



# Mapleton Public Schools

Response to:

## **Adams 14 School District**

Request for Qualifications/Proposal  
for a Management Partner



Submitted by Mapleton Public Schools  
Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019

## Adams 14 School District

### Request for Qualifications/Proposal Response for a Management Partner

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# **SECTION 1**

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## **LETTER OF INTEREST**

January 15, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

It is the power of dreams, the hopes of a brighter future, and the promise of quality public education for all children that fuels our interest in serving as the management partner for Adams 14 School District. An educational partnership between Adams 14 School District and Mapleton Public Schools is foundational to the culture and history of our shared and similar communities. Before Mapleton High School first opened its doors in the mid-1950s, students living in Adams County School District #1 (Mapleton), were welcomed, supported, and educated at Adams City High School. Those early relationships, experiences, and memories established our communities' collective commitment to student achievement long, long ago. Today, our families are friends and neighbors, we know each other's children and we know the communities we serve because we are more similar than different. Supporting Adams 14, our neighbors, is the best way to preserve and protect our shared commitment to our children and our communities for generations to come.

The mission of Mapleton Public Schools is to guarantee that all students can achieve their dreams and contribute enthusiastically to their community, country and world through an education system characterized by:

- An unyielding commitment to academic success and personal growth;
- Learning opportunities that empower students to develop their talents and pursue their interests;
- Highly skilled, compassionate staff who believe they make the difference in each student's life;
- Small, safe, family-like environments of unwavering support where relationships ensure personal achievement; and
- A resourceful and responsive community working together to ensure that no obstacle shall impede a student's success.

Mapleton defines itself as an innovative, diverse and deeply-rooted learning community, passionately committed to the uniqueness and potential of each student. We are informed by the history and values of our local community and are proud of our unwavering pledge to honor who and where we serve. We are strongly committed to public education and equitable access to opportunities for all children. We believe strong schools and strong communities go hand-in-hand. These beliefs extend beyond Mapleton's district boundaries.

Mapleton initiated a "reinvention" of its schools more than 15 years ago. Through that process, we developed a powerful appreciation of our past, a deep understanding of our then present realities, and a compelling vision for our future. Mapleton's "theory of action" included the creation of schools that were "small-by-design." Mapleton has a proud history of working within a small community, knowing every student well, and investing in results for every child. Those were, and continue to be, the values we hold highest in our schools: high expectations and rigorous academic content, relevant content and courses, and strong relationships with caring adults.

The first graduating class following the reinvention was in 2008. Since that time, Mapleton's graduation rate has increased from 48.8% in 2010 to 74.3% in 2018. Every academic indicator continues to trend in a positive direction. Although we haven't achieved all of our goals, our work is grounded in research and effective practices and is producing positive outcomes for kids.

While the most successful turnaround efforts have both high-impact leaders and the solid capacity at the district level to initiate, support and enhance transformational change, the “recipe” for success is unique to each community. Mapleton’s reinvention has been working for Mapleton because this unique recipe was imagined and developed with the trust, support and participation of the Mapleton community. While the recipe is developed within the context of the local community, the key ingredients and supports for a successful turnaround effort are very consistent.

At the District level the key ingredients include: 1. Articulating a powerful vision for turnaround and making tough decisions; 2. Providing clear, visible, and positive support for dramatic change; 3. Recognizing the vital importance of leadership and investing in leadership development and training; 4. Investing in a coherent, guaranteed and viable curriculum that aligns with standards and assures appropriate training; 5. Building meaningful assessment and data analysis systems to track progress and inform instructional decisions; 6. Conducting instructional leadership team walkthroughs and facilitating meetings and discussions based on effective instructional practices; and 7. Managing key partnerships in ways that further enhance the focus and impact of external partners.

At the school level the key ingredients also emerge: 1. Strategic use of staffing and scheduling; 2. Culture of open, two-way communication; 3. Establishment of clear, consistent, and aligned instructional foci and expectations; 4. Regular use of classroom observations to improve instruction; 5. Consistent implementation of a well-defined multitiered system of support; 6. Provision of nonacademic student supports, including social-emotional supports; 7. Consistent implementation of a schoolwide student behavior plan; 8. Focus on offering expanded learning opportunities; and 9. Commitment to engaging families in student learning.

Mapleton’s approach to completing this project is comprehensive. As the management organization, we would fully engage with all stakeholder groups and would address every area of the district – expanding some areas and activities while strategically abandoning others. The work would not be superficial or fleeting, rather, a deep dive into what’s working and what isn’t working. Mapleton would support the staff of Adams 14 to take on BOLD initiatives and hone skills that elevate educational practices. We would commit to building a solid district infrastructure that will result in increased academic outcomes for all students.

In the first 100 days, we would follow the six strategic actions discussed in the Research on Effective Practices for School Turnaround conducted in Massachusetts: 1. Assure the right leaders and teachers are in the buildings; 2. Establish teacher agency, ownership, and urgency by building the community of practitioners immediately; 3. Establish collaborative teaming structures to improve instruction; 4. Ensure a safe and secure learning environment; 5. Provide leadership and collegial support; 6. Sustain and maintain turnaround efforts long-term by working to identify some of the long-term problems of practice that will take years of applied work to solve.

The Mapleton team would be all in. In other words, the Board of Education, myself, central administrators, school leaders, teachers, and support staff, would all work together to lead and learn alongside one another. As Superintendent of Mapleton Public Schools, I would act as the main point of contact for the duration of this project.

Sincerely,



Charlotte Ciancio

Superintendent, Mapleton Public Schools



# **SECTION 2**

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## **EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS**



## Section 2

# Experience and Qualifications

## Proposed Personnel

**Charlotte Ciancio, Superintendent of Mapleton Public Schools**, will serve as the main point of contact for the duration of this project. Ms. Ciancio has served the Mapleton community as Superintendent of Schools for 18 years and is one of the longest-serving superintendents in the state of Colorado.

Mapleton Public Schools is similar to Adams 14 School District in its location, size and mission. If Mapleton is selected as the EMO, Adams 14 will receive the support of an entire organization doing the same work, sharing the same passions,

and serving very similar student populations, right next door. Mapleton’s Board of Education, superintendent, central administrators, school leaders, teachers and support staff would work together to build capacity and develop a sustainable system of academic excellence in Adams 14.

The Mapleton Public Schools team is nearly 900 members strong, and many employees live in the Commerce City/Thornton area. Critical to the success of Mapleton is each employee’s understanding of their role in realizing our mission – that all students will

achieve their dreams.

For this project, current Adams 14 leaders will play critical roles, and some new leaders may be identified. Senior Mapleton administrators would provide high level oversight for the project.

**Charlotte Ciancio, Superintendent**, was born, raised and educated in the Mapleton community, Superintendent Ciancio is a lifelong educator dedicated to nurturing our state’s next generation of leaders. In her time as superintendent she has worked with the Mapleton community to lead what has

become one of Colorado’s most ambitious and successful school reform initiatives (see below).

As Superintendent, Ms. Ciancio’s leadership and influence reaches far beyond Mapleton’s district boundaries. A trusted advisor, Ms. Ciancio provides mentorship support for superintendents and education leaders in all corners of the state. She is an active member of several statewide education-focused organizations, including the Colorado Association of School Executives and the Colorado Association of School Boards, and serves on numerous education committees and boards at both the local and state level.

**Mike Crawford, Deputy Superintendent**, has 29 years of experience in public education as a teacher, counselor, school administrator, and district administrator. A product of public schools in Adams County, Mr. Crawford has served in three school districts in the north metro area, including 12 years in Mapleton. Mr. Crawford will bring expertise in employee relations, student support services, and school district operations to the Adams 14 project.

**Karla Allenbach, Assistant Superintendent of Schools**, has years of experience as a teacher, instructional guide, school administrator and district administrator. Ms. Allenbach has served for 25 years in Adams County, including 19 in Mapleton.

She will bring expertise in special education, curriculum and instruction, Office of Civil Rights coordination, and school supervision to the Adams 14 project.

**Erica Branscum, Assistant Superintendent of Talent Recruitment and Development**, has 23 years of public education experience, all in Mapleton Public Schools. Ms. Branscum has been a teacher, school administrator and district administrator. She will bring expertise in human resources, professional development, federal programs, and early childhood education to the Adams 14 project.

These individuals, and the rest of the Mapleton executive team (see resumes below), will hand-select a group of Mapleton administrators committed to improving public education to directly support the improvement efforts of Adams 14 School District.

The administrative team in Mapleton has received national and international recognition for their reform work, which is documented in the book, “Against the Odds - Insights from One District’s Small School Reform,” written by a team of education experts, including Larry Cuban, Professor Emeritus of Education at Stanford and Gary Lichtenstein, head of Quality Evaluation Designs, a firm specializing in education evaluation and research.

When Superintendent Ciancio

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first arrived in Mapleton, students were disengaged, test scores and graduation rates were low, and drop-out rates were high. Concern within the community was growing and big changes were needed. In response to the need for action the Board of Education at the time and district leadership – many of whom are still with the district – successfully organized teachers, business leaders, partner organizations, parents and community members to outline a new road map to success. The strategic plan that emerged from this road map outlined the district-wide reinvention of Mapleton Public Schools.

During this significant period of reform, all eight conventional elementary schools, two middle schools and one comprehensive high school transitioned to a new system of schools that were small-by-design. Mapleton moved away from the idea of neighborhood schools and

introduced a full-choice system where families select their school based on how their children like to learn, not where they live. Today, Mapleton Public Schools proudly offers an entire community of students a wide-range of unique educational options typically not offered in a public school setting.

Mapleton students, parents and the community are celebrating the results of the reinvention. Today, drop-out rates are down and graduation rates are up. In 2009, Mapleton was among the three most improved districts in the Denver metro area on the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) tests. Since 2010, 100% of high school seniors apply to college every year, more than doubling the number of those who had applied in the years before the reinvention. Of Mapleton’s seniors, nearly 98% are accepted into the college of their choice annually. Between 2008 and 2016 ACT results

sustained a significant upward trajectory of improvement. In 2018, we have seen some of our most impressive numbers yet. Enrollment rates are at a seven-year high, graduation rates increased for the fifth year in a row.

