOD also complies with the Sunshine laws by naming the relevant statutory reason for moving to executive session and by not voting while in executive session.

MVCS BOD members may serve on standing or ad-hoc committees. At least one member of the voting BOD must be on a committee for it to be considered a BOD committee. Current committees are:

- Finance Committee—monthly meeting
- Funding Committee—twice monthly meeting
- Nominating Committee—as needed meeting
- Strategic Plan Committee—periodic meeting (not year-round)
- School Accountability Committee (SAC)—periodic meeting (not year-round)

MVCS BOD members are given meeting materials to review in advance of meetings. They are expected to come to meetings prepared to discuss scheduled business in an informed way. If BOD members are not able to attend in person, they may attend meetings remotely. The 2022-2023 BOD regular meeting schedule is attached as Appendix I.

MVCS BOD Onboarding, Training, & Evaluation

MVCS is committed to having ongoing board training. New members are trained with CLCS BOD training modules. Additionally, BOD members commit to board training as needed regarding governance best practices, either as a group or as individuals. Annually, BOD members are all given the opportunity to attend the Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS) conference which has a governance track for BOD members.

Involvement of Parents

Parents are meaningfully involved with MVCS governance through a variety of ways. Some parents of MVCS students serve on the MVCS BOD. Others may serve on the School Accountability Committee (SAC). Additionally, parents are surveyed at least annually for satisfaction and for feedback regarding possible changes to be made at MVCS. MVCS staff are in regular communication with parents and take note of parent concerns or ideas to improve the school, passing them on to the leadership team as they come up. Parents play a vital role at MVCS, supporting their children at home as they work on things off-site. MVCS leadership and staff respect this and seek to partner with parents effectively, creating an effective learning environment for all students, specifically tailored to each individual student and family as needed.

Legal Status & Governing Documents

Documents pertaining to MVCS's legal status and governance are found in appendices as listed below.

- Policy GOV.450.0—By-laws (Appendix J)
- Articles of Incorporation (Appendix K)
- CO Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing & Non-profit Status (Appendix L)
- 501c3 Exemption Status & EIN (Appendix M)

Oversight of Operations

As an existing school, MVCS has a Director who is overseen and annually evaluated by the MVCS Board of Directors. There is a clear delineation of duties between the Director and the MVCS BOD included in the governance section of the MVCS Policy Book.

I. EMPLOYEES

As an existing school, MVCS has forty-two employees at this time. Employees range from part- to full-time employees working between twelve and forty hours a week; some employees are classified as exempt, some as non-exempt. Human resources matters are fully covered in the HRS section of the MVCS Policy Book, and employees annually receive an Employee Handbook which includes HRS policy information as well as some procedural-level information. New employees receive an employee handbook along with all relevant documents at hire. All current staff members are informed of any updates to the handbook within 30 days of approved changes by the Board of Directors and will receive a copy of the changes. All recipients of the handbook or change documentation must sign and return an acknowledgement page.

Because MVCS is in the process of transitioning its model, some of the information presented in this section will be changing for the 2023-2024 school year, particularly that which pertains to schedules. Attention will be given to this once the school has been able to finalize needed staffing adjustments. The majority of the employee information will not change, however.

The MVCS BOD and administration has the goal of retaining all staff whose job does not need to change or who are able and willing to shift to new job assignments. These decisions will be finalized in the spring of 2023 after new processes and the schedule and classes have been finalized. The 2022-2023 organization chart is included in Appendix N.

The most substantive information from the HRS section of the MVCS Policy Book as well as some additional detail from the Employee Handbook is included below. Information in the HRS policies pertaining to employee insurance is not included here, and is instead covered in Section J (Insurance) of the Application. Similarly, information pertaining to professional development is not included here and is instead covered in Section E (Educational Program) of the application.

Employment Principles

Employment is with the mutual consent of the employee and Mesa Valley Community School. Either has the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without explanation, justification, cause, or advance notice. There is no property interest in continued employment. All MVCS staff members are employees of Mesa Valley Community School and have no claim to rights arising under the Colorado Teacher Employment Compensation and Dismissal Act, including those pertaining to probationary/non-probationary conditions. This employment at-will relationship will remain in effect throughout the employment with MVCS. This employment relationship may not be modified by any oral or implied agreement. MVCS retains final decision-making authority regarding hiring or firing decisions in connection with MVCS staff.

Mesa Valley Community School is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of MVCS to afford equal employment opportunities to all qualified individuals without discrimination with regard to race, religious creed, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, medical condition, military or veteran or qualified disabled veteran status, or any other legally protected status.

MVCS is committed to maintaining a work environment which is free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation. Employees are prohibited from discriminating against other employees, against applicants, or against students based upon the aforementioned protected classes. MVCS also honors the Crown Act of 2020 and will not discriminate against an individual based on the individual's hair texture or hairstyle if that hair texture or that hairstyle is commonly associated with a particular race or national origin (including a hairstyle in which hair is tightly coiled or tightly curled, locs, cornrows, twists, braids, Bantu knots, and Afros).

If an employee needs to request a reasonable accommodation or a variance in MVCS's stated policies and/or procedures due to the employee's disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the employee's sincerely held religious belief, the employee should notify his or her supervisor.

Posting Positions

MVCS follows the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act (January 1, 2021) which states that employers make "reasonable efforts" to announce, post, or otherwise make known all job openings and opportunities for promotion to all employees on the same day should there be a vacancy. This does not include opportunities for "in line" advancement due to the needs of the employer. No notice is required to fill temporary positions for up to six months if the position is not expected to become permanent.

Additional Hiring information

MVCS has detailed information in HRS.100.3 regarding employee information/forms, hiring Relatives, hiring District 51 employees, and hiring retirees.

Background Checks

All MVCS employees are required to undergo the same fingerprint-based background check as Mesa County Valley School District 51 employees. All volunteers working directly with students are required to comply with the School District's current screening policy for third-party contractors and volunteers working with children.

Certification & Licenses

MVCS is exempted from the state requirement of teacher licensure; instead there are three pathways to establish teaching qualifications: All teachers and academic advisors must either carry a valid Colorado teaching license, have taken and passed the appropriate Praxis test, or have 32 college course hours in the area of teaching concentration. Newly-hired staff who do not have a valid Colorado license or do not meet "in-field" requirements must either apply for a Colorado teaching license or pass the appropriate Praxis test by the last day of the school year in which they are hired. SPED staff may not be exempted from the licensing requirement. The Business Manager tracks employee credentials.

In the instance that a teacher is not teaching a core subject but has extensive work experience (10 or more years) or more than 40 college credit hours in a specialized area (without a completed degree), the school may hire this individual as a teacher with the proper recommendations or official college transcripts for verification of completed credit hours. These individuals may not under any circumstance provide instruction within a core subject but will be able to provide instruction within the specific area of expertise.

Employees whose positions require specific credentials (Academic Advisors, on-site teachers, SST personnel) are responsible for taking actions to ensure their credentials do not lapse. Employees must submit to the Business Manager documentation that they have passed the required certification exam and/or obtained/renewed their credentials. Employment may be terminated if an employee does not fulfill this requirement.

Salaries

The BOD delegates to the Director the responsibility of developing a salary schedule that is used to determine compensation for all classes of employees. Nothing in the design of the salary schedule guarantees an annual increase in compensation. All employees (Exempt and Non-Exempt) are paid on an annualized salary basis. MVCS's salary schedule must be reviewed and approved by the BOD before it is used to set individual salaries. Each employee's compensation is also reviewed annually. Stipends for additional work or certification may also be awarded. The BOD determines compensation for the Director.

Calendar & Schedule information

MVCS has detailed information in HRS.250.2 regarding the annual calendar, schedule, and timecards.

Leave—Vacation Time

MVCS offers vacation time as well as sick time for all employees. Employees may receive vacation time each year (based on total contract hours) with 50% of the total annual vacation hours given on the first day of the fall semester, and the remaining 50% on the first day of the second semester. Vacation accrual is capped at 80 hours, so once an employee reaches this amount, they will stop accruing until such time that their accrued hours are less than the 80 hours allowed.

Employees are expected to submit a Time off Request form to their supervisor with reasonable advance notice as appropriate to the leave type (i.e. vacation, emergency, etc.) and the employee's duties (i.e. amount and type of interactions with others). Vacation time may be used for any purpose as long as the dates have been preapproved by the employee's supervisor. If an employee is able to make up the requested time off within the week that leave is requested (between Monday-Friday), the employee should notify the supervisor so that the requested time off hours are not deducted from the total accrued hours. If an employee will exceed the accrued vacation balance when requesting time off, the Business Manager will inform the employee that there will be unpaid days due to the exhaustion of accrued paid time off.

Should the employee resign, retire, or be asked to leave MVCS, accrued vacation hours will be paid to the employee at the time of the final paycheck in accordance with current and applicable state law.

Leave—Sick Leave

All employees will accrue sick leave at a rate of 1 hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked up to 48 hours per year in accordance with the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act (HFWA). This will be front loaded to the employee at the beginning of the school year. Employees will roll any unused sick leave from year to year with no cap on total accrued hours as per HFWA. Employees may use sick time for any of the following reasons:

- Mental or physical illness, injury, or a health condition that prevents the employee from working;
- Obtaining a medical diagnosis, care, or medical treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition;
- Obtaining preventive medical care;
- To care for a family member for any of the reasons listed above;
- The employee or employee's family member has been the victim of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or harassment and the use of leave is to 1) seek medical attention, 2) obtain services from a victim services organization, 3) obtain mental health or other counseling, 4) seek relocation due to domestic abuse, sexual assault, or harassment, 5) seek legal services, including preparation for or participation in a civil or criminal proceeding relating to or resulting from the domestic abuse, sexual assault, or harassment;
- If there is a public health emergency and the school or place of care of the employee's child and the employee needs to be absent from work to care for the employee's child. (Additional information regarding Public Health Emergencies is included in this handbook).

