

Mosier Community School  
2019-2020 Site Visit  
December 12, 2019

North Wasco County School District  
3632 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
The Dalles, Oregon 97058

Mosier Community School  
1204 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue  
Mosier, OR 97040

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### Introduction

Site visits to school district sponsored charter schools are a regular and systemic examination of a charter school's administration and implementation of the charter agreement. They are one of the essential functions of sponsoring school districts, as delegated by the State Board of Education consistent (SBE) with ORS 338.095 (2), which states, in pertinent part, "The sponsor or sponsor's designee at least annually shall visit the public charter school site and review the public charter school's compliance with the terms and provisions of the charter."

The purpose of the annual site visit is to gather and document evidence about the school's performance, implementation of the education and organizational program outlined in its charter, and compliance with law and regulations. **The documents and observations gathered assist in assessing the extent to which the charter school is faithful to the terms of its charter, educationally and fiscally sound and organizationally viable.**

North Wasco County School District 21, represented by current Human Resources Director and former Mosier Community School Director Brian Schimel, conducted the annual charter school site visit at Mosier Community School on December 12, 2019. This site visit included classroom walkthroughs, interviews with the Executive Director, Dean of Students, Executive Secretary, an MCS Board member, licensed and classified staff, as well as Randy Anderson, the Chief Financial Officer for the North Wasco County School District.

In addition to interviews, a review of the Mosier Community School Annual Report and financial information was conducted and based upon materials previously received by the district through the annual reporting process. Assessment data as provided by the Oregon Department of Education and information derived from NextUp Leadership's Information Collection Report was also used.

### Mosier Community School - Core Values

The core values of Mosier Community School (MCS) have recently been reviewed, updated, and adopted by the MCS Board of Directors (December 2019). During the school visit, many of the core values were evident or discussed, specifically, Wellness, Relationships, and Relationships. The core values are included here as they were consistently mentioned during the visitation process, primarily the efforts to revisit and refocus resources around these long standing core values.

#### MULTI-AGE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We believe students in multi-age environments are able to visualize a path of progression which allows them to explore their next steps of learning at their own developmental pace. This leads to an ever expanding horizon which is not limited to age or grade expectations.

#### FLEXIBLE SKILL LEVEL CORE INSTRUCTION

We support the value of differentiated instruction for all learners. We assess student abilities regularly to ascertain continued growth and to determine whether current placement is appropriate. We believe that students learn best when they are placed in small groups determined by ability.

#### RELATIONSHIPS

We foster supportive relationships to build a safe, engaging, and inclusive school community in which all students have a sense of belonging. Students are encouraged to collaborate and compromise to reach consensus. Respecting and promoting citizenship, confidentiality, and individual dignity are essential for creating positive relationships.

#### RIGOR

We set high expectations of growth for all students to develop academic excellence, and achieve their maximum potential. We continually monitor and adjust the educational instruction to incorporate new learning.

#### RELEVANCE

Multi-disciplinary learning allows students to create connections, find significance, and prepare for future challenges. Integrated learning allows students to make connections between multiple subjects which will encompass the arts, sciences and core curriculum. Thematic units, in conjunction with, place based and inquiry-based learning creates relevance for students and encourages differentiated learning. We believe in learning subjects in depth to enhance student success in educational challenges.

#### RECOGNITION OF SUCCESS

We value and honor individual growth and achievement in educational excellence as vehicles to acknowledge and motivate learners. Recognition is a step toward developing intrinsic learning patterns.

#### WELLNESS

We develop strong, healthy minds and bodies. We choose to teach and develop healthy social and emotional behaviors within the school community. Good nutrition, exercise and balanced mental health are important values for students and adults, which we believe to be a foundation for educational success.

#### SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

We seek to work collaboratively and respectfully within the school and our local community. We support Mosier Community School by embracing the Core Values and using them to guide our educational practice, learning, and growth. We value and encourage participation from our local community.

### **Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities for Future Growth**

A focus of this report was to identify the numerous strengths and challenges of Mosier Community School. However, the results of the interviews should not be viewed as a representation of the entire school – they were statements or comments recorded during individual interviews with selected stakeholders– not school wide/community wide surveys.