In “Against the Odds,” Cuban confirms the following about Mapleton’s reinvention:

*“...implementing major reforms in an urban school system is intense and unrelenting work—not only for district administrators, but also for school leaders and teachers, central office staff, service personnel, and students themselves. As obstacles proliferate, too many districts lose heart and return to the status quo. In Mapleton, on the other hand, a small district developed a reform plan and has stuck to it. Its story offers lessons to other similar districts, and even to larger ones, about how to implement major reform and negotiate expected and unexpected challenges along the way.”*

## Charlotte Ciano | Superintendent of Schools

### Primary Role

The 2018-19 school year marks Ms. Ciano's 18th year as the Superintendent of Mapleton Public Schools.

### Results

Superintendent Ciano not only demonstrates a strong ability to lead, but a very special ability to nurture and encourage innovative thinking while protecting the mission and vision of our organization. Under her leadership, Mapleton Public Schools has been able to organize groups of teachers, staff, parents, business leaders and community members to develop a strategic plan embarking on a massive reinvention of our school district. The work she leads has been changing the face of public education in our community, across Colorado and in the United States.

### Qualifications

Superintendent Ciano is a lifelong educator. Her administrative experience started in 1996 when she served as a principal in Westminster Public Schools and later as Director of Learning Services. She joined Mapleton in 2000 as the Executive Director of Learning Services and was appointed superintendent in 2001. She holds numerous professional growth memberships, including Denver Area Superintendent's Council, Adams County School Superintendent's Council, Boettcher Teachers Program, American Association of School Administrators, and the National Association of School Boards. She has received several notable honors and awards in her time as superintendent, including CASSA Colbert Cushing Award (2018), Colorado Superintendent of the Year (2012), Community Champion from Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (2010), Let Talent Shine Award from College Summit (2008), and the Vocational Service Award from the Westminster 710 Rotary (2007).

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## Mike Crawford | Deputy Superintendent

### Primary Role

Mike Crawford, as the Deputy Superintendent of Mapleton Public Schools, provides a critical partnership between schools and the executive team.

### Results

Mr. Crawford provides district-level leadership and strategic direction setting for the District. In 2018, under Mr. Crawford's leadership, Mapleton Public Schools embarked on an extensive capital construction campaign, benefiting every school in the District. While overseeing Mapleton's Human Resources Department, he improved numerous systems, including employee on-boarding, benefits and employee relations. He was also instrumental in the implementation of Educator Effectiveness in Mapleton.

### Qualifications

Mr. Crawford has worked in public education in the state of Colorado, primarily in Adams County for more than 28 years. He started his career as a teacher and counselor before being appointed in administration successively as a principal, student services director, learning services director, executive director of human resources and his current appointment as deputy superintendent. Mr. Crawford obtained his principal license and degree as a Specialist in Education in the areas of Administration, Supervision and Curriculum Development at the University of Colorado and an undergraduate degree in the arts from the University of Denver.

Mr. Crawford maintains a professional affiliation with the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and is an active membership with Colorado Association of School Executives. Mr. Crawford has served as Chair of the Adams County Youth Initiative Management Team that oversaw the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative.

**Karla Allenbach** | Assistant Superintendent of Schools**Primary Role**

As Mapleton's Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Karla Allenbach's leadership and keen awareness of the needs of a small-by-design system of schools has been essential to the success Mapleton celebrates today.

**Results**

Ms. Allenbach has served Mapleton in numerous capacities and has come to define what 'best practice' means for the district in curriculum and instruction, Office of Civil Rights coordination, special education, and school supervision. With an eye for effective daily instruction practices in all content areas, Ms. Allenbach leads the charge on what it means to provide for the success for all students.

**Qualifications**

Ms. Allenbach has worked in education for nearly 25 years. She started her career as a special education teacher in Westminster Public Schools. In 2000 she accepted a job as a literacy resource teacher in Mapleton. The following year she became an assistant principal and later served as a principal for five years. In 2008, Ms. Allenbach moved to the central administration office to serve as the Director of English Language Learners. While in that position she coordinated all district-level parental involvement activities and developed robust and effective ELA student programming and services. Ms. Allenbach has supported Human Resources, professional development and Learning Services. She oversees and manages the development of all school-level and district-level Unified Improvement Plans, oversees the Special Education student programming and services, and oversees the management and implementation of all curriculum and aligned instructional models/practices for all content areas and grade levels.

Ms. Allenbach obtained her state Principal license from the University of Denver. She holds a Master of Arts degree with a double major in Special Education from the University of Northern Colorado and a Bachelor of Science from Morningside College.

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**Erica Branscum** | Assistant Superintendent of Talent, Recruitment and Development**Primary Role**

Erica Branscum serves as Mapleton's Assistant Superintendent of Talent, Recruitment and Development. She brilliantly coordinates the recruitment, selection, placement, evaluation of and recognition of employees for the purposes of hiring and retaining highly qualified staff.

**Results**

A long-time educator, Ms. Branscum draws upon her experience in the classroom to attract talented, highly-qualified individuals that are eager to invest in the mission of Mapleton Public Schools. She built and maintains an environment of trust and a culture of communication by collaborating with union leadership in an inclusive and respectful manner. She has been instrumental in the implementation of the negotiated agreement. Both inside and outside of the classroom, Ms. Branscum identifies new and innovative ways to improve outcomes for students.

**Qualifications**

Ms. Branscum started her career in Mapleton Public Schools in 1996 as an early childhood special education teacher. She later served as the Director of Mapleton's Early Learning Center, where she managed the Colorado Preschool Program grants and requirements, provided instructional leadership, planned and supported preschool curriculum development, and laid the foundation for Mapleton to become a community leader in early childhood education. She served as a school principal for several years before moving to central administration to serve as the Executive Director of Learning Services. She has received numerous awards for her excellence in education, including the Colorado Governors Distinguished Improvement Award, the Colorado National Distinguished Principal Finalist award, and the Colorado Centers of Excellence Award. Ms. Branscum obtained her state Principal license from the University of Phoenix. She received a Master of Teaching in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Northern Colorado, and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Colorado State University.

## Brian Fuller | Chief Information Officer

### Primary Role

Brian Fuller is the Chief Information and Security Officer for Mapleton Public Schools.

### Results

Mr. Fuller is an innovate and responsive leader. He ensures stakeholders are informed and educated on the accountability and accreditation status for Mapleton Public Schools. As part of his accountability and accreditation responsibilities, Mr. Fuller provides leadership to the Department of Assessment which is responsible for the development and implementation and evaluation of assessment systems within Mapleton. In addition to his work with accountability, accreditation and assessment, Mr. Fuller also provides leadership for the Information and Educational technology department.

### Qualifications

Mr. Fuller has worked in public education in Adams County for 18 years. He has held roles primarily in the areas of Assessment, Accountability and Accreditation and Technology. Mr. Fuller is the district administrative representative for the District Accountability Advisory Committee (DAAC) and has held this role since 2015. Mr. Fuller has degrees from Colorado State University in Computer Science and Economics. He maintains active memberships with the Colorado Association of School Executives, Association of Colorado Educational Evaluators and Association for Computing Machinery.

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## Shae Martinez | Chief Financial Officer

### Primary Role

Shae Martinez has served as Mapleton's Chief Financial Officer since 2009.

### Results

Ms. Martinez works collaboratively with District leadership, the Board of Education, Mapleton staff and the community to align resources within a priority-driven budget model. Under her leadership, Mapleton has received the Governmental Finance Officer Association Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Association of School Business Officials Meritorious Budget Award and Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting, and the Department of Business Officers Distinguished Service Award through the Colorado Association of School Executives.

### Qualifications

Ms. Martinez received her Master of Business Administration from Concordia University and a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Regis University.

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## David Sauer | Chief Operations Officer

### Primary Role

David Sauer serves as the Chief Operations Officer for Mapleton Public Schools.

### Results

Mr. Sauer has served the Mapleton community in numerous capacities, and has found success in each role. As a teacher and school director, Mr. Sauer implemented Restorative Justice practices school-wide and has worked toward building community from the ground up. As the district's emergency management coordinator, Mr. Sauer has worked to ensure Mapleton is prepared, nimble and responsive during a crisis. He also oversees a growing Operations department and management of facilities, both new and old.

### Qualifications

Born, raised and educated in Mapleton Public Schools, Mr. Sauer's unique understanding of the community has helped him to address the needs of the community as a teacher, a school director, and now as a member of the executive team. Mr. Sauer holds a Bachelor of Arts from Metropolitan State University. He received his Master of Arts in Teaching from Grand Canyon University and completed his Principal licensure at the University of Phoenix.

## Process for Added Capacity

**Mapleton Public Schools is committed** to providing safe learning and work environments where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. We will recruit and select additional team members and partner organizations to support this work in a manner that is strategic, intentional and impactful in achieving the goals set forth by Adams 14 School District.

We will build high impact instructional leadership capacity across district schools and departments.

Staff placements and any necessary hiring will be addressed in a timely fashion to allow for participation in the development of the overall improvement effort. Staff will receive all necessary training to implement initiatives with integrity.

As Superintendent, Ms. Ciancio has knit together a web of partners willing and interested in providing services that wrap around the needs of our community. These partner organizations, much like Mapleton, are motivated by the idea of improving public education for the children of Adams County and have already expressed interest and excitement in helping neighbors, should there be an appropriate and meaningful match.

We will ensure staff have the skills and experience to implement the work ahead with fidelity by providing necessary, appropriate and relevant professional development. Additionally, high-quality team members will be retained through a culture of communication, where administrators, teachers and other school staff are included in the discussions of policies and practices that inform future success of Adams 14 School District.

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We will build high impact instructional leadership capacity across district schools and departments.

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## Organizational Experience



**Mapleton Public Schools and Adams 14** School District are neighboring school districts that share much more than a border. The rich histories of our two communities are filled with stories of farming, agriculture and neighbors nourishing neighbors, collaborating to sustain and improve quality of life. We are public school districts, passionate about public education and dedicated to providing high-quality education for our children.

Our strong interest in advancing the mission and vision of Adams 14 School District stems from our desire to ensure access to quality public education for all children in Adams County and in our state. Not unlike Adams 14, more than 10 years ago, Mapleton, too was confronted with the need to change. We accepted the challenge. We worked to overhaul a system that was no longer serving our students. We engaged our community and stakeholders through the strategic planning process to identify a new road map to success. We embarked on district-wide turnaround

efforts, creating new systems and new structures that have led to improvements in student outcomes.