Sick leave will not be paid out at separation of employment, but will be reinstated if the employee returns to work for MVCS within a six-month period in accordance with HFWA

Additional Leave information

MVCS has detailed information in HRS.300.4 regarding sick bank, medical certification to work, Family Medical Leave Act, public health emergencies, Jury Duty, Bereavement, maternity/paternity, military service, and administrative leave.

Staff Expectations

All employees are expected to adhere to employment standards; not doing so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Employment standards include:

- Meet established expectations of job performance
- Comply with attendance policies
- Respect the personal/property rights of all during the course of MVCS business
- Maintain a courteous and professional demeanor
- Maintain professional boundaries (see District 51's Professional Boundaries Policy GBEB-R).
- Protect confidential MVCS, student, or provider information (including not divulging, altering, damaging, or destroying same)—FERPA, etc.
- Behave with integrity and honesty

Violence in the Workplace

MVCS is committed to providing a safe workplace that is free from violence or threats of violence. Any and all acts of violence in the workplace are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action. Additionally, any and all threats of violence, direct or indirect, serious or said in jest, are prohibited. All threats will be taken seriously and are subject to disciplinary action. Employees concerned about family violence being brought to the workplace or onto the work parking lot are encouraged to notify administration. Any employee who receives a protective or restraining order that lists MVCS as a protected area is required

to provide the Director with a copy of the order and information requested by MVCS to identify the individual subject to the order.

Drug-Free Workplace

MVCS is committed to maintaining a drug-free work environment and each employee is responsible for the maintenance of such an environment. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance (i.e. drugs) and/or the use of alcohol or tobacco on school grounds, or while conducting MVCS business, are prohibited. Additionally, an employee must notify MVCS of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace, or while conducting MVCS business, no later than five days after such conviction. A report of a conviction must be made to the Director. MVCS may ask an employee to submit to a drug or alcohol test whenever it reasonably believes that the employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the workplace including, but not limited to, the following circumstances: evidence of drugs or alcohol on or about the employee's person or in the employee's vicinity; unusual, bizarre or erratic conduct that suggests the employee is impaired by, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol; or an on-the-job accident or injury under circumstances that suggest the possible use or influence of drugs or alcohol in the injury.

This does not prohibit, or in any way limit, the lawful use of prescription or non-prescription drugs. However, an employee must inform his/her immediate supervisor if he/she is using a prescription or non-prescription drug which could impair work performance or pose a risk of harm to the employee, to others, or to property. It is the employee's responsibility to determine from his or her physician(s) if the medication can impair work performance or pose such a risk. If the lawful use of lawful prescription or non-prescription drugs does limit or otherwise impair the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of his or her position or otherwise creates a safety risk, the Director will meet with the employee to determine whether a reasonable accommodation is available.

Anti-Harassment & Discrimination

MVCS is committed to maintaining a work environment free of all forms of unlawful harassment. Employees are prohibited from engaging in all forms of unlawful harassment, including harassment based on race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, gender identity, veteran status, sexual orientation, and any other protected class status. Harassment based on any of the aforementioned protected classes may include, but is not limited to, many different types of actions: verbal (e.g. derogatory comment), physical (e.g. assault), or visual (e.g. internet materials). Sexual harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. Both victim and harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an administrator, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer.

Employees should promptly report an incident of discrimination or harassment to the Director, Assistant Director, or Business Manager. The employee should not assume that witnesses to the incident will know the conduct is unwelcomed; an employee should not rely on a witness to report the conduct for the employee. Informing the harasser that the conduct is unwelcomed is not a report of harassment since the harasser may not self-report the violation. If the alleged harasser is the employee's supervisor, an administrator, or one of the individuals designated to receive harassment reports, the employee should not report the incident to that individual, but instead must notify another authorized employee in order to ensure that the matter is promptly and appropriately addressed.

Any administrator who receives information indicating a concern about harassment or discrimination must complete a report using District 51 guidelines, even if the information comes from someone other than the target of the harassment or discrimination, or even if the person expressing the concern indicates that they do not wish to have the harassment or discrimination reported. If the harassed individual does not wish to report the incident formally, an informal record will still be kept on file. MVCS will promptly investigate any report and take appropriate remedial action. If the harassment or discrimination continues, the employee must immediately report the incident so that the matter can be reopened and addressed.

Retaliation for reporting what an employee believes to be harassing or discriminatory conduct or for participating in an investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination is prohibited. Any retaliation should be reported according to the same procedures as reporting discrimination or harassment.

Any employee engaging in any type of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action. Any administrator who has knowledge of such behavior, yet takes no action to report it is subject to disciplinary action.

Conflict of Interests

Employees must maintain an awareness of MVCS interests versus their own personal interests and avoid conflicts in this area. Specifically, the following behavior is prohibited: accepting a gift of substantial value or substantial economic benefit tantamount to a gift of substantial value which would tend to improperly influence a reasonable person in his/her position or which he/she knows or should know is primarily for the purpose of rewarding him/her for action taken in which he/she exercised discretionary authority.

Additional staff expectations

MVCS has detailed information in HRS.400.2 regarding Employee Dress code, student privacy, suspicious behavior, moonlighting, employee monitoring, office dating, Workplace investigations, Use of MVCS property, and computer/internet/cell phone use.

Staff Performance—Performance Evaluation

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor. Teachers, academic advisors, and all provisional (first-year) employees, will be evaluated both at mid-year and year-end. All other staff members will be evaluated at the end of the school year. Provisional employees may be required to participate in a more extensive review to assist in acclimating to the MVCS environment. First-year employees will be asked to meet the expectations that are explained at the beginning of the school year, and that are presented at the mid-year review. Failure to meet those requirements will reflect on the goals/mission of MVCS, and will result in a non-renewal of contract for the following school year. Written evaluations will be completed which may include reports, correspondence, and other memoranda to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

Should an employee need support in an area that is recognized during a review or in some cases, prior to a review, a Performance Focus Plan (PFP) may be implemented. A PFP is used to support growth in an area where the employee needs assistance to reach a professional goal desired by the employee, administration, or the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Unlike an improvement plan, a PFP may be given in a lower scoring area of a review even if a score is within acceptable range. A PFP contains a description of the area of focus, anticipated outcome and measure, as well as support and timeline information. The Director or supervisor will assist the employee in reaching this goal by providing support in various ways within the given timeline or requesting that all professional development be taken in the area of focus. A meeting with the Director or supervisor will be scheduled on the dates listed within the PFP to discuss the level of growth. Should the goal(s) not be reached at the end of the scheduled PFP, a new PFP may be written or the Director or supervisor may opt for other solutions. The employee and Business Manager will each receive a copy of the PFP at initiation.

Staff Performance—Discipline

In an effort to correct employee misconduct at the earliest stage possible, MVCS administration may implement a stair-step disciplinary procedure. This may begin first with a verbal warning. The next offense would proceed to a written warning; the next step is suspension; followed by termination of employment. Although MVCS may utilize such stair-step disciplinary procedures, MVCS reserves the right to skip any or all steps and immediately discharge an employee. The stair-step disciplinary procedure does not forfeit the at-will status of its employees and MVCS preserves the at-will nature of the employment relationship. Accordingly, discharge may be initiated by MVCS at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

Additional Staff Performance Information

MVCS has detailed information in HRS.450.2 regarding personnel files, grievance procedures, and separation of employment.

J. INSURANCE COVERAGE

Mesa Valley Community School (MVCS) will always maintain the necessary and appropriate insurance coverage for the school. Each year, insurance is reviewed for appropriate coverage and reasonable premiums. At this time, structural building insurance is associated with the COP, and contents are covered through Hanover Insurance Group. Workman's Compensation is also included through Hub International under Pinnacol Assurance.

Staff specific insurance is brokered under Active Insurance and is reviewed annually in the spring prior to the new fiscal year. MVCS pays 100% of the lowest cost monthly premium for staff that are contracted for 30 or more hours per week. Currently, MVCS offers four different medical insurance plans for various needs, including an HSA (Health Savings Account) option.

Current School Coverage

Hanover Insurance Group through Hub International (Contents/Staff/Board)

- Commercial Property Coverage
- Commercial General Liability Coverage
- Cyber Liability Coverage
- Automobile Liability
- Umbrella Liability
- Professional Liability Coverage (includes Board of Directors)
- Current yearly premium is \$29,892

Pinnacol Assurance through Hub International (Workman's Compensation)

- Bodily Injury by Accident: \$1,000,000 Each Accident
- Bodily Injury by Disease: \$1,000,000 Each Employee
- Bodily Injury by Disease: \$1,000,000 Policy Limit
- Current yearly premium is \$5,500

Current Staff-Specific Coverage

MVCS offers group health insurance to all employees who are contracted for 30 hours or more. Dental and vision insurance is available to all employees at the employee's expense. MVCS covers a portion of the employee insurance premiums as determined annually by the Board of Directors. Insurance options are reviewed annually with consideration to the budget and projected premiums. The insurance plan year is September 1—August 31. Employees may make changes in insurance coverage during open enrollment each fall. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees may waive coverage with MVCS if they are covered under a different qualifying health plan. If an employee waives coverage, they may be entitled to a cash-in-lieu amount as determined by the BOD and Business Manager and with consideration to the yearly budget. This amount is added to the employee's monthly paycheck as income. Employees who receive cash-in-lieu have the option of purchasing vision and dental insurance at the employee's expense.