Stakeholders identified the following strengths during the visitation:

- A “close knit” community and staff
- Professional development in mathematics – more efficient with a smaller environment
- A caring and nurturing staff
- An excellent staff
- Staff develop strong relationships with students here – pays off academically
- Small class sizes
- Strong core values
- Lunches made from scratch
- A focus on healthy living
- Responsive Classrooms
- Middle school student behavior has improved
- Benchmark Literacy implementation/continuation
- Physical Education and Health classes at all levels
- Strong Board and ED committees
- Facilities committee – facilities assessment
- The creation of an additional section of Kindergarten
- Organized procedures and schedules are in place at the middle level
- Multi-age learning
- Placed Based Friday at the middle school level
- Recognition of success (revisited and implemented) – Core Values
- Special Education and English Language Learner interventions
- Individual help for students
- Multiple styles of teaching/learning
- Hands on lessons
- The kids!

Stakeholders identified the following challenges (or future growth) during the visitation:

- We have to scramble for additional resources more than a larger school district
- Mathematics adoption
- Look at expanding custodial staff
- Updating school policies
- The promotion of the school – enrollment currently 195
- Getting back to our roots (Mission, Vision, Core Values)
- Currently updating job descriptions
- Recent high staff turnover
- Updating facilities
- Fewer teaching assistants

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- Developing measurable student outcomes
- State assessment scores have declined over several years
- School state funding and allocation decisions
- How to best use/update the gas station property

Additionally, after a review of information collected from staff, students, and the community in a December 2019 report, consultants from **NextUp Leadership** identified the following strengths of MCS:

- A dedicated and collaborative staff of teachers working together
- Small class sizes with a placed-based education philosophy
- Strong arts and music programs
- Close relationships between students and staff with one-on-one attention
- Committed to serving all students from all backgrounds
- Safe and secure place for students to learn and staff to work

The consultants also identified areas of growth or improvement for the organization:

- Upgraded school facilities
- Devote more resources for student access to mental health services
- Expand Elective course offerings and extracurricular activities
- Solidify funding sources

#### **Student Demographics and Enrollment (As reported in MCS' 2018-2019 Annual Report)**

Mosier Community School's enrollment in June of 2019 was 195, or 89% of capacity. 2018-19 marked the first time that Mosier School has been under full enrollment in several years. While MCS continued to have lengthy waitlist in some grades (Kindergarten, 4th, and 5th grades) other grades were not at capacity.

Of our 195 students, 60% are White, 33% are Hispanic/Latino, .05% are multi-racial, .01% are Black/ African American, and .01% American Indian/Alaska Native. These population dynamics reflect a student population that continues to trend more racially diverse each year, which is more in line with the population characteristics district-wide.

58% of our students are from Mosier, 37% are from The Dalles, and 5% reside in Hood River. In 2018-2019, 44% of the students at MCS received free or reduced breakfast and lunch, 18% were English Language Learners, and 12% qualified for Special Education services. Our regular attendance rate was 94%, nearly a 10% increase from the previous year (85%).

#### **Student Academic Achievement and Growth (Derived from ODE's At –A- Glance School Profile and ODE 2018-2019 ESSA Accountability Details Report)**

The Oregon School Profile indicates the following for Mosier Community School:

- Median class size is 21 (an increase of 1 from the prior year 2017-2018)– state average is 25 students.
- 85% of the students are considered regular attenders, the Oregon average is 80%.

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- Both English Language Arts and Mathematics scores (Achievement) decreased 4% from the prior year. Both remain above average for all Oregon students.
- English Language Arts and Mathematics Academic Growth for all students has declined to a level 3 (3-year average). This should be an area of focus for the school.
- Academic growth in Mathematics for students on IEP's remains at a level 5.

### **Financials**

An interview with Chief Financial Officer Randy Anderson and a review of MCS' audited financials indicate that the school is relatively strong financially. The audit report for 2019 determined that the school was in compliance with all laws and regulations regarding the Minimal Standards of Audits for Oregon Municipal Corporations (Oregon Administrative Rules).

### **Summary**

There is ample evidence that Mosier Community School is faithful to the terms of its charter, educationally and fiscally sound and organizationally viable. Mosier Community School is not without opportunities for improvement as retention of staff, funding, facilities, and academic rigor were all mentioned as current and future challenges. However, none of the major school school functions were identified in the "Needs improvement" category. Thank you for the opportunity to visit the school. A special thank you to all of the staff who were available. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and we look forward to the annual school visitation in 2020-2021. It will be important for the new superintendent to be involved in this process so he/she can learn more about the wonderful educational offerings of Mosier Community School.