One notable improvement example is the increase in graduation rate from **48.9% in 2010** (following the implementation of the new state formula) to **74.3% in 2018**. Another example is the increase in our 11th grade ACT scores, from 14.4 in 2005, to 19.2 in 2016.

Coming off the accreditation clock in 2012, we have had six consecutive years on Improvement status. School-level turnaround efforts have paralleled district-wide efforts with similar positive results. For example, when Welby Community School, a prek-6 school, was on turnaround status, district and school leaders engaged the community in challenging conversations to identify what was working and what was no longer working for the children of this school. From those conversations, we charted a new course forward, which included the introduction of a new school model and renewed

focus on rigor, relevance and relationships. As a result, the school is now on a performance plan. Enrollment has increased, as has teacher and parent satisfaction.

As a management partner, Mapleton does not promote a single, specific educational programming methodology or model. It is our consistent practice to identify and adopt a variety of educational programming options that are selected and implemented at schools based on student needs. This creates a system of choice for students and parents. We would work with the Adams 14 community to identify robust educational programming choices for each school and allow families to make informed program decisions based on the needs, interests and passions of the children. We believe strongly in choice – choice for students, for parents, for teachers and for the community. As part of our improvement efforts, we identified and implemented a variety of school models, including International Baccalaureate, Expeditionary

Learning, Big Picture, Workshop, Leadership, STEM, University Partnership, Young Adult, and online. Through this partnership with Adams 14 School District, we will provide support, expertise and best practices informed by our own knowledge and experiences as a public school district in the selection of options best suited for the community.

As your partner, we would also address the non-instructional, operational aspects of the district. In system improvement, every subsystem must be aligned with the overall system purpose. For school districts, this means that transportation, business services, food service, custodial services, safety and security services, maintenance, and others must all support the overall mission of improvement of student outcomes. For example, our transportation plan is critical in supporting a district of choice. Students are bussed from their homes to any school in the district, a change which required full support of the transportation team. Busing is also provided to before and after school activities, including Air Force JROTC, band, choir, orchestra, athletics and tutoring programs. Our Nutrition Services team focuses on creating healthy choices in food so that students will choose to eat at school. Our operations teams have safety and security

practices in place to constantly monitor, identify and improve on practices to keep our students and staff safe. As your partner, we would bring our expertise in auditing and analyzing your subsystems and developing plans for improvement aligned to the strategic mission of Adams 14.

We also believe in the necessity of creating excellence for our students in the buildings they attend and the outdoor spaces they use. Over the past decade, we have embarked on a robust capital constructional program that has led to a new building or renovation for nearly every existing school. This was done through BEST grants and community support through the passage of bond measures. We can provide support to Adams 14 in managing the logistics of construction projects and keeping any construction chaos out of the classroom so that every student learns in a safe, secure 21st century learning environment.

Leadership is critical to the success of any organization, and it is particularly important in the work of school and district improvement. Our belief is that a system improves when individuals in the system improve through continuous learning. We believe that people closest to the problem are best able to solve the problem. We believe that leadership skills can be learned and developed.

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2010  
graduation  
rate:  
48.9%

2018  
graduation  
rate:  
74.3%

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We believe that leadership grows best when the system is built on trust and encourages a culture of communication. We do not believe that you can fire your way to excellence. In fact, the longevity of our leadership at all levels and positions has been an important element in our success. To support leaders and encourage them to stay, we have created structures and processes to improve the leadership skills of existing staff members and to encourage ownership in the mission and vision. Formal training programs, small group problem solving teams, mentorships, and leadership coaching are structures that address the development and retention of leadership knowledge and skills. We would partner with Adams 14 to provide similar support to existing leaders.

Engagement is foundational to improvement. When

stakeholders are fully engaged, they will expend discretionary effort to support and assist in the achievement of the school district's mission. True engagement is a result of interacting factors:

- Trusting that each person's opinion matters
- Having a safe space to share,
- Engaging in open communication (listening and sharing),
- Developing positive relationships,
- Demonstrating system knowledge,
- Modeling consistency of message and mission, and
- Assuring inclusivity and representation of all voices.

Stakeholder engagement is a key leadership responsibility Mapleton has experience in creating engagement in the community and within

the organization. Structures supporting this engagement are detailed in subsequent pages of this document. Some examples include community councils, student councils, teacher-administration teams, parent advisory groups, community advisory groups, and others that are task specific such as building oversight committee and budget oversight committee. We have a unique relationship with the Mapleton Education Foundation in that we provide office space and clerical support for the fund raising and "friend raising" arm of our district. Multiple business partners and community members contribute time, expertise, energy and money to our district each year through the Foundation efforts. We would assist Adams 14 in creating the structures and the processes for improving community engagement.



## Organizational Structure

**As a public school district in Colorado**, Mapleton is governed by a five member Board of Education. Members are elected from internal director districts, ensuring equitable representation from all communities within the school district. The Board uses a Collaborative Governance model, outlined in their locally developed handbook. Under Collaborative Governance, the school Board leads the district primarily through policy development and implementation. They focus their attention on the strategic direction, policies, broad goals of the organization, and on results. For reporting purposes, the Board's only employee is the superintendent.

The superintendent, in turn, hires all district staff, provides executive leadership and management for the district and its schools, and keeps the board informed of all political, high stakes and systemic issues affecting the district. The superintendent's authority and influence are extended through an executive team. Executive team members effectively supervise and support the schools and other teams of the district. School directors (who fill the role of traditional school principals) and department directors directly manage specific functions and personnel.

Mapleton responds to the needs of its community by remaining flexible and nimble. Our organizational structure has been effective due to the servant leadership philosophy embraced throughout the system. Mapleton's effectiveness likely has as much to do with how individuals within the system interact with one another as it does with the organizational structure, itself. Collaboration and clear communication are expectations. Shared values and commitments are identified, discussed, and celebrated regularly – this builds strong professional relationships and sense of shared efficacy.



# Organizational Theory of Action and Implementation

**The foundation of Mapleton’s** theory of action is the belief that the solutions to the problems facing public education are found within the local community. Education reform efforts are successful when communities rally around the singular purpose of propelling each student to individual success. There isn’t “one way” to maximize student learning. Each community must identify and commit to the strategies best suited to support their students. In Mapleton’s reform efforts, it has been helpful to adopt common thinking models to help all stakeholders speak the same language when talking about school reform. For example, often, we reference the “Four R’s”:

**Rigor:** Every student is presented with content that challenges them and helps them grow. Students are expected to meet high expectations within their zone of proximal development.

**Relationships:** Students require role models, mentors, advocates, and highly skilled instructors to succeed. They are best equipped to meet high expectations when they know all the adults around them are

invested in their success.

**Relevance:** Education is personal. Each student must believe that the lessons they learn today are directly related to their future goals. The educational system must support students in setting goals and also in helping them make connections between learning in school and success beyond school.

**Results:** Just as school districts and individual schools must be held accountable, districts and schools must adopt methods to measure the learning of every student. Education professionals must be curious action-oriented researchers, constantly using formative and summative data to adjust instruction and accelerate students learning.

For Mapleton, engaging community stakeholders happens at a variety of levels. Most importantly, parents are asked to participate in their child’s education, and they are equipped with the information they need to meaningfully support their child’s learning in school. In the broader community, Mapleton has successfully earned the trust of community stakeholders through welcoming involvement

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The Mapleton Public Schools theory of action follows:

**IF...**we engage the community to develop solutions and build trust in the district leadership, offer aligned and proven educational choices, create small learning communities, and recruit and retain highly skilled and committed adults **THEN...** student outcomes will improve, students will have the necessary skills to be highly competitive in an ever-changing world, and will ultimately achieve their dreams.

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and fulfilling promises. An advisory group made up of business owners, governmental officials, faith leaders, and other citizens meets regularly with district leadership in order to serve as ambassadors to the community regarding the work and progress happening in Mapleton. When Mapleton has asked the community to support bond and mill levy questions, this group has been instrumental in getting measures passed. A track record of fulfilling promises to the community regarding improved results and better facilities has been a key to garnering increased community support.

It was Mapleton's unique approach to overcoming its challenges that resulted in the current choice system of small-by design schools. Students and parents can select a program that best fits their need, and all of the schools are small in size so that relationships between students, parents, teachers and the school are more likely to form and deepen. We have never let access to resources, financial or otherwise, prevent us from implementing turnaround strategies. Examples of this include multiple public and private grants and donations. We have an unwavering commitment to do whatever it takes to meet student needs. Finally, we have developed tools and processes for selecting candidates with the greatest talent who are a match for the work required in our district. We then provide continuous professional development, a family-like atmosphere, and a culture of support and appreciation that results in the retention of our employees.

Mapleton's theory of action will be of great assistance in bringing comprehensive, sustainable reform to Adams 14.

## Understanding of National, State and Local Context

**Mapleton Public Schools has a deep understanding** of the local context based on proximity (the two districts are contiguous) and on nearly identical community and school demographics. A chart may best illustrate the district and student body similarities:

	Adams 14	Mapleton*
Total Population	7,467	6,581
Free/Reduced Lunch	84.12%	72.6%
Special Education	11.35%	13.8%
Minority	87.6%	85.1%
English Language Learners	56.6%	44.7%

*\*Excluding Colorado Connections Online Academy*

This similarity in size, location, and student body characteristics gives Mapleton a distinctive and idiosyncratic advantage for serving the Adams 14 School District students and community. The advantage extends beyond community and demographics. At Mapleton, we understand the state educational landscape and the accountability requirements and are skilled at leveraging the requirements to benefit the schools and the students. For example, at Mapleton, we do not consider the state requirement for a Unified Improvement Plan to be onerous; rather, we maximize the state support in creating robust, actionable improvement plans that lead to improved student outcomes.

As a district committed to serving our local community, we also understand the importance of local control. In serving as your partner, it is not

the intent of Mapleton Public Schools to usurp the authority of the Adams 14 local board of education; rather it is the intent to provide scaffolded support with gradual release to full autonomy and to support a process that provides a “space” for the local community to learn and adopt schemas, beliefs and actions that will lead to better outcomes for the students. Several years ago, Mapleton engaged in a total community engagement effort which led to a complete redesign of the district. We have the experience and expertise to support Adams 14 in engaging in a similar strategic planning process with the understanding and expectation that the outcome would be unique. It is not the intent of Mapleton to replicate our solution, rather it is Mapleton’s intent to share the structures and processes for full community engagement in determining the optimal path forward for Adams 14.