Currently, MVCS offers the following options under the terms listed above:

- Health Insurance—Anthem Blue Cross/Blue Shield (employee only)
- Dental Insurance—MetLife or Alpha Dental (employee plus dependents)
- Vision Insurance—VSP (employee plus dependents)
- Aflac—Employees have the option of purchasing additional accident, dental, cancer, critical illness, hospital, and disability coverage at the expense of the employee.
- Life Insurance—Each employee is covered by a \$25,000 policy with Companion Life. All premiums are paid by MVCS.
- EAP—Mesa Valley Community School is a member of the Triad Employee Assistance Program. All employees qualify for five emotional health appointments per year, per incident. Spouses and children under the age of 26 also qualify. Triad also provides 30 minutes of free legal advice as well as financial advice as needed.

The MVCS Board of Directors voted to decline all participation in the Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FMLI) program in September of 2022. The Business Manager will bring this to the BOD at the beginning of each school year for a vote.

Indemnification

To the extent not covered by insurance or otherwise barred by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act, MVCS agrees to indemnify and hold the District and its agents and employees harmless from all liability, claims and demands on account of injury, loss or damage, including and without limitation, claims arising from bodily injury, personal injury, sickness disease, death, property loss or damage or any other losses of any kind whatsoever which arise out of or are in any manner connected with MVCS's operations. The foregoing provision shall not be deemed a relinquishment or waiver of any kind of applicable limitations of liability provided by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act.

K. PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Parent Involvement in Restructuring

MVCS is built on parent involvement. Our parents are homeschool parents (current grades K-5) and parents of students who primarily school at home (current grades 6-12). By the nature of what our school does, parents are tightly bound up in our work as a school.

MVCS has had multiple parent meetings starting in the 2021-2022 school year to discuss the changes the school is undergoing and will be scheduling more as the school continues to transition to its final form for the 2023-2024 school year. We have also sent out multiple parent surveys to invite parents to give meaningful feedback to help direct the upcoming changes in ways that will continue to meet the needs of students and their families. Information gained from these forums has specifically directed MVCS to the following:

1. Maintain as much flexibility as possible.
2. Maintain ability to take some classes completely off-site.
3. Maintain connections with concurrent (WCCC and CMU) and crossover (District 51) partners.
4. Maintain quality, small, on-site two-day-a-week classes.
5. Maintain connections with community educators if possible.
6. Explore other online options as needed to round out a full-time program for older students.

We believe we can be responsive to each of these parent requests.

In mid-December, MVCS has scheduled a parent letter and meeting to explain the 2023-2024 changes and to invite parents to ask questions about the transition. This will solidify the essential shape of the new form the school is taking and help parents and students think through the continuing value MVCS offers them, as well as the changes they will need to make in their thinking and planning for future years. Our Application form for the 2023-2024 school year opens on January 1, 2023, so having the meeting at this time will allow parents and students to have time to consider their options and decide whether to continue enrollment with MVCS.

Future Parent Involvement Children's Education

All MVCS classes will continue to have fall and spring parent-teacher conferences. These provide invaluable opportunities for parents and teachers to connect, share concerns, and celebrate accomplishments. As we move to requiring more student time in classes on-site, these will be even more vital.

No school can exist without parent involvement, but hybrid learning especially depends on parents helping students structure their time and place to study at home. Further, online classes and those taking place on a college campus require parent awareness of and support for these classes. Historically, MVCS Academic Advisors have met with parents on a monthly basis to review student work and ensure that students are on track for their classes. The new structure of MVCS requires that the purpose of these parent meetings be adjusted to meet the new needs. Going forward, student work will be reviewed in an ongoing basis in each class (between teacher and student without involving the parent). However, parents have a birds-eye view of the student and how they are engaging with all of their classes as a whole.

For this reason, MVCS will continue to have check-ins with parents and students at least twice a year to make sure that each student has all the support needed to thrive and to set the schedule for the next term. More frequent meetings will be required for parents of some students to ensure that student needs are met. For instance, a student who is taking all classes on campus at MVCS or at WCCC for their second year and is doing well will need fewer check-ins than a student who is new to the MVCS blended learning class structure, is taking two online classes, has one independent study class, and has some learning struggles needing intervention. These check-ins not only allow MVCS instructional staff to monitor student progress, but to also mentor students and parents toward fully benefitting from and embracing the MVCS educational model. With their many combined years of working with students learning at home, MVCS staff can help correct issues that are common to home learning before they become major problems.

Future Parent Involvement in School Culture

Parents and students value the small-school feel of MVCS that places an emphasis on individuals. MVCS will continue to foster this through continuing to offer optional, periodic student and parent workshops on topics relevant to the learning community. MVCS will work to expand this community by launching opportunities for student and parent socialization outside school hours. There is no requirement that parents perform service hours for the school. Instead, opportunities for parents to volunteer time to help in classrooms, social events, etc. will be publicized throughout the year.

Future Opportunities for Parental Input & Feedback

MVCS recognizes that parents are significant stakeholders for our school. We deeply value their input and will continue our annual practice of surveying parents at the end of the school year about their entire MVCS experience. This allows parents the opportunity to give detailed feedback about individual classes and teachers, support staff, and the school as a whole. We will also survey our parents more frequently as needed to ensure that we are continuing to meet parent and student needs as we transition and adjust our program over the next year or two.

Future Parent involvement in Accountability & Governance

MVCS plans to expand and is updating its School Accountability Committee to allow for more frequent and clear connection to the school decision makers. Further, as a much greater amount of the school's activities will be taking place on-site, our facility also needs some improvements. We look forward to including parents in the conversation around how to improve the facility (starting with the back yard for recess) and how to fundraise for these purposes. Additionally, MVCS understands that parents are the ones who know best what types of social activities bring value to them and their children, and we would like to invite them to take an active role in helping plan these activities to build closer social connections across the student body and between the staff and parents.

External Partners

MVCS depends on connections with District 51, WCCC, and CMU to provide enrollment opportunities for students (crossover classes and concurrent classes). MVCS has current arrangements in place for these and will seek to maintain these connections and improve communication and clarity around these options (e.g. billing specifics, practices, limitations, etc.).

MVCS has also had a long history of its students using community educators as a resource for student activities. For instance, in the past, a parent may have elected to enroll their child in private violin lessons or to study gymnastics at a local gymnastics business. Going forward, MVCS plans to explore directly employing some of the instructors who previously operated independently (e.g. music teachers). MVCS is exploring the possibility of entering into agreements with some of the community businesses who have offered many of the P.E. and arts opportunities for MVCS students. The process of transitioning these individuals and businesses to employees and direct partners is time-consuming and is not complete at this time. Final arrangements will be completed in spring of 2023.

For its part-time K-5 students this year, MVCS has partnered with several local organizations to provide what we are calling "Explore! Time". During this 6-week session (Jan 13-Feb 17), Track 1 (Monday/Wednesday) classes will continue, but Track 2 (Friday) classes will be cancelled. Parents may choose to sign up their children for elective, enriching activities on Fridays at the following business (at no cost to them): Powderhorn skiing, Grand Valley Climbing, Legacy Academy Gymnastics and Ninja, Absolute Dance, and Eureka Science Museum. In order to meet hour requirements for October Count, Track 2 students must attend one of these sessions; Explore! Time is optional for Track 1 students. This new offering is proving to be exciting to our community. Depending on final feedback after Explore! Time occurs, we will determine whether to continue this practice in future years and whether any adjustments need to be made.

L. ENROLLMENT POLICY

Recruitment

MVCS has a current student body which will provide a solid base of enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year. Each year MVCS also incorporates new students. Awareness of MVCS has been accomplished in the following ways:

- MVCS is on the District 51 list of options/charter schools.
- The District 51 Student Services and Support office directs homeschool students to us.
- MVCS maintains connections with school counselors in District 51 which yields referrals for students not thriving in their current District 51 environment who would prefer something more home-based while not being fully online (GRA).
- Because of the changes to our program in the 2021-2022 school year, MVCS posted flyers in many locations in Grand Junction known to be frequented by homeschool families (e.g. MCPL, the homeschool library, etc.). This has helped to expand the reach of MVCS (and District 51) into homeschool families who would otherwise not attend a District 51 school. MVCS will continue this approach in the future, but especially to recruit for the 2023-2024 school year.

Potential for Future Recruitment

We also believe that there is potential to make more inroads into the high school homeschool community if we can market MVCS to them as a conduit to higher education opportunities which are at no cost to them. The Colorado State Legislature has pledged funds to encourage higher education for all high school students (which includes homeschoolers) (cite law) and has tasked public schools with expanding the reach of concurrent enrollment. Being able to connect eligible homeschool students to these opportunities benefits everyone. We would like to explore the idea of District 51 referring to MVCS all homeschooled students seeking classes at WCCC and CMU so that MVCS can manage that registration and also be considered the home school for these students. This keeps the recordkeeping for these students in one place and also allows us to provide these students and their parents access to other resources that benefit them such as SAT testing, test-prep opportunities, parent and student workshops, and social opportunities allowing them to connect with a greater community.