Mapleton Public Schools is well-equipped to serve emerging bilingual students, culturally and linguistically diverse students, gifted and talented students, those students at risk of academic failure, and other historically under-served groups. We understand that improvement in serving groups of students begins with a belief in the important responsibility of serving each, individual student. The philosophy that guides our work is that every student will succeed, and it is the responsibility of the adults in the systems to ensure that success. High-quality first-best instruction along with a robust curriculum and aligned assessment systems allow most students to succeed. The students who require extra support are identified quickly through professional learning teams and targeted interventions, provided by highly qualified, highly trained professionals. This instructional system requires ongoing, high-quality professional development, up-to-date and aligned curricular materials, research-based interventions, and

highly-qualified staff to implement. When students require specialized services (English acquisition, gifted and talented, special education), we design and implement programs based on best practices and research. In addition to the classroom teachers, we employ specialists to support the many and unique needs of our students: psychologists, counselors, behavior specialists, career specialists are examples of these support specialists.

As a district, we are able to offer a wide range of support and expertise. For example, one of our team members has extensive experience in working with the Office of Civil Rights and has

successfully resolved a number of OCR issues. Several of our team members have expertise and experience in negotiating labor contracts that are fair for all parties involved. Our team experience is diverse, deep and varied which allows access to expertise not often afforded by external partners. We are able to deploy the talent when needed.

Most critically, as your potential partner and neighbor, we understand the historical foundations of Commerce City and the impact this history has on the schools and the school district. The community has deep roots which have become woven into the fabric the school district. There are great stories

that need to be honored and told in the schools and across the community. We will assist in articulating the ancestral strengths of District 14 – the agricultural background, heritage of proud immigrants, relationship to the river and the land – and connect this to the improvement work we will engage in together. The Commerce City community is unique with proud roots, important assets, great strengths and an inspiring story. We will value and honor the past as we work with you to create a strong future. We will assist in creating schools that will always honor where you have been while moving forward to achieve your vision.



## Organizational Capacity

**As a public school district committed** to the success of all students, Mapleton Public Schools is well equipped to assist with the improvement efforts of the Adams 14 School District. More than a decade after our own massive reform efforts, we are consistently engaged in system improvements that are yielding big results. We continually evaluate our systems and processes to make sure what we are doing is working for kids and have identified many of the conditions and structures necessary for success. As a partner, we will share and scale up our improvement processes in Adams 14 very quickly. We believe this cross-district collaboration will benefit the students both in Mapleton and in Adams 14.

Central to our capacity to complete this project in a coherent and timely fashion is strong, cohesive leadership. Our executive leadership team is somewhat unique in having long tenure in a single school district. Several team members are Adams County natives; all have been serving the Adams County community for more than 10 years, and most for more than 20 years. We know the community well – its assets and its challenges. We are humble servant leaders who are committed to partnering with the dedicated professionals of Adams 14 to expand our work to affect a larger part of our community. Leadership in Mapleton is mission-driven and strives to ensure all district personnel have the capacity to lead change. To that end, all members of the Mapleton team are aware of the valuable role they play in the success of each and every student and will fulfill that same role for the students of Adams 14 School District.

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We continually evaluate our systems and processes to make sure what we are doing is working for kids.

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In addition to the current executive team members, Mapleton would assign two deputy superintendents of reform to shepherd the work in Adams 14. The Deputy Superintendent of Academic Achievement will supervise and evaluate all staff responsible for the learning systems within the district, including curriculum and instruction, special education, student support services, assessment, professional development, and oversee the Unified Improvement Planning. The Deputy Superintendent of Systems Performance will supervise and evaluate the operational support systems of the district including human resources, business services, transportation, maintenance, communication, and nutrition services. These two

deputy superintendents would report directly to Mapleton's superintendent of schools and would serve as liaisons between Mapleton and Adams 14.

Collaborative Governance is another example of a structure we would be able to quickly implement in Adams 14 School District. Mapleton's Board of Education is committed to the principles and practices of collaborative governance. This commitment allows the Board of Education to focus on continuous learning and improvement while engaging in constructive conversations about how to best provide quality public education. Collaborative governance allows the Board of Education to lead as a united front, serving as a model of effective leadership for students, staff and the community.

Mapleton has deep organizational capacity. Initially, it will be essential for an external manager to have the level of authority commensurate with the responsibilities outlined in the Scope of Work. See Section 3, number 8 for a full description of our gradual release of responsibilities proposal.

## Proposed Progress Monitoring Systems

**To ensure consistent improvement** is taking place in each of our schools, Mapleton engages in regular progress monitoring at the district, school and classroom levels. We use growth data from state and district assessments, as well as:

- Teacher evaluations based on the Danielson framework
- Dashboard reports to continuously monitor key performance indicators such as on track graduation, attendance, and dropout rates
- Classroom assessments aligned to instructional materials that provide useful information for teachers, students, and parents on next steps in academic advancements
- Rigorous benchmark assessments designed to identify opportunities for accelerated learning and corrective instruction

We also have structures and systems in place for school directors and leaders to collaborate while monitoring school improvement at each site. This allows leaders to use the benefit of each other's experiences and to share ideas in support of improvement for all. In Mapleton, we are committed to improvement at all levels, from the school and director, to the teacher and classroom, and to each individual student.

### **Director Evaluations and Coaching**

Mapleton believes that staff at every level should commit to lifelong learning and continuous improvement. In order to support the professional growth of our building directors, we have implemented a mentoring program. This personalized support includes New Administrator Induction meetings each month lead by experienced school leaders. Experienced school directors are supported with monthly visits from a retired school superintendent who helps identify strengths and support their annual goals.

### **SST: School Support Teams**

Monthly School Support Teams (SST) are a process that has been so successful in Mapleton that, if selected as the lead partner, we would implement in Adams 14 immediately. The monthly SST process has been utilized in Mapleton Public Schools for more than 10 years. It is designed to monitor the implementation of school and district improvement plans, curriculum implementation, levels of classroom rigor and student engagement. It would also allow us to begin to build positive relationships and trust between the Adams 14 and Mapleton staffs.

Teams made up of central administrators, the school principal, the school's instructional guide, a visiting school principal, parents from the school community and a classroom teacher visit each district school each month, for a half day meeting. During the monthly visits, each team visits every classroom in the school, and effectively the entire district, during one common week each month. The district Learning Services team determines the focus area each month, visits the school and classrooms to look for evidence of implementation in the focus area, and provides written feedback to the school staff regarding next steps for implementation and overall continuous growth. Additionally, each month during the visit, the School Support Team reviews school data provided by the school principal. The data is relevant to the curricular area being validated.

The data and feedback for each set of monthly SST visits is then summarized by Learning Services for the superintendent's cabinet and Board of Education. The emphasis is on the trends and outliers within the system and next steps to be taken by Learning Services, school principals, and/or other stakeholders. The summary is also provided to all school principals at a bi-monthly leadership meeting.



Mapleton uses the SST process to engage in a continuous improvement cycle via a monthly system check on key instructional areas and district initiatives that provides feedback and input on action steps for school communities, central departments, and the Superintendent's Cabinet. We would implement this process in Adams 14 and would train the Adams 14 staff on the process and create a schedule for implementation within the first 100 days of the partnership.

### **EL Education Work Plan**

One example of how schools in Mapleton monitor progress is the EL Education Work Plan. Expeditionary Learning schools use this plan to set goals and monitor school improvement data. Each year, leaders and a representative group of teachers work collaboratively to review assessment and survey data. Based on that data, they create several long-term (3-year) goals related to three areas of achievement: Character, Mastery of Knowledge and Skills, and High-Quality Student Work. Long-term goals are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. From these long-term goals, the group discusses incremental steps that can be taken to reach that goal, and 1-year goals are created. These goals are broken down into action steps, and the group identifies what Professional Development the staff will need to meet those goals. They also determine who is responsible for implementing each of the action steps. These goals and action steps make up

the school's work plan for the following year.

This process typically takes one day. On a second half-day, all the EL schools in Mapleton get together to share their work plan goals and seek feedback. This is a highly collaborative and transparent process. Completed work plans are used throughout the following year to plan meeting agendas, schedule PD, identify team and individual goals for professional growth, and to create the school's UIP. Progress toward these goals is evaluated at the middle and end of the year by the school's leadership team, and data collected during these evaluations is used when creating the work plan for the following year.

### **Parent, Student, and Staff Surveys**

Each year, Mapleton sends out surveys to all district staff, parents, and students. This survey is designed to collect the qualitative data that isn't apparent from test scores, teacher evaluations, and the like. Instead, these surveys ask about how people feel about the school. Does the school feel safe? Do the teachers truly believe that all students can be successful? Do you have the support you need in order to do your job?

This information is collected anonymously, and then the results are aggregated and made available to all stakeholders. Directors and school leaders can then use this data to drive school improvement for the following year, as well as inform decisions about focus areas for the UIP and work plan.



## Communication and Stakeholder Input



**In Mapleton Public Schools, we believe** a strong culture of communication is essential to building and maintaining healthy and productive relationships with our stakeholders. Through transparent, two-way communication, flexibility, a willingness to listen and a willingness to adapt, we build relationships that will weather storms of life. As we work together to weather those storms, we know that strong communication forms the foundation of trust. It informs and engages our community, facilitates innovation, builds effective teams, contributes to the growth of the district, and

ensures transparency.

All district initiatives are supported with a strategic communication plan addressing primary and secondary audiences, messaging, tactics and distribution channels. Measurable outputs and evaluation are also critical components of each plan. We employ a variety of tools and resources to assure key messages are shared in a way that is strategic and inclusive. Our approach, however, can most accurately be described by who we are.

The collaborative culture that defines Mapleton Public Schools is grounded in the belief that we are stronger together. We

celebrate the words of Jackie Mutcherson, who said, “It takes each of us to make a difference for all of us.”

Collaboration can be observed across all environments in Mapleton Public Schools. Below are descriptions of how various stakeholder groups communicate and collaborate to advance the mission of Mapleton Public Schools.

The Board of Education works very intentionally to lead “from the middle.” They find common ground using data and research to inform their thinking while keeping the hopes, dreams and needs of our children central to their decisions. The structure that supports their decision-

making is a monthly study session where they frequently take a deep dive into the specifics of their policies. They also study the issues that influence the results within the district. Examples include: consideration of new curriculum materials; a deeper understanding of assessment results; the factors contributing to poor student attendance; the results from a community survey; etc. They also use this 3-4-hour time slot each month to build relationships while developing critical insight and essential leadership skills.

The District Accountability Advisory Committee meets monthly as well. This group of parents, business owners and staff members fulfill the charges determined by the Board while discussing key opportunities within the district. Specific areas of study include district goals and objectives, review of the Conduct and Discipline Code, budget priorities, grants, wellness and personnel evaluations. They report to the Board of Education at each monthly business meeting of the Board.

The Construction Accountability and Advisory Committee also meets monthly and includes board members, parents, community members, business owners and staff. They monitor the bond expenditures and stay up to date on the district's robust capital improvement campaign as projects move from concept



to design to the ribbon cuttings. They report to the Board of Education at each monthly business meeting of the Board.

Mapleton's Community Ambassadors meet each quarter for an update on Mapleton's results and progress. This group is made up of community leaders, business owners, elected officials, former board members, a current board representative and interested "others". They are asked to provide input on emerging ideas and offer

suggestions informed by their community lens. This group also brings forth meaningful partnerships that work to advance Mapleton's mission.

Mapleton's unique relationship with the Mapleton Education Foundation creates many beneficial touchpoints. By offering office space to the Foundation, board members have an opportunity to not just visualize their impact but see the difference their support makes in the lives of Mapleton

teachers and students. The Foundation board meets each month to discuss opportunities to support the students and staff across our system. This is a very diverse group of supporters including business leaders, community members, representatives from higher education, district partners, teachers, administrators, and a board representative.

The Mapleton Education Association leadership meets with the superintendent, deputy superintendent and assistant superintendent of Human Resources each month as a professional council to maintain open and continuous dialog

between licensed staff and central administration.

Building and department secretaries, as well as representatives from each classified employee work group meet with the superintendent and deputy superintendent each quarter as key communicators. These classified communications meetings are used to share important district news and updates from school buildings and departments as well as address any questions or concerns brought to the table.

The Superintendent's Student Advisory Group meets each month. This group consists of student representatives

from each district high school. They are frequently asked for feedback on emerging ideas and offer insight into the impact on students. This student voice is essential in bringing the student lens to the district's decision-making process.

The District conducts annual surveys to parents and students regarding their experiences with the schools. Every other year, the Board participates in a "listening tour" across the district, inviting parents and community members to share their experiences and offer ideas for our improvement.



We use a variety of tools and channels to help tell our story, share our message, plan our events, celebrate our good news, and perhaps most importantly, build relationships. These tools include:

- Printed and digital publications
- Fliers/handouts
- Infinite Campus Parent Portal
- Website
- Social media
- Video Production and
- Local media outlets

Our district website is responsive, allowing content to be accessed on any device. Both the district and individual school sites feature a translation function, reducing barriers to information. Content is added daily.

Our social media accounts are perhaps our most powerful tools for reaching our stakeholders. Our frequent use of platforms including Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram and Twitter have helped to make us the most credible and trusted source for news and information about our district. Our community turns to us first. Posts are published multiple times daily and detail exciting news and events, emergency updates and other important information.

The “Staff Insider” is an employee newsletter that highlights the “inside scoop” and what is going on inside the system. It is published monthly and distributed via email as well as on the employee intra-net.

The “Learning Link” is a digital newsletter written for Mapleton families emphasizing the

upcoming activities and events that parents might find interesting and engaging. The “Link” is published each month.

The “Mapleton Memo” is a weekly publication full of essential information for school and district directors, assistant directors, department leaders and executive secretaries. The purpose of the Mapleton Memo is to alleviate email fatigue by consolidating important, need-to-know school and district information and making it available in one central source. The “Mapleton Memo” is divided into four sections: Announcements, Action Items, Reminders and FYI. Important dates may be added to employee calendars by simply clicking the add to calendar link.

The community newsletter, the “Maple Leaf,” is published quarterly. This eight-page publication includes features photos highlighting events and activities throughout the district, as well as a deeper look into district initiatives. As a community publication, the “Maple Leaf” is written to encourage engagement of a broader audience who might not otherwise realize their role in creating and supporting successful schools.

Engagement is about reaching out and reaching in. This approach helps to build trust and credibility, drive efficiency and effectiveness, and encourage healthy relationships and strong involvement with our stakeholder groups. Mapleton is comfortable working across multiple platforms to engage stakeholders and look forward to working with the Adams 14 team to identify the ways in which their communication and stakeholder engagement can be improved.

# **SECTION 3**

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## **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### Section 3

# Scope of Services

## Project Overview

**Improving education is a complex task** that requires new ways of thinking to take us beyond our current realities. Mandating change by force-fitting a common curriculum to all schools and students, and focusing on “weeding out” bad teachers are examples of solutions on which some have spent a great deal of money and energy. While these may seem sensible at first glance, they haven’t worked well so far, and are unlikely to ever bring about lasting and meaningful improvement. This is not the path that Mapleton will follow.

Stanford University professor Larry Cuban noted that reforming education is very different from something like putting a person on the moon, where each step can be precisely engineered. While moon landings and similar ventures are extremely complicated, Cuban argued that education and other social endeavors, like criminal justice and health care, are complex and are filled with, “hundreds of moving parts, scores of players of varied expertise and independence, yet missing a ‘mission control’ that runs all these different parts within an ever-changing political, economic and societal environment.”

One of Dr. Cuban’s main points is that in complex systems, efforts to impose significant change by imposing rules from the top will “hardly make a dent in the daily work of those whose job is to convert policy into action.”

When it comes to systems, the difference between complex and complicated is decidedly not just semantics. When leading complex systems, centralized “mission control” strategies don’t work, and simple cause-and-effect thinking doesn’t apply. Understanding education as a complex system means letting go of our attachment to cause-and-effect solutions (especially the so-called “silver bullets”) in order to bring about improvements that last and have a meaningful impact on students and their learning.

In Mapleton, we understand that education is a complex system. On the surface, our education system might appear to be highly centralized: classrooms are led by teachers, schools are led by principals, districts are led by superintendents, and so on. However, we understand that both Mapleton and Adams 14 are complex systems that are nested within the larger system of other complex systems like schools and classrooms.

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Lessons learned from other complex systems suggest that it will take widespread action from all teachers, not just a selected few directed by top-down mandates, to make a better education system a reality.

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The “agents” within the system, including the students, teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, policy makers, etc., all interact in a web of relationships that shape how the system performs. These interactions have produced the patterns that we see, both good and bad.

As we enter into this partnership, we cannot look for centralized control and simple cause-and-effect explanations. We need to look beyond centralized, top-down approaches which have had limited impact in schools and classrooms.

Developing principal and teacher leadership capacity is a major focus for Mapleton Public Schools and would be the primary strategy for improving outcomes for kids in District 14.

We promote the belief that leadership is something that can and does happen at all levels of the education system. We understand that our role is to create and foster the conditions for leadership opportunities and development at all levels of the district.

Teachers can and should be the ones responsible for improving education. To that end, we need to cultivate the capacity within all teachers to mobilize their peers and, together, change the system.

Change in a complex system comes from harnessing the energy that is already within the system. In Jane Jacob’s book, “The Death and Life of American Cities,” she argued for approaching the problem of understanding a city from the street up. She wasn’t against interventions — in fact, she was a strong proponent of urban planning — but she argued for focusing on and reinforcing the patterns that make a neighborhood vibrant and self-renewing, rather than bulldozing problematic neighborhoods.

So, when we think about teachers and the teaching profession, what does that energy look like? What might it look like to understand education “from the sidewalk up” and reinforce patterns that make classrooms and schools vibrant places where all students learn? Lessons learned from other complex systems suggest that it will take widespread action from all teachers, not just a selected few directed by top-down mandates, to make a better education system a reality.

**1.** *Implementing an evidence-based instructional program, including developing/recommending curriculum, assessment systems, scheduling and professional development.*

**Mapleton Public Schools takes responsibility** at the district level for assuring that a cohesive, guaranteed and viable curriculum is taught at each grade level and at each school, but our adopted instructional programs are as diverse as our schools. The common thread that weaves them together is the foundation driven by standards, grounded in evidence-based strategies, and rigorous yet accessible content with supporting materials. Mapleton has undertaken the review and adoption of several sets of curricular materials over the past two years. The process was robust and collaborative – engaging teachers, students and community members. Each of the adopted programs have embedded formative assessments and robust professional development opportunities for staff implementing/delivering the content.

Mapleton’s approach to curriculum materials adoption is not a “one-size-fits-all” approach. The key to implementation with fidelity and dependability is the commitment and ownership by the teachers who need to use them. When teachers “own” the curriculum resources and believe that they support their instruction, student outcomes improve. A top-down mandate to use specific materials with a specific pacing and regimen may produce temporary results; but sustainable results require not just buy-in, but ownership.

Mapleton believes in providing schools a framework within which they choose curricular materials. These curriculum options exist to ensure that each school has resources that align to standards and support student achievement

Working with Adams 14, we can move more quickly than the typical curriculum review and adoption process. We would recommend that the Board of Education adopt the full menu of options (including Beyond Textbooks or other Adams 14 adopted curriculum, when appropriate), giving schools in Adams 14 the opportunity to review, observe and select from a variety of options.



The following curriculum materials have been adopted in Mapleton.

**Math:** All math curriculum materials provide a rigorous, engaging, comprehensive approach that is aligned to standards. The curriculum materials are student-centered, with opportunities to investigate and explore concepts and skills that enable students to solve complex problems in math.

- Bridges (K-5)
- enVision (6-8)
- Eureka (6-8)
- UCSMP (9-12)

**Literacy:** All literacy curriculum materials support a balanced literacy approach for reading and writing.

- American Reading Company
- EL Modules
- Lucy Calkins Units of Study
- Inside
- Language For...suite

Common practices include setting learning goals and objectives that are connected to success criteria and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Framework. Based on instructional objectives, educators may appropriately choose to begin in any part of the framework. Students move back and forth between each of the components as they master skills, strategies, and standards.