Additionally, in the future we hope to be able to access the list of parents who have registered their children as homeschoolers and do direct mailings to those families. These families have the potential to add more students to District 51 who would otherwise not attend a District 51 school. The approach we would like to take on this would be for MVCS to partner with District 51 to have MVCS manage the recordkeeping for homeschool students registering with District 51 as they are required to do. We are very interested in exploring this idea with District 51 to determine whether it is an option for MVCS to take this off the plate of someone at District 51. We understand that the staff assigned to this task has recently changed, and we also know that managing the homeschool information (Intent to Homeschool, assessment records, etc.) can be challenging. Many of these homeschool parents come to our facility twice a week, making it a simple matter for us to communicate with them and gather the documents District 51 needs from them each year. Additionally, since many of them are likely to use the NWEA testing done at MVCS to fulfil their bi-annual reporting requirement, we actually already have this data in-house and could skip the steps of the parent getting the information from us and then taking that

information to District 51, requiring District 51 to then verify and file that documentation. As THE school in the Valley which is vitally connected to the homeschool community, it makes sense for MVCS to help District 51 manage the homeschool recordkeeping headaches. To us, these types of tasks fit right in with what we already do, and do well.

Where ongoing recruitment and marketing are concerned after the 2023-2024 school year, MVCS will continue all of the above strategies and plans to expand community awareness regarding how MVCS can meet the needs of a diverse population including students with special needs or those who are economically disadvantaged, at-risk, low achieving, disabled, and linguistically diverse along with those who are exceptional and educationally disadvantaged students.

Enrollment Policy

The Enrollment Eligibility and Enrollment & Onboarding Procedure (STU.100.5) is included in its entirety below. It has been rigorously reviewed to ensure non-discrimination.

Enrollment Eligibility

MVCS is a public charter school, serving students with disabilities and English Learners and provides services to students as required by state and federal law. Charter schools are subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry, need for special education services, and certain other grounds. Laws applicable to students with disabilities include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

MVCS enrollment is open to all students eligible to enroll in a public school in Mesa County, Colorado. MVCS's enrollment policy is designed to:

- Meet the requirements of Colorado Revised Statute 22-30.5-104 (3).
- Ensure equal access to the school.
- Serve at-risk students (defined as economically-disadvantaged).

Age

MVCS follows District #51 policy JEB to determine the age of students enrolling in MVCS. Students must be 5-21 years old and without a diploma or equivalent.

Students over age 18 must have a detailed step-by-step plan for meeting diploma requirements as part of their ICAP and must continue to stay on this track. MVCS accepts students who turn 21 after October 1 of that school year, but will not accept students who turn 21 before October 1 unless they have an active Special Education status. In that case, MVCS will enroll the student for that school year only. MVCS does not accept students who are 22 years old or older regardless of their Special Education status.

Part- and Full-Time Enrollment

Part-time students must be homeschooled students in Mesa County, registered with District 51 or their home school district, and parents of these students will be expected and encouraged to abide by the homeschool statute (C.R.S. § 22-33-104.5). In the event that a student is enrolled with an "umbrella"

school, that student is not considered by law to be homeschooled, and these students do not fall under the same legal regulations, but they are allowed to enroll in MVCS part-time.

All students in grades K-5 are part-time students and are enrolled in the Mesa Valley Enrichment Program (MVEP). There is no full-time option for students in these grades. Students in grades 6-12 may enroll on either a part- or full-time basis.

MVCS will enroll part-time students in grades 6-12 within the following parameters:

1. Students will be accepted as space allows; full-time MVCS students have priority.
2. Students enroll in one of the following course combinations per semester; students must meet eligibility requirements for concurrent classes:
 - a. 2 MVCS courses
 - b. 1 MVCS course and 1 crossover course (including Career Center)
 - c. 1 WCCC module
 - d. 1 MVCS course and 1 (1-3 credit) CMU course
 - e. 3-12 credits at CMU

Simultaneous Enrollment

The below guidelines outline the MVCS policy regarding simultaneous enrollment. The most common scenarios are listed below, but this list is not comprehensive.

1. Part-time students may not simultaneously enroll part-time in two public schools.
2. Part-time students may simultaneously enroll in MVCS and a private school; homeschool “umbrella” schools are counted as private schools. Such enrollment is at the discretion of the private school.
3. Part-time students may be simultaneously enrolled in community educational co-ops and enrichment schools.
4. Full-time students may be simultaneously enrolled in up to two classes a semester at a District 51 school (on a space-available basis).
5. Qualifying part- or full-time students may be concurrently enrolled in an Institute for Higher Education (IHE).

Expelled Students

Students who have been expelled by another school in the District are barred from enrolling in MVCS during the term of their expulsion.

Enrollment & Onboarding Procedure

When bringing new students into the school, two processes overlap each other. It is crucial to be aware of where an individual student is in the enrollment process so that no discrimination takes place. Conversations about the specifics of a student’s situation (parent support, exceptional needs status, etc.—things that get discussed during onboarding) must ONLY take place after a student has been ENROLLED.

Creating the Roster and Waitlist

1. **Application**—Parents of prospective new students are directed to fill out an online form to be placed on a date-stamped wait list. The form is made available and the wait list begins to form annually on the first school day in January. Parents of current students are also directed to fill

out this form to confirm continued enrollment and add siblings for the following school year. (Siblings of current enrollees are guaranteed enrollment.) This forms the roster of the next school year. The deadline for returning students to confirm enrollment is February 28. By that date, the Director determines the maximum number of students who will be accepted in each grade. MVCS may enroll up to 500 students annually per its contract with School District #51; staffing and space constraints are considered when setting the specific annual limits for each grade.

2. **Overview**—Prospective parents are strongly encouraged to attend an overview prior to enrollment to make sure they understand the unique model of MVCS and to receive a detailed explanation of school expectations and requirements. These presentations explain the basics of how MVCS works. General questions (not specific to student needs such as IEPs) are encouraged at this time. When necessary, parents may watch a recording of an overview rather than attending in person.
3. **Enrollment**—On March 1, all unconfirmed current students are purged from the roster for the next school year, siblings of current enrollees are added to the roster, and students from the waitlist are added to the roster, working from the “top” of the wait list by date—up to the capacity determined by the Director. New students added to the roster from the wait list are contacted by MVCS to inform them that they have been enrolled. Between March 1 and the last date to enroll in mid-September (specific date determined annually), students continue to be added to the roster from the waitlist as space becomes available (and students may withdraw, opening up more roster space). As new students are added to the roster from the wait list, they are contacted by MVCS to inform them of their confirmed enrollment.
4. **Registration**—All enrolled students (both new and returning) must complete online registration with District 51 each year. This process gathers/confirms demographic/contact information and parent permissions. Registration opens in mid-July. All enrolled families (new and returning) are emailed instructions to complete registration. Registration continues for students added from the waitlist until enrollment is closed in mid-September.

Onboarding New Enrolled Parents & Students

1. **Scheduling**—Once a student has been enrolled, part-time students are sent a link to sign up for classes. Full-time students are scheduled for classes individually through a collaborative process that involves the parent and MVCS staff member who determine the best schedule for each student. This meeting also allows for discussion of individual student needs and the ability of the parent to support the student at home with the unique blended learning approach of MVCS. Parents will be given a copy of the Participation Agreement so that they can understand the requirements of enrollment in MVCS. Staff and families will have an opportunity to explore concerns that either may have about the appropriateness of enrollment in MVCS.
2. **Records Review & Evaluation**—Once a student is enrolled (step 3 above), MVCS/MVEP will review educational records. Records may be sourced from District 51, previous school(s) outside District 51, and the parents. High school students’ incoming credit will be evaluated and transferred in based on appropriate documentation; testing may be required to authenticate homeschool classes and determine appropriate grade level. During this stage, MVCS/MVEP will also identify students with disabilities. MVCS/MVEP will conduct an individual inquiry into each such student to determine whether reasonable modifications or necessary aids and services would provide the student with an equal

opportunity to participate in school activities, including extracurricular ones. MVCS/MVEP will also determine if the extra-curricular or activity needs reasonable modification to allow the student to participate in all aspects of the activity. Such determinations shall be made on a case-by-case basis based on student-specific facts. MVCS/MVEP is committed to complying with 34 C.F.R. § 104.37's requirement that schools provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the school's non-academic services, including extracurricular activities and enrichment programs.

M. TRANSPORTATION & FOOD SERVICES

Transportation

MVCS has not and will not provide transportation services to and from the school unless it is required by a student's formal Individualized Education Program (IEP). Because schedules are highly personalized for each student and no student attends school across the entire school week, it is too complicated to arrange transportation. Instead, parents are directed to transport their own child(ren) to and from school. The GJ city bus lines also service District 51 students at no cost to them as long as the student shows his ID. This option can help older students meet their transportation needs (especially those who are economically disadvantaged).

In the event that a student's IEP plan specifies a need for transportation, MVCS will partner with District 51 to arrange for such transportation using the established District 51 bus system if possible. If such arrangements cannot be made, MVCS will contract with another transportation provider for this student. Once at the school building, any students who struggle with mobility may access the second floor (if needed) via an ADA-rated accessibility lift.