Although each of the curriculum materials that are currently adopted in Mapleton come with curriculum-based, formative assessments; a balanced assessment system meets the informational needs of teachers, administrators, students, families, and communities.

The alignment of an assessment system with the comprehensive instructional program is essential to ensure cohesion between classroom instruction, state standards (learning outcomes), and success in future college and career opportunities. A comprehensive assessment system includes:

- Diagnostic Assessments
- Formative Assessments
- Interim (Benchmark) Assessments
- Summative Assessments

Mapleton Public Schools is well-positioned to provide guidance and support in aligning an effective assessment system, as we have also experienced recent transitions in state assessments. It is critically important to collaboratively identify the informational needs of stakeholders in an education system and develop a secure, aligned assessment system that will inform instructional practices and provide progress monitoring on standards attainment.

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Mapleton’s approach to curriculum materials adoption is not a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Rather, several different programs offer very similar frameworks, approaches and materials. The key to implementation with fidelity and dependability is the commitment and ownership by the teachers who need to use them.

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Mapleton’s assessment system is a comprehensive package of assessments that range from diagnostic to summative, each with a clearly identified purpose and audience for their results, while minimizing burden on students and teachers.

High-fidelity implementation of a balanced assessment system is critical and requires the training of administration and teachers on the delivery, use, and interpretation of assessment systems. Professional development for assessment administration and data interpretation is embedded into our practice.



Providing professional development is the cornerstone to advancing teacher and leader effectiveness. To establish a culture of learning centered on standards-based education and the use of research-based strategies, all staff participate in embedded, ongoing professional development. Each of the school design partners support the ongoing improvement strategies at the school. Several of the schools have “Design Coaches” through the partner program and every school as a full-time Instructional Guide.

All Mapleton administrators, assistant directors, instructional guides and interventionists participate in “Leading the Learning” through Just Ask Publications and Professional Development. This program has been intentionally designed to support the development of instructional leaders. While engaged in Leading the Learning, administrators and teacher leaders address the following critical questions to impact teacher professional growth and increase student achievement:

- What do schools look like when they organize around a commitment to the achievement of high standards by all students?
- What do schools look like when all the adults in the school are committed to the success of all the other adults?
- What do schools look like when they are results-oriented?
- What do schools look like when all the stakeholders are committed to continuous improvement no matter how well they are already do?

Enhancing the understandings of educators has been shown to lead directly to improved student learning.

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Mapleton Public Schools is well-positioned to provide guidance and support in aligning an effective assessment system.

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**2.** *Recruiting and retaining personnel, including responsibilities formerly entrusted to the superintendent, such as: teacher and administrator placement, transfer, and evaluation; recommending to the local board the non-renewal or renewal of employment contracts, action on at-will employees, and action on the superintendent's contract; and employee group negotiations.*

Assuring that the right leaders and teachers are in the right roles - is the key to the successful implementation of reforms. It is our fundamental belief that those called to work in public education are the right people. It is our responsibility to find that “just right” role. We believe that investing in the professional development of our staff builds trust, loyalty and longevity.

We know that leadership matters. Recruiting strong leaders requires knowing what a strong leader looks like and what he/she can do. To that end, we define a strong leader as a person with:

- A strong sense of urgency to do what it takes to improve the lives of students in the school(s);
- An exceptionally strong understanding and knowledge of what an effective school looks and feels like both organizationally and instructionally;
- A deep understanding of high-quality, rigorous instruction;
- A deep understanding of relational leadership that builds trusting and collegial relationships across the school community; and
- An ability to continually reflect and adjust practice as needed.

Teachers want to work with strong leaders. It has been our experience that a strong, supportive leader attracts strong, supportive teachers – teachers who believe that their students can achieve, and who want to take on the challenge of working together to improve outcomes for kids.

Developing a strong administrative team and a core group of teachers provides the initial reservoir of capacity and expertise. To assure that the teams are strategically aligned, we would invite all current administrators to share their personal goals and aspirations. With that knowledge, we will have the ability to make appropriate assignments.



For open positions, we begin the process by strategically defining the roles and responsibilities for the position. To that end we would:

- Conduct a job analysis to identify and communicate the competencies, identify the professional knowledge, attributes and skills necessary to achieve the vision, and for effective job performance;
- Implement supports and recruitment efforts for hard-to-fill positions and assist with determining strategies for placement;
- Engage the right people for critical input; recruit within and beyond Adams 14 and Mapleton to select staff whose practice and experience are aligned with the district/school vision;
- Develop job descriptions which reflect the main duties and responsibilities of each position, and which will support recruitment, selection, professional development and compensation;
- Develop an interview process that uses clear protocols and processes in hiring and involve other staff members to assist. Structures could be used that allow the applicant to demonstrate their leadership experience or teaching proficiency; and
- Develop a marketing plan focused on the strengths and vision of the district that highlights why staff would want to come to work in the district.

Mapleton believes that teaching is developmental process. Teachers improve over time as they learn new skills, develop new strategies and believe that they can make a difference. Our teacher evaluation system must be consistent with that belief. Mapleton uses the Charlotte Danielson framework that sets clear expectations and embeds the necessary professional development to advance teacher skills. We would work collaboratively with the teacher's association to assure that teachers trust the evaluation process.

Working through the negotiations process with the employee groups provides a critical opportunity to build trust and a common understanding of the work moving forward. Mapleton would plan to participate in the negotiations process using an interest-based model. Through this collaborative process, we have the opportunity to build the collective will of all Adams 14 employees.

The future relationship with the current superintendent is an issue yet to be resolved. Although the most important role of the superintendent is working with the Board of Education and shepherding their vision for the district, the superintendent has to be a credible and trusted leader for the system. In order to lead, others must be willing to follow. Mapleton's superintendent would work directly with the superintendent in Adams 14 to determine the best course of action and make a recommendation to the Board.

**3.*****Recruiting and recommending to the local board management******operators needed for individual schools, as well as any service providers needed to support particular programs.***

Building the capacity of the organization requires an investment in specific and strategic professional development of the staff. The expertise necessary for systems change may require hiring outside providers and partners.

In Mapleton, each of the schools has an adopted instructional model that offers choices for parents/students to best support individual student learning styles and needs. The school model partners include:

- EL Education
- International Baccalaureate
- University Partnership
- STEM
- Community Schools
- Big Picture, Inc.
- Colorado Connections Academy - online

Mapleton would introduce Adams 14 to the partners that make sense in the Adams 14 context to help individual schools implement a specific model of instruction, if they choose to do so.

At the high school level, Mapleton would first engage with the stakeholders to determine next steps. We understand that the high school building was designed to facilitate the development of a similar “small by design” philosophy - to create smaller learning academies. That is clearly the philosophy Mapleton embodies and would strongly encourage. We believe that smaller learning environments promote an educational system that is personalized. Smaller learning environments are not an end, in themselves. They serve as a means to create rigorous learning opportunities with relevant instructional content, embedded in positive and productive relationships between students and the adults supporting their learning.

**4.** *Recommending to the local board needed changes to the districts collective bargaining agreement ahead of each annual process for amending said agreement.*

Mapleton has a long history of a positive and productive relationship with the district’s bargaining units. The MEA and Mapleton administration work collaboratively to address the issues that impact student achievement. There is an esprit de corps or feeling of fellowship across the Mapleton system that promotes a willingness to change and take risks. We would value the opportunity to rebuild a positive relationship between Adams 14 and the teachers’ association.



**5.** *Evaluating district policies and recommending amendments, revisions, or deletions to the local board policies.*

As a public school district, Mapleton has a deep understanding and appreciation for Board Policy. Mapleton has been working very intentionally over the past three years to bring all Board policies up to date and ensure alignment of the district’s practices. Mapleton is well-equipped to support the policy review process.





**6.** *Ensuring operational excellence, coordinating community engagement efforts, supporting local governance training, and ultimately, driving substantive school and district improvement.*

As a public school district, Mapleton is best-suited for understanding the complexities brought to bear by a highly-engaged community in a locally-controlled context. Governing through policy is a powerful and rewarding experience for local boards of education. Mapleton has a long and strong history of collaborative governance and frequently engages in training sessions.

Mapleton’s board of education, together with their superintendent, look forward to working with the Adams 14 board to articulate their shared values and common goals. Mapleton’s board has committed to working together each month to build one another’s capacity and develop leadership skills.