MVCS classes may occasionally take field trips off-site. In these situations, generally parents will be asked to transport their own children (parents may choose to carpool with others at their discretion). Occasionally, MVCS students may participate in a trip sponsored by District 51 (e.g. college trip) and will have the option to participate in transportation arrangements that have been made by District 51. While historically MVCS has never had occasion to arrange for District 51 transportation (bus/van) for a field trip, MVCS may choose to contract for this service in the future on an as-needed and as-available basis.

Food Services

MVCS has never offered food services on site. The school building has no kitchen or other facilities to make this possible. Students are expected to bring their own lunch when they attend classes. More of our students will attend classes on-site than they have done in the past, so this is likely to be something that is needed. Students needing food onsite are currently accommodated by being given a small cold lunch. A small inventory of suitable items is maintained for this purpose in a staff break room and staff are aware of the location of this food and its availability. The general fund is used to purchase food for this purpose. With the recent passage of The Healthy School Meals for All in Colorado, we are very interested in making meals available to our students. Beginning next year, MVCS is interested in exploring the option of partnering with District 51 to provide cold lunch options to students.

MVCS staff also inform parents of the accessibility of lunch and breakfast at neighborhood District 51 schools or at the Lunch Lizard during summer break months. A handful of our students have benefitted from these programs. MVCS would like to continue to improve its communication to parents about this in the future.

N. FACILITIES

Building

MVCS has a facility located at 609 25 Rd. in Grand Junction. This building is part of a Property Owner's Association (POA) that includes four other buildings with shared access to some interior roadways. This 36,486 sq ft facility has been home to MVCS since Feb. 2019. Previously the "KidzPlex building", MVCS has renovated parts of the building already three times to transform it from being a building primarily for gymnastic and day care to be a functional school for K-12 students. During this process, all building and fire safety inspections have been obtained and all applicable requirements for zoning and occupancy, health and safety laws and ADA requirements have been addressed.

Renovations

Renovations that MVCS has made to the building include the following:

- An entirely new HVAC system for two-thirds of the building (the west side) was acquired.
- Space was re-allocated to create classrooms, meeting rooms, and staff space.
- Bathrooms and drinking fountains were updated.
- Windows and skylights were added where possible
- A Special Education wing was created by adding a floor in a part of the building which was previously only one level.
- Electrical systems were updated to add significant capacity.
- Lights were updated throughout to be efficient.
- Fire systems were added to meet school code requirements.
- Flooring and paint were updated throughout the building, with the exception of the gym area (entire east side of building).
- Ethernet and Wireless Access Points were installed throughout the building to meet District 51 specifications.

The current status of the facility is as follows:

- 10 classrooms that can hold at least 25 students at a time. This includes one which functions as a high school science room, and—though it cannot support a full chemistry lab—it meets the basic needs of the high school science program. This room also serves as an art room because it has a sink and easily-cleanable VCT flooring. Three of these rooms have temporary partitions for some of their walls.
- 5 classrooms that can hold at least 5 students at a time (used for Special Education, speech therapy, and occupational therapy)
- 2 rooms for staff who need to meet with students for behavioral or counseling concerns.
- A front office administrative area which includes 5 offices, a shared work space, and houses supplies.
- 2 staff break rooms (one includes a teacher work space).
- 7 meeting rooms
- 5 family study rooms
- 1 large staff area with 27 staff cubicles and a staff work area

- 1 library
- Outdoor space used for lunch/recess
- Entire building is ADA-compliant and includes an ADA lift to allow access to the second floor.

Upcoming planned renovations are currently being arranged with FCI. ESSR III will be used to fund this project. Construction is scheduled to begin mid-December.

- The HVAC system for one-third of the building (the east side) is original to the building and consists of 30-year-old swamp coolers with heating capacity. These machines have been breaking down, are quite loud, and leave dirt residue on surfaces. Replacement units will be comparable to those on the rest of the building.
- A large room on the first floor will be subdivided with permanent walls to replace the temporary dividers in use now. This will separate the room into three areas (two classrooms and a library).
- Two rooms that were previously locker rooms in the KidzPlex building and which include bathrooms have been closed off since we took possession of the building. This space will be renovated in the 2022-2023 school year to create two bathrooms which are next to the lunch room. This renovation will also sub-divide the area to create a dedicated storage room and staff meeting room.
- Windows will be added to the gym to brighten the space and make it more friendly.

While many things have been improved on the MVCS building, some areas have been identified as still in need of updates/renovations. These updates are not scheduled at this time; funding is budgeted to be available in the 2025-2026 school year. Fortunately, MVCS can continue to function without these updates in the near future. As needs are prioritized and funds become available, the following parts of the building are likely to be addressed.

- The parking lot is in need of resurfacing and restriping.
- The gym area is unfinished and split with partitions into lunchroom, classroom, cubicle, and storage space. Currently, leaving this space flexible with the ability to rearrange as needed is not a bad thing. However, we would like to improve this space. Currently it has just a bare cement floor, half of the walls are unfinished, the ceiling is open with visible insulation (and some of that has begun to fall after a leak in the ceiling this past summer). It is not a pleasant space to be in and we would like to address that, as well as subdivide the space into more permanent areas in the future.
- The back yard area has a large area of dirt which can become muddy. This area is part of where students spend lunch and recess time. It needs to be covered to make the area more useable and friendly and also attempt to cut down on the need for excessive janitorial work on muddy days. Additionally, the outdoor landscaping in this area is haphazard and divided into sections that do not meet any current use; the space has fencing which is not uniform and unnecessarily places part of the area off-limits to students. A large, decrepit storage shed is in the middle of this space and it would be beneficial for this space to be reclaimed for student use. An unusual stand-alone covered area in the back yard is good for shade, but unattractive. The irrigation system will need to be updated as the space is rearranged. Our overall goal is to create a pleasant and functional space for students during their lunch and recess times.
- Roof maintenance has been challenging. There are many leaks throughout the building, some of which travel down to the first floor. It is difficult to address these areas because nearly the

entire roof is covered by solar panels. A project to update the roof and address concerns posed by access blocked by solar panels is indicated.

We welcome District 51 facilities department input or possible partnerships to address these needs.

Place in the community

MVCS's location is currently flanked by current or upcoming projects from private and city projects.

- There is a subdivision project currently being built directly to the north of MVCS. This will include the addition of a road between MVCS and the new subdivision (Flat Top Lane). As part of this project, agreements have been made to add access to the POA through the MVCS parking lot to this new road. This should help alleviate many of the access and safety concerns that currently exist for parents and students entering and leaving the property.
- Changes to 25 Rd. (which is to the east of the POA) are scheduled to be completed within the next two years. These changes will preclude entering the complex on the east side and will instead direct all incoming traffic to the north (via the road access that is being constructed as part of the private building project to the north). Exiting the complex will still be possible to the east, though the turn will be restricted to one direction. Overall, these changes are anticipated to address safety concerns that have been problematic for the complex for many years.
- MVCS benefits from proximity to WCCC. Many of our high school students attend classes at WCCC. Being across the street from WCCC makes it possible for students to move back and forth from MVCS and WCCC classes as needed. However, there are concerns about students traveling by foot across 25 Road, given the busy nature of that roadway. As the City proceeds with plans to update 25 Road, MVCS will work with the city to try to address these safety concerns.

Funding the facility

MVCS acquired its facility via a District 51 COP. This makes District 51 the owner of the building, and MVCS pays District 51 monthly (directly reduced from its per-student funding) for use of the building. The term of the COP is 30 years, and when the final payment has been made, ownership will shift from District 51 to MVCS. MVCS receives Capital Construction Grant money from the state of Colorado which significantly offsets the cost of the building.

Maintenance/Upkeep

MVCS employs its own staff for maintenance and upkeep. For some purposes (e.g. lawn care, snow removal, pest control, etc.) MVCS contracts with a private company. MVCS would be interested in exploring the possibility of contracting with District 51 for some of these needs in the future.

Student Safety/Security

MVCS operates with a closed campus policy which helps keep students safe while they are in our care. For many years, MVCS has worked closely with the District 51 security department to ensure that MVCS follows District 51 protocols. We have worked with District 51 to meet needs in these areas:

- Fire drills/safety
- Shelter-in-Place and Lockdown drills/safety
- Quarterly table-top drills.
- Identifying a pick-up place in the event of a school emergency

We continue to remain in contact with District 51 security personnel and will continue to follow the most updated procedures in this area.

Additional Matters

MVCS maintains an asbestos management plan which may be viewed in the MVCS office. District personnel are welcome to review the plan. Additional documentation kept on file in the front office includes backflow prevention, lift inspection, fire extinguisher, alarm panel inspection, and monthly defibrillator inspections.

O. WAIVERS

MVCS is committed to comply with all laws and policies at the state and district level that are not waived. MVCS will seek both automatic and non-automatic waivers from state law and district policy as outlined below. All waivers will be requested for the duration of the charter school contract term. Regarding financial impact, no significant impact on the budget of the school or district is anticipated for any of the waivers.

State Waivers—Automatic

Colorado grants waivers to the following state laws automatically to all charter schools. No replacement policies or replacement plans are required to be written for these waivers.

State Statute Citation	Description
22-32-109(1)(f), C.R.S.	Local board duties concerning selection of staff and pay
22-32-109(1)(t), C.R.S.	Determine educational program and prescribe textbooks
22-32-110(1)(h), C.R.S.	Local board powers—Terminate employment of personnel
22-32-110(1)(i), C.R.S.	Local board duties—Reimburse employees for expenses
22-32-110(1)(j), C.R.S.	Local board powers—Procure life, health, or accident insurance
22-32-110(1)(k), C.R.S.	Local board powers—Policies relating in-service training and official conduct
22-32-110(1)(ee), C.R.S.	Local board powers—Employ teachers' aides & other non-certificated personnel
22-32-126, C.R.S.	Employment and authority of principals
22-33-104(4), C.R.S.	Compulsory school attendance—Attendance policies and excused absences
22-63-301, C.R.S.	Teacher Employment Act—Grounds for dismissal
22-63-302, C.R.S.	Teacher Employment Act—Procedures for dismissal of teachers
22-63-401, C.R.S.	Teacher Employment Act—Teachers subject to adopted salary schedule
22-63-402, C.R.S.	Teacher Employment Act—Certificate required to pay teachers
22-63-403, C.R.S.	Teacher Employment Act—Describes payment of salaries
22-1-112, C.R.S.	School Year—National Holidays

State Waivers—Non-Automatic

In addition to the automatically-granted state waivers, MVCS will seek to the following waivers, all of which it has previously requested and been granted. These are all commonly-requested waivers for charter schools.

State Statute Citation	Description
22-9-106, C.R.S.	Performance Evaluation System
22-2-112(1)(q)(I), C.R.S.	Reporting Evaluation Ratings
22-32-109(1)(n)(I), C.R.S.	School Calendar
22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(B), C.R.S.	Adoption of District Calendar
22-63-201, C.R.S.	Teacher Licensure
22-63-202, C.R.S.	Teacher Employment Contracts

22-63-203, C.R.S.	Probationary Teachers
22-63-206, C.R.S.	Transfer of Teachers
22-32-110(1)(y), C.R.S.	Accept Gifts, Grants and Donations
22-32-109(1)(b), C.R.S.	Competitive Bidding
22-7-1014, C.R.S.	Kindergarten School Readiness Plans

District Waivers

MVCS appreciates the value of District 51 policy in meeting the requirements of state statute and rules to create a framework within which MVCS’s charter structure can exist. There are a few policies created by District 51 which are incompatible with the uniqueness of MVCS. In these cases, MVCS seeks the waivers from District 51 policy and (as with state law) creates its own replacement policies unless no replacement is needed. No waiver is sought by MVCS in instances when a power is fully delegated from District 51 to MVCS, as is the case with Section B (School Board Governance and Operation) and Section G (Personnel) which were expressly delegated from District 51 to MVCS in the 2018 charter school contract and which we expect to again be expressly delegated in the 2023 contract. MVCS will work with District 51 during contract negotiations to clarify expectations in this area.

P. STUDENT DISCIPLINE, EXPULSION, OR SUSPENSION

Student Discipline

MVCS operates within District 51's student conduct and discipline policies. Because of the high level of parental involvement, our population tends to be minimally disruptive. There are Class Handbooks for two grade groups—K-5 and 6-12 which emphasize the most relevant expectations. The handbooks also clarify school-level expectations (e.g. the MVCS dress code is slightly different from that in traditional District 51 schools). These school-level expectations are taken from the MVCS Policy Book. Parents and students are given a copy of the Class Handbook each year and are required to sign it. Relevant sections of the MVCS Class Handbooks are included below. The topics chosen for inclusion in the Class Handbooks reflect the cultural norms for our population, and consequently focus only on general behavior expectations, dress code, and academic integrity—the areas into which the vast majority of concerns at MVCS fall. Items of more significant or specific concern are governed specifically by District 51 policies and our Class Handbooks specifically state that. This approach to communicating expectations is culturally responsive to our population.

Staff apply these expectations equitably and without bias. There are no expectations (including those in the dress code) which discriminate on the basis of race (e.g. hair texture, type, or style), economic status, etc. Staff working with students receiving special education services are trained in the administration of discipline, which allows them to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Staff are also encouraged to make expectations clear from the onset, as well as reinforce expectations as needed. When possible, staff attend relevant District trainings.

MVCS has more than one staff member available to help coach and support other staff members who may be struggling with aspects of classroom management or with individual students in their classes. Our MTSS staff member helps with both general coaching, individual student matters, and behavior interventions. Our Teacher coach member helps with general coaching and classroom support as needed. Our school counselor intervenes as needed to work with individual students who may have issues such as anxiety, depression, emotional regulation, etc. interfering with their behavior in class.

MVEP (Grades K-5) Behavior Expectations

Guidelines for MVEP are the following, taken from the Class Handbook:

1. Arrive on time.
2. Come prepared with supplies and homework (if relevant).
3. Show respect for the teacher and all members of the class at all times. This includes your words, actions, and attention to hygiene.
4. Keep your hands to yourself.
5. Treat classroom materials and equipment better than you would your own.
6. Clean up your area before leaving the room. Food is not allowed in the classroom without teacher approval. Drinks must have lids.
7. Keep gum in your mouth and your mouth closed when chewing.
8. Follow the individual teacher's guidelines about cell phone use. Never talk or text on a phone during class.

If student behavior is disruptive to the class, measures will be taken to restore the student to participate positively. Disruptive behavior is not tolerated and parents may be called to pick up their child if the child is non-cooperative or significantly disruptive; parents of a child with recurring behavior issues may be required to remain on-site while the child is in class. If behavior issues result in the student frequently missing class time, attendance policies apply. MVCS/MVEP operates within District 51's student conduct and discipline policies. See the Mesa County School District #51 Student Handbook for full policies about student conduct and discipline; detailed information is on pages 22-31.

Grades 6-12 Behavior Expectations

Guidelines for students in 6-12th grade on-site classes are the following, taken from the Class Handbook. The Class Handbook also includes the dress code and a detailed section on Academic Integrity.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

MVCS operates within District 51's student conduct and discipline policies. Specific expectations for students attending MVCS classes are the following:

1. Arrive on time.
2. Come prepared with supplies and homework.
3. Show respect for the teacher and all members of the class at all times. This includes your words, actions, and attention to hygiene.
4. Keep your hands to yourself and do not engage in extended touching (aggressive behavior or public displays of affection).
5. Treat classroom materials and equipment better than you would your own.
6. Clean up your area before leaving the room. Food is not allowed in the classroom without teacher approval. Drinks must have lids.
7. Keep gum in your mouth and your mouth closed when chewing.
8. Follow the individual teacher's guidelines about cell phone use. Never talk or text on a phone during class.
9. Watch for children when entering the parking lot, drive slowly, and follow a counter-clockwise pattern.

If you are withdrawn from a class, you will not receive credit or have student funds refunded. You may be withdrawn from a class for the following reasons:

1. Tampering with or damaging any program on the school computers.
2. Theft or attempted theft, including other students' work.
3. Accessing or attempting to access pornographic content on the Internet—including on your phone while in the building.
4. Plagiarizing or attempting to plagiarize material.
5. Tampering with projects belonging to other students.
6. Any action that is detrimental to the learning environment.
7. Any action that places students or property at risk.
8. Any action that can be interpreted as bullying or harassment, including verbal, non-verbal, or electronic interactions.
9. Bringing a weapon to school.

Student Suspension & Expulsion

Historically, MVCS has never had occasion to suspend or expel a student. The most significant incident the school has ever had (many years ago) was able to be handled with the aid of law enforcement helping mediate an issue between students which one student perceived as threatening. Less significant issues have been handled internally through clarifying expectations, increasing communication with parents about behaviors observed on campus (both positive and negative behaviors), and by including our guidance counselor when needed to address potential emotional or mental health concerns. When necessary, we can refer out into the community for needs beyond those relevant to the school. (specifics).

In the event that a student must be expelled, we will provide for an alternative education by partnering with District 51 following current District 51 protocol at that time.

Q. SERVING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

MVCS adheres to all national and state anti-discrimination laws, complying with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), and Title IX. Our recruitment practice, enrollment policy, educational program, and discipline procedures are all crafted to guard against any type of discrimination and protect students with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, homeless pupils, economically disadvantaged students, and all pupils regardless of creed, nationality, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Discipline for students with disabilities is in accordance with a student's IEP or 504 and includes all the procedural safeguards for students with disabilities mandated by state and federal law.

Continuing its long-standing historical focus on individualized education, MVCS is dedicated to serving students with special needs of all types. MVCS strives to identify special needs as quickly as possible and provides a continuum of services for those identified with special needs to help ensure academic success for all students.

Because legal obligations are not the same for all groups of MVCS students, this part of MVCS's program requires careful distinctions between part-time homeschool students, part-time non-homeschool students, and full-time students. A brief explanation follows. See the sub-section "Programming for Part-time Homeschool Students" for more details.

- **Part-time homeschool students**—Parents of these students have chosen to homeschool their child and, consequently, assume the overall responsibility for their child's education. As part of their vision for their child's educational program, these parents have elected to include part-time enrollment in MVCS as a part of their child's education. All of MVCS's K-5 students as well as most of the part-time 6-12th grade students fall into this category. In Synergy, these students are coded BOTH "home-based" and "part-time." This coding allows data for these students to be disaggregated (homeschooled students' test results are not attributable to a school for state purposes). Most notably, students in this category ARE NOT eligible for special education.
- **Part-time non-homeschool students**—Students whose parents have not chosen to homeschool, but who have a part-time schedule fall into this category. Examples include a senior with a part-time schedule because graduation requirements are nearly met, and a student with a reduced schedule due to medical issues. A very small number of 6-12th grade MVCS students could be in this category, although in any given year there may not be any students in this category. In Synergy, these students are coded ONLY "part-time." These students' data IS included in school reports and students in this category ARE eligible for special education.
- **Full-time students**—These students' parents have elected to have MVCS in charge of the student's educational program. Only 6-12th grade MVCS students are eligible to be full-time students. In Synergy, these students receive no special coding, as they are "typical" public school students whose test results are attributable to the school and who are eligible for special education.