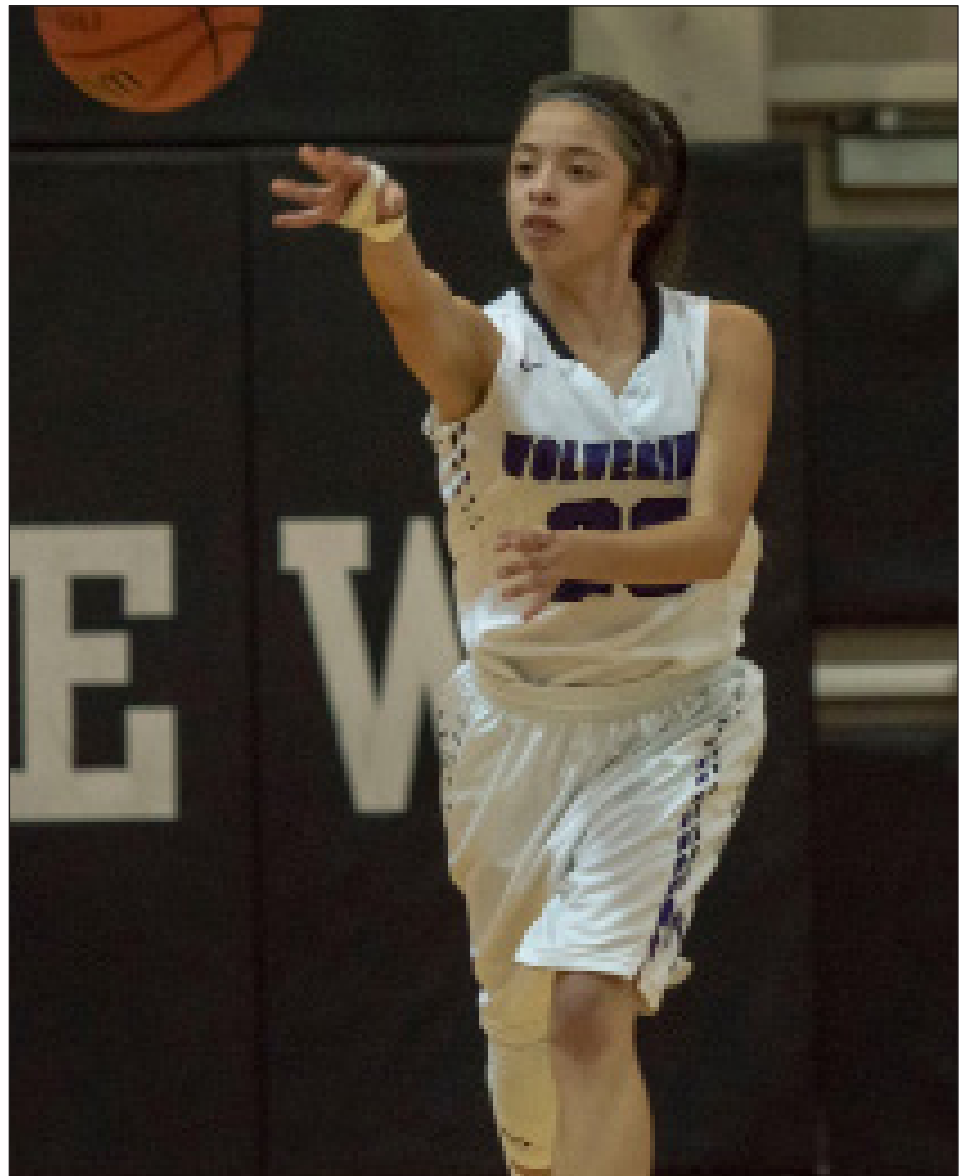
Mapleton has a proven record for engaging its community. There are a multitude of strategies to bring in small groups of people who can have a huge positive influence on the results for students. Mapleton’s engagement strategies highlight the power of individuals and give voice to all members of the community.



**7.** *Determining whether to continue provisions of the Revised Pathways Proposal from 2017, including but not limited to the District's partnership with Beyond Textbooks.*

It is clear that a great deal of work and expertise has gone into preparing the Pathways proposal. It would be our intent to learn more about what is working and what isn't. We intend to engage with those effected by the proposal and seek their insights into how to move forward.

Regarding Beyond Textbooks, we would engage with the schools currently implementing the framework and working with the partnership. It is from those individuals that we will learn whether to continue with the partnership. The people most effected by the decision will be involved in making the decision.



**8.** *Such other  
and further  
authority as the  
Lead Partner  
reasonably needs  
to create ...*

The Mapleton Board of Education would propose to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with Adams 14. Through this agreement, autonomy and authority would be detailed. Our proposal is to follow the tenets of a gradual release of responsibility framework over a 60-month contract.

- The first phase is the orientation phase that would assure that the expectations are clear and that everyone understands their role and is energized by the opportunity;
- The second phase is sometimes referred to as the “I do” phase. In this context, we would propose that Mapleton have full authority to make the necessary changes within the system. Mapleton will consult with the board regarding the planned strategies but would be granted full authority to move forward with the plan. We would engage with district 14 team, modeling strategies and explaining why things are done in a certain way.
- The third phase is the “guided practice” phase, often referred to as “we do”. In this context, we would demonstrate how we make decisions and give district leadership the opportunity to practice. In this phase, the board would continue to delegate the authority to Mapleton; however, they would be actively engaged in study sessions and Board retreats to understand the context and role of the board moving forward.
- The fourth phase is the Collaborative Practice phase. Mapleton will gradually reduce support as the Adams 14 team moves toward independence. Mapleton will continue to monitor progress and give immediate feedback. The Board of Education will continue to engage and participate in study sessions and learning retreats. They re-assume more authority.
- Phase Five is the Independent Practice phase, where leaders and teachers will demonstrate knowledge of the concepts and perform the skills without assistance. Ownership and responsibility shift back to Adams 14 at this phase, although Mapleton will provide additional structured or guided practice opportunities, as needed.
- Phase six is the “Reflection” phase. Adams 14 will manage and evaluate their own progress and set new goals. Mapleton will serve in a consultation role at this phase.

This approach would ensure that the Adams 14 staff are supported in their acquisition of the skills and strategies necessary for success. Implementing this type of approach requires time. We are confident that with the lessons we’ve learned, we can streamline the process for Adams 14 and achieve results in record time.

## Organization Cultural Shift



The foundation of a great workplace is created by organizational credibility, respect and fairness which form the foundation of trust. Trust is the glue which binds a system and provides the capacity for transformational change. The level of trust that we have in our leaders, co-workers and partners ultimately determines our confidence in their ability to effectively deliver results.

Mapleton Public Schools believes in the process of aligning, developing and supporting human and professional capital. It is through this course of action that we can build trust because all stakeholders are committed to the professional development of teachers and leaders. Trusting relationships assures the commitment needed to drive substantive school and district improvement. The following steps to build trust across the system will be integrated into the work as an essential element of sustainable transformation

- Begin by listening – to both the hopes and fears. Assuring there is an environment where people feel safe to contribute without blame or fear;
- View mistakes as opportunities for learning and triumphs as launching pads for new opportunities;
- Review the employee agreements, handbooks and policies. In Mapleton we value our employees as qualified, creative adults and honored creators;
- Value employees as people;
- Model appropriate leadership and get your fellow leaders to do the same thing;
- Admit when we make mistakes, and when any of us personally make a mistake;
- Communicate honestly and openly about the plans, priorities, challenges and opportunities.

Whole-system transformation is multi-faceted and derives from the process of stakeholders creating, investing in and being accountable to a unified belief system that supports a culture of learning. With a focus on increasing student achievement, a culture of learning embraces collaborative decision making, a shared commitment to high standards and rigorous learning opportunities for students and adults. Inclusive learning environments that respond to the unique needs of students while maintaining learning expectations lead to healthy and reciprocal mentoring relationships and the evolution of teaching as a profession.



The following key components are essential to assuring a cultural shift:

### **Collaborative Culture of Learning**

At the core of Mapleton’s culture, is collaboration. Collaboration is the key to the positive and productive relationship with the Mapleton Education Association. Throughout the negotiated agreement, the language not only supports, but demands a collaborative approach to the thorny problems that we face across our schools.

The Mapleton board of education leads through a “Collaborative Governance” model where issues are discussed, values are clarified, and staff is empowered to boldly and creatively find a solution. The Board of Education leads the district primarily through policy development and implementation. They focus their attention on the strategic direction and broad goals of the organization, and on results.

Because a collaborative culture is the heart of establishing and preserving a culture of learning, relationships must be purposeful and supportive between and amongst educators. These relationships are strategic, supportive and intended to nurture and sustain supportive learning environments. Studies have repeatedly shown that the school with the highest student achievement results, as well as the highest levels of job satisfaction among staff members, are places where structures for collaboration are established and maintained over time.

Although we recognize that Collaborative Decision Making is only one style of decision making, it is the “go to” approach when considering an organizational cultural shift.

### **School Leadership Teams**

School Leadership Teams help build and maintain positive school culture in Mapleton. School Leadership Teams ensure broad representation of professional stakeholders in aspects of decision making. They build the ownership and efficacy of staff members and increase the propensity for all staff members to work toward positive outcomes for all students.

## **Professional Development**

Mapleton Public Schools believes that the professional development of teachers and building leaders provides the foundation for increased student success. Professional development is structured to support curriculum implementation and mastery, as well as to support research-based instructional strategies in the classroom. On-going, embedded professional development is strategic, systemic, collaborative and sustainable. This model of professional development ensures that the learning is closely connected to the work of classroom teachers, with the goal of improving instruction and increasing student achievement and outcomes.

## **Supervision and Evaluation**

Mapleton Public Schools believes that working within the professional environment of public education is a developmental process. We are committed to the professional growth and development of those working within the system. Each employee group develops their craft through a system of explicit expectations and supports.

Teachers demonstrate proficiency across a professional continuum that includes:

- Cultivating a learning environment that encourages positive teacher-student relationships and expects consistently strong effort from teachers and students;
- Developing as an instructional expert while cultivating learning, creating interest, and ensuring student engagement; and
- Upholding professional responsibilities including:
  - maintaining a focus on results,
  - being a positive contributor during collaboration, and
  - supporting an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.

The continuum provides explicit expectations while supporting the natural development of teachers. Mapleton supports a supervision and evaluation model that is intentionally designed to advance the professional progression of educators along a continuum of proficiency. The evaluation framework provides common language and expectations for both educators and leaders, as well as defining professional proficiency. Expectations for proficiency are well-explained and fully articulated. The evaluation model recognizes strengths, explains areas for growth and celebrates accomplishments. Administrators are also supported through a developmental continuum for leaders. The “Four Dimensions of Leadership” articulates the expected progression of skills. Administrators are assigned a leadership coach that works as a one-on-one mentor/guide. The coaches meet weekly to support the accomplishment of each person’s goals as well as conducting classroom walk-throughs.

## **Commitment to High Standards and Rigorous Learning Opportunities**

Mapleton Public Schools ensures that teachers and students have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum that aligns to the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards and incorporates research-based instructional practices. This includes a philosophy of inclusive practices and ensures that all students have access to first-best instructional practices, while being supported with specialized instruction and support. In short, we believe students learn differently and we offer a variety of options for personalized learning.

## Instructional Transformation

Instructional transformation is rooted in the theory of the differences between first-order and second-order change. The reform Mapleton experienced, positions us to lead this work in Adams 14. Marzano explains the difference as “First-order change is incremental. It can be thought of as the next most obvious step to take in a school or a district. Second-order change is anything but incremental. It involves dramatic departures from expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution”. In the sections that follow are descriptions of the outcomes that have resulted from our own instructional transformation.

### Supporting the Professional Educator

Supporting the professional educator includes effective strategies to connect professional learning to practices in the classroom. Among these strategies are: teacher mentors, instructional coach/guide and a two-year new teacher induction program.