Because distinctions of this sort are not commonly made in public school settings, it is worth emphasizing that MVCS respects the parents' right and responsibility to determine what type of schooling their child receives. While this choice may result in a student being ruled ineligible for special

education (should the parent choose not to relinquish control of the child’s overall educational program), the goal of MVCS is never to avoid responsibility for students with special needs, but rather to support the student as much as possible without conflicting with the parent’s decision to assume responsibility for their child’s overall educational program.

Kindergarten School Readiness & READ

MVCS participates in the Kindergarten School Readiness (KSR) assessments and the creation of plans for all of its kindergarten students. MVCS has a waiver which allows it to use a modified KSR assessment for this purpose. (MVCS will re-apply for this waiver for its next contract cycle.) Because all of our kindergarten students are also part-time homeschool students, if a student’s KSR plan includes elements that need to be completed at home, MVCS can only encourage—not mandate—that these elements are completed.

MVCS also tests all K-3 students (and those in older grades on READ plans) with DIBELS three times a year. DIBELS is used as a metric on KSR plans as well as being used to develop READ plans when necessary. Students on READ plans have assigned interventions and participate in progress monitoring as needed. Interventions include those offered at MVCS as well as those that can be completed at home. Similarly to KSR plans, parents of part-time homeschool students can only be encouraged—not mandated—to complete reading interventions. All K-3 staff are trained with CDE Science of Reading materials.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

In alignment with Tier II of the MTSS process, MVCS implements targeted interventions and monitors the academic progress of all at-risk students (whether enrolled part- or full-time). Students who meet the criteria of at-risk are referred by the classroom teacher to the Student Support Team (SST team) which is headed by the MTSS Coordinator, on staff with MVCS. The SST team collects data and evidence of the student’s overall performance which is then reviewed by the SST team along with the parents and student, if age appropriate. The SST team identifies strategies and/or interventions to improve student performance, creating formal MTSS plans when needed.

Interventions for at-risk students must clearly align with the student’s identified challenges and are clearly described. MVCS options for interventions include those offered at MVCS as well as those that can be completed at home. Some intervention programs used include Lexia Core5, Lexia PowerUp, ALEKS, Kahn Mappers, and Prodigy. Those offered at the MVCS site could include individual or small group tutoring, after school academic programs, and/or behavior support plans. Both full-and part-time homeschool students participate in the MTSS process, however MVCS can only encourage—not mandate—that interventions be completed by part-time homeschool students; all other MVCS students follow the intervention process completely. Student performance data is tracked and reviewed periodically to determine response to the intervention. At minimum, the effectiveness of the interventions is assessed quarterly. Students who demonstrate improved performance as the result of an intervention will continue with the intervention in place in the general education setting.

Research shows that with an effective Tier I educational program which is responsive to individual learning needs—combined with targeted Tier II interventions when necessary—the vast majority of students will achieve academic success. There are, however, those students for which a more intensive and individualized educational program is necessary. For those students who demonstrate chronic or

ongoing difficulty with academic or social growth and who have not responded to targeted interventions, further diagnostic assessment may be necessary and they may be referred for a formal evaluation by a school psychologist to determine eligibility for special education services. Tier III of the MTSS process provides for the assessment of students for specific disabilities and eligibility for services under 504 or IEP plans.

Special Education & 504 Programming for Part-time Homeschool Students

Since District 51 has not previously had a stand-alone part-time homeschool enrichment program, there has been some confusion and misunderstanding around the SPED responsibilities for our students in this category (all K-5 students in 2022-2023, plus some in grades 6-12 beginning in 2023-2024). MVCS has drawn on information found in the Charter School Institute (CSI) document “FAQ: Programming for Homeschool Students” to help define our responsibilities in this area. We have also had our legal counsel review this CSI document for accuracy and verify MVCS obligations. The CSI document may be found in Appendix O and a memo from MVCS counsel on this topic may be found in Appendix P (“SparksWillson Memo”). The essential points from these documents regarding IEPs and 504s—clarifying obligations for part-time homeschool students—are outlined below, along with an explanation of what this will look like at MVCS.

1. MVCS develops, implements, and maintains 504 plans to formally document needed accommodations for students with disabilities and allow equal access. MVCS employs a 504 Coordinator for this purpose. Accommodations are provided as needed as they are relevant to testing and/or specific courses in which the student is enrolled.
2. MVCS enrolls students with disabilities, but FAPE and IEPs do not apply to homeschool students; consequently, MVCS does not provide special education services for these students. Additionally, MVCS receives no categorical funding for these students. MVCS has elected to instead offer support classes for students whose parents would like a supplemental or replacement class focusing on targeted help for students struggling with ELA, math, oral communication, or handwriting. These students do not have an IEP plan, and the support classes are not special education services. Any parent may enroll a student in these classes.
3. MVCS evaluates a homeschool student who has suspected disabilities per Child Find requirements. If MVCS suspects a disability for a student enrolled in the MVEP program, MVCS follows the process for evaluating a student for a disability. Students in grades K-4 will receive an evaluation if recommended by the team. If the student qualifies for an IEP, the student will be referred to their District 51 neighborhood school to fully-develop and implement the IEP. If the parent does not want to transfer to the neighborhood school, the parent may instead elect to waive the IEP and any services for which the student would have been eligible. Fifth grade students who qualify for an IEP have the option to transfer to a District school to receive services at the neighborhood school, but also have the option to waive services until the student is enrolled as a full-time MVCS student and to then receive services beginning in the 6th grade. In such a case, the IEP would be inactivated until the student enters the 6th grade.

Special Education & 504 Programming for Full-time Students

The Special Education department is administered by the school with oversight from the SPED department of District 51. MVCS has a strong working relationship with the District 51 SPED department, and that relationship is enhanced by contracting with District 51 for the School Psychologist

position. Additionally, MVCS staff attend various professional developments, trainings, and meetings provided by District 51 in order to stay consistent with District policies and practices. Data collection for school assessments is done in the same way for MVCS students as it is for other students in District 51, and the same systems are used by the school as are used in District 51. School records for students with disabilities are housed in the same platform that District 51 uses, which allows students to pass seamlessly between MVCS and a traditional district school when necessary. MVCS uses the District 51 IEP checklists in Appendix Q to assure that IEPs are written following District and State guidelines, and that they accurately reflect the student’s needs and academic, social, and emotional plan. Additionally, MVCS IEP’s are checked by the District SPED department after finalization.

Staffing for the Special Education Department

MVCS follows state requirements that Special Education teachers must possess a Colorado Teacher’s license, with appropriate endorsements as necessary to serve students with exceptional needs. Because of the smaller size of MVCS, it is common for our SPED teachers to have multiple endorsements or licenses, allowing them to teach either in general education classes or the SPED environment as needed. We have also capitalized on the experience and availability of retired SPED teachers and those who have worked in other schools but prefer a part-time option.

Past enrollment suggests that MVCS will enroll approximately 15-22 students with IEPs between the grades of 6 and 12 in the 2023-2024 school year. In order to provide for these students, MVCS anticipates staffing the following positions:

- 1 High School SPED teacher
- 1 Middle School SPED teacher
- 1 Speech/Language Therapist
- 1 Occupational Therapist
- 1 School Psychologist
- 1 School Nurse

These providers are employed on a part- or full-time basis by MVCS, with the School Psychologist and the School Nurse positions being employed by District 51. Psychologist and nurse contract hours vary by year, according to MVCS student populations, but currently the MOU is for 8 School Psychologist hours and 4 School Nurse hours per week.

Curriculum for the Special Education Department

Annually, MVCS develops SPED classes that are unique to the population of students at the school for that year, tailoring the schedule to the students’ specific needs (as a group and as individuals). Most of those classes are between 4-8 students per teacher.

- **English Language Arts for Middle and High School**—The whole book approach used in the General Education classes at MVCS is modified for students receiving services according to an IEP. High-interest books are chosen and all content is built around the themes in the book, with vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills included in each unit. Instruction is differentiated according to the collective IEP goals of the current group of students. SPED teachers meet individually with students as needed and provide one-on-one instruction when necessary. Because of the small class sizes, students are able to move at their own pace and receive help as

needed. Students are provided a variety of ways to demonstrate their learning, including oral presentations, written assignments, tests, quizzes, and projects.

- **Math for Middle School**—MVCS has been using Moving with Math Learning System: Foundations as well as WestEd Math Pathways and Pitfalls. Moving with Math Learning System: Foundations was chosen by the Student Services Team because it is a research-based RTI program that had been used in the elementary grades and resulted in progress and growth of our students. In the 2022-2023 school year, the Math Pathways and Pitfalls curriculum was added because it spends a lot of time targeting areas that many students are lacking. It is also a research-based RTI curriculum that addresses academic language and math learning for diverse students.
- **Math for High School**—MVCS has used both Teaching Textbooks and Math-U-See for Pre-Algebra and Algebra. These curricula are both full general education curricula that work for students who are struggling in math. Teaching Textbooks has worked well because it is less visually overwhelming and it moves through the topics at a slower pace than other curricula such as Saxon or Pearson. Math-U-See has been a great option for our students because it includes instructional videos by the creator and a manipulatives kit that enhances learning. Most of our students have the accommodation to use math manipulatives. The students receive direct explicit instruction from the special educator and then they can watch the video for each lesson if they get stuck on homework when they are not in class. Math-U-See is designed to have students spend the first three lessons learning new concepts and the next two to three lessons are a review of previous concepts. This has proven to be a great method for our students who need significant time learning new concepts but also benefit from the reinforcement of learned concepts. For our students who are at a lower level, our teachers are using AGS Publishing's Mathematics Concepts and Basic Math as well as Pacemaker Practical Mathematics for Consumers (this is from the Pearson Learning Group) both of these curricula are specifically designed to be used with students who have disabilities.
- Because we are a small school, all curriculum and instructional materials decisions are made by the Student Support Team, which consists of the SPED teachers, the SLP, OT, School Psychologist and Director.

Assessment & Progress Monitoring for the Special Education Department

Students participate in NWEA testing three times a year, CMAS/PSAT/SAT in the spring, and CogAT in the 7th grade. At the beginning of the year and throughout the year as plans are updated, accommodation information is taken from student IEPs and 504s and given to the Administrative Assistant, who enters all accommodation information into a database used to track accommodations and input the information into testing platforms as needed. As students test throughout the year (NWEA, state testing, classroom tests taken in the Test Lab, etc.), proctors are provided with the information they need to ensure that every student receives appropriate accommodations.

Progress monitoring is done using a Curriculum Based Measurement test at the student's functioning level. The current District practice is to progress monitor every two weeks, however, that assumes that students are in class 5 days a week, so the ratio of instruction to testing is 1:10. MVCS uses the same ratio, so progress monitoring is conducted after ten class sessions, resulting in progress monitoring being done every 5 weeks (after 10 units of instruction). This allows students in the MVCS blended learning environment to spend less class time participating in a progress monitor and instead allows

them to use this time for instruction, showing more growth with several lessons between each progress monitor.

English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELL/MLs)

MVCS has never had an ELL/ML student and does not employ staff who specialize in services required by linguistically diverse students. However, MVCS acknowledges the needs of this population along with the school's obligation to adhere to state and federal requirements related to the identification, service, and evaluation of these students. In the event that an ELL/ML student enrolls either part- or full-time, MVCS will work closely with District 51 to ensure that the student's needs are met.

If a student indicates a language other than English on the Home Language Survey, MVCS will coordinate with the District 51 CDLE department to arrange for administration of the state-required identification screener (WIDA Screener) and complete the identification process. Following NEP or LEP identification, MVCS will work with the CDLE department to determine how to provide equitable access to courses based on language acquisition status, as well as ongoing progress monitoring. This could include contracting with District 51 for services of staff who specialize in working with ELL/MLs. Additionally, students identified as NEP or LEP must take the annual ACCESS for ELLs exam, even if they have chosen to deny EL services; here too, MVCS would need to rely on the CDLE department.

Gifted & Talented Students (G/T)

MVCS strives to support the unique needs of students who excel and/or are identified as Gifted and/or Talented. Classroom teachers receive training at least yearly to help them develop an understanding of G/T students, differentiate for G/T students, and learn methodology necessary for meeting the needs of this unique population. When relevant, staff working with G/T students will intersect with Special Education staff to meet the needs of twice-exceptional students.

MVCS students (part- or full-time) who score in the top 90th percentile on a state assessment or the NWEA MAP assessment are placed on the Talent Pool watch list. The watch list is maintained by the MVCS G/T Coordinator who works with teachers to determine next steps and additional testing that would be needed to formally identify a student as Gifted/Talented. An additional data point which can be used to identify G/T students may be acquired with the CogAT test, which is administered to 2nd and 7th grade students (and others if requested by parents, recommended by teachers, or indicated for follow-up by fall NWEA scores). Once a Talent Pool student has three data points which indicate that the student is Gifted and Talented, the MVCS G/T Coordinator works with District 51 G/T staff to formally identify the student.

It is worth noting that for students in K-5, it is unlikely that there will be enough data available to identify a student as G/T. However, if a student has enough data, an ALP plan will be developed. An existing ALP for a student (from a different school, or the previous iteration of MVCS) will be maintained and supported as appropriate in the subject area for that student, if the student is enrolled in an MVEP class in that area.

Once a student has been formally identified as G/T, the MVCS G/T Coordinator works through the following steps.

1. Creating an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP)—Parents are contacted by the G/T Coordinator to collaborate on an Advanced Learning Plan. The ALP will identify two goals of interest to the student and parent, one academic and one affective goal. Parents are guided through a process to determine worthwhile goals by the G/T Coordinator.
2. Maintaining an ALP—Parents of students with existing ALPs are contacted at the beginning of the year by the G/T Coordinator to determine the ALP goals for the year. Throughout the year, all students are progress monitored towards the growth on their goal by the G/T Coordinator, relevant teachers, and the parent (particularly for affective goals).
3. Creating opportunities for group enrichment opportunities—Students in the Talent Pool as well as those who are formally identified as G/T are included in enrichment opportunities that meet goals included in student ALPs each year.

The direction MVCS has received from legal counsel (Appendix P) suggests that it would be good for MVCS and District 51 to formally discuss the matter of part-time homeschool students and ALPs prior to completing the 2023 MVCS/District 51 contract. ALPs may be largely irrelevant in the context of a part-time enrichment program such as that for K-5 students, but may be more relevant to part-time homeschooled students in grades 6-12. MVCS would like to clarify expectations for this population in a way that is mutually beneficial to District 51, MVCS, and the students.

Homeless Students

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, MVCS ensures rights regarding enrollment, accessibility, and educational stability for students experiencing homelessness. MVCS provides students in this situation with access to the District 51 REACH Program Coordinator and will work through the situation with District 51 staff to ensure that the student's needs and the school's legal obligations are met. A significant concern to be discussed is whether the educational stability needed by the student is compatible with continuing in the blended learning environment at MVCS. As MVCS does not provide transportation, this will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. As MVCS is transitioning to a new school model, it would be beneficial for MVCS to discuss this with REACH staff to clarify best practices for this new school situation.

Students with Social/Emotional Needs

MVCS employs a Guidance Counselor who draws on the tools and examples outlined in the American School Counselors Association's (ASCA) mindset and behaviors for student success in order to provide a systematic and comprehensive school counseling program. Needs are determined through individual assessment, identifying gaps in achievement, attendance and discipline records. The MVCS Guidance Counselor provides short term professional solution oriented and focused counseling support to students in classrooms, large and small groups, or individually. Service platforms include in person and on-line engagement. The goal is to address and overcome social, emotional, and behavioral issues that may affect students' educational and vocational performance. Additionally, our counselor consults, collaborates, and makes referrals based on the District 51 established Student Mental Well-Being Resource Guide.

R. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Because MVCS is a charter school governed by a contract with District 51 it is important to have a clear agreement and understanding by both parties regarding how to address any conflicts that could arise. Additionally, state statute (CRS 22-30.5-107.5) outlines requirements for how charter schools and their authorizer are to handle disputes.

As a general principle, MVCS intends to reach out for support or address concerns proactively and constructively with District 51. Historically, MVCS has been able to resolve questions or concerns with District 51 without resorting to an escalation to legal disputes. We fully anticipate that this relationship will continue. However, should a matter need more significant discussion or remedy, the 2018 MVCS/District 51 Contract states that MVCS and District 51 would enter a mediation process. Only after such mediation fails would legal remedies be pursued. The 15-year copacetic relationship MVV/MVCS has had with District 51 indicates that such measures would be unlikely to be needed.

The verbiage from the 2018 MVCS/District 51 contract pertaining to this issue is listed below. We anticipate the 2023 contract being substantially similar.

ARTICLE 9 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

9.1 Mandatory Mediation. In the event any dispute arises between the District and the Charter School concerning this Agreement which is not governed by §22-30.5-107.5 or 108, C.R.S., such dispute shall first be submitted to the Superintendent of the District or his/her designee for review. Thereafter, representatives of the District and the Charter School shall meet and attempt in good faith to negotiate a resolution of the dispute. In the event these representatives are unable to resolve the dispute informally pursuant to this procedure, they shall engage in non-binding mediation in Grand Junction, Colorado before a neutral mediator selected by agreement of the parties. The mediation shall be scheduled and concluded within sixty (60) days of selection of the mediator. The mediation process shall be closed to the public and all information submitted during mediation shall be confidential to the extent permitted by law. The cost of the mediation, including the fees of the mediator, shall be split equally between the parties. If at the conclusion of the mediation the dispute is not resolved, either party may then pursue such additional remedies as may be provided by law.

9.2 Jurisdiction and Venue. No court shall have subject matter jurisdiction over any claim to which Paragraph 9.1 applies until and unless the parties have first participated in mediation as provided in said paragraph, and the mediator certifies in writing that the parties are unable to resolve the dispute by mediation. In the event any claim or dispute concerning this Agreement is attempted to be resolved in any court by either party, the venue of such matter shall only be in Mesa County, Colorado.