Teacher mentors provide new teachers with personal and professional development support. Teacher mentors are also an effective way to retain effective new-to-career teachers. Teacher mentors are a key component to the two-year induction program for teachers who are in their first two years in public education. The induction program follows a scope and sequence designed to provide teachers with guidance toward mastering professional standards and expectations. This program is differentiated to meet the needs of teachers in a variety of roles.

An Instructional Coach/Guide exists in each school with the primary responsibility of providing support, mentoring, and embedded professional development in lesson planning and delivery of standards-based instruction. In addition, at a district level, three Instructional Coaches/Guides support system-wide math alignment, planning and instruction. Further, two additional district-level Instructional Coaches/Guides support Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction.

To maintain effective operative planning and effective lesson delivery, the Instructional Coach/Guide collaboratively plans with grade level teams to: develop formative assessments, analyze student data, determine student outcomes, and model and/or co-teach to ensure effective instruction. In addition, an Instructional Coach works with school leaders to monitor the use of standards-based learning targets and to ensure that the program of instruction and assessments are aligned with academic standards.

In Mapleton, we believe principals are, first and foremost, instructional leaders. Therefore, schools must have adequate administrator staffing to respond to the diverse needs of schools. This practice ensures school leaders have the capacity to be active learners with staff and to have an instructional presence for teachers and students. Our belief is that personal connections with students cultivate an enhanced learning environment and positive school culture, thus leading to increased student achievement. In addition to instructional leadership, two other responsibilities of effective school leaders are to manage student-teacher ratios and create and monitor collaborative schedules. We believe these essential components boost and support student achievement. Target student-teacher ratio, in Mapleton, is an average of 23 to 1. Collaborative scheduling allows for common team planning, standards alignment and the evaluation of student work and data.



### **Meeting the Needs of the Diverse Learner**

The Mapleton community is diverse, as are our learners. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds and have a variety of needs. It is our belief that lessons are designed and instruction is delivered with the intent to reach all students. At the core of our belief system are cultural responsiveness, individualization and personalized learning. Additionally, considering the needs of the whole child is key to a student's readiness to learn. Strategies include:

- Adequate staffing to support the needs of all students
- Scheduling that supports collaboration between interventionists and classroom teachers
- Access to Tier 2 and Tier 3 instruction when data indicates the need
- Access to specialized instruction for students with IEPs
- Professional development focused on the whole child, trauma-informed care, behavior management and social-emotional learning

### **Access to Early College, Career and Technical Education Opportunities**

Mapleton offers a menu of experiences that prepare students for a variety of post-secondary options. Options are explored, and students can select from a menu of opportunities based on personal preferences and interests. Options include early college and/or career and technical experiences. Mapleton has experience fostering and expanding community partnerships for the purpose of providing experiential learning.

## Leadership Development

Mapleton Public Schools strongly believes that leadership matters; that leaders grow over time; that leaders deserve support and opportunities for growth. Although all administrators including school directors are considered “at-will” employees, the district is committed to ensuring the success of school directors. The evaluation process is intended to provide support and guidance throughout the school year. In Mapleton we value, model and embrace a growth mindset. We know that schools and districts thrive under the guidance of strong leadership. Leaders who foster an environment where all staff feel safe, valued, and productive in a culture that respectfully challenges them to do more than they think possible. In Mapleton Public Schools, we agree that in order for leaders to develop and grow we must facilitate honest, direct feedback and an evaluation process that is growth producing and follows a continuum of development that aligns with national standards. Mapleton performance evaluation systems for licensed professionals are tools for advancing student learning.

This partnership is an unprecedented opportunity for professional educators to work together. Together, we will change the landscape of public education as we improve communities and develop leaders for tomorrow.



# SECTION 4

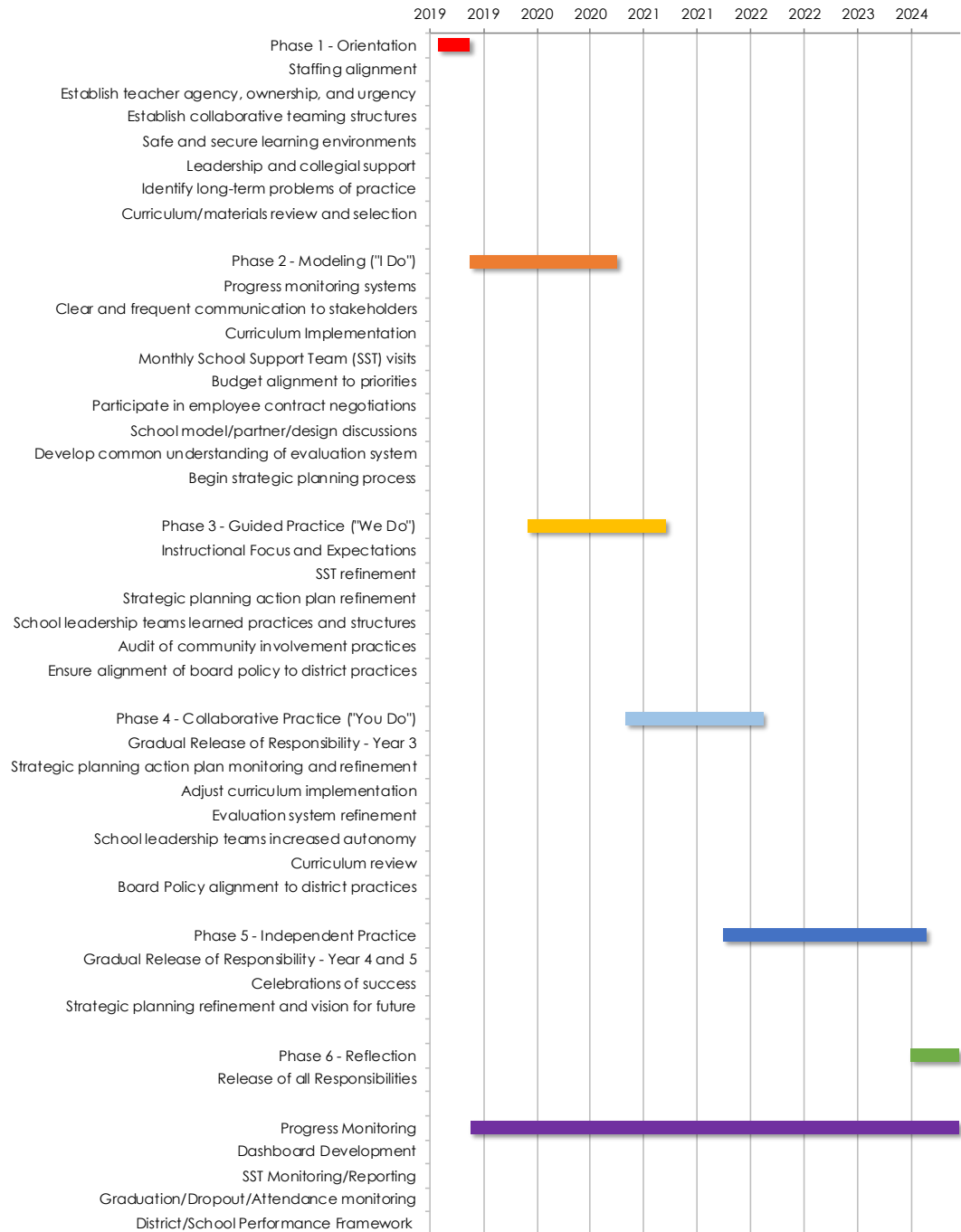
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## SCHEDULE

# Adams 14 EMO Timeline Overview



TASKS	START	END	DAYS
<b>Phase 1 - Orientation</b>	3/4/19	6/30/19	118
Staffing alignment			
Establish teacher agency, ownership, and urgency			
Establish collaborative teaming structures			
Safe and secure learning environments			
Leadership and collegial support			
Identify long-term problems of practice			
Curriculum/materials review and selection			
<b>Phase 2 - Modeling ("I Do")</b>	7/1/19	1/1/21	550
Progress monitoring systems			
Clear and frequent communication to stakeholders			
Curriculum Implementation			
Monthly School Support Team (SST) visits			
Budget alignment to priorities			
Participate in employee contract negotiations			
School model/partner/design discussions			
Develop common understanding of evaluation system			
Begin strategic planning process			
<b>Phase 3 - Guided Practice ("We Do")</b>	2/1/20	6/30/21	515
Instructional Focus and Expectations			
SST refinement			
Strategic planning action plan refinement			
School leadership teams learned practices and structures			
Audit of community involvement practices			
Ensure alignment of board policy to district practices			
<b>Phase 4 - Collaborative Practice ("You Do")</b>	2/1/21	6/30/22	514
Gradual Release of Responsibility - Year 3			
Strategic planning action plan monitoring and refinement			
Adjust curriculum implementation			
Evaluation system refinement			
School leadership teams increased autonomy			
Curriculum review			
Board Policy alignment to district practices			
<b>Phase 5 - Independent Practice</b>	2/1/22	3/1/24	759
Gradual Release of Responsibility - Year 4 and 5			
Celebrations of success			
Strategic planning refinement and vision for future			
<b>Phase 6 - Reflection</b>	1/1/24	6/30/24	181
Release of all Responsibilities			
<b>Progress Monitoring</b>	7/1/19	6/30/24	1826
Dashboard Development			
SST Monitoring/Reporting			
Graduation/Dropout/Attendance monitoring			
District/School Performance Framework			



# SECTION 5

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## REFERENCES

## Section 5

# References

**Anonymous** | Parent of a Mapleton Public Schools student

**Tim Van Binsbergen** | Business Owner

**Dr. Chris Fiedler** | Superintendent of Schools, Brighton 27J

**Ray Garcia** | Former Board of Education member, Mapleton Public Schools

**Jason Gustafson** | Mapleton Education Association

**Annetth Martinez** | Mapleton Public Schools Student

**Sergeant Michael Miller** | Adams County Sheriff's Office

**Steve O'Dorisio** | Adams County Commissioner

**Jen Raiffie** | Former Board of Education member, Mapleton Public Schools, current employee

**Alex Vidal** | Mapleton Public Schools student

January 9, 2019

Dear District 14 Selection Committee,

I know what it's like to be the parent of a difficult child. I know what it's like to receive phone calls from the school saying, "You need to come pick her up. She's suspended again." "She hit another child." "She hit a teacher." I know what it's like to have to carry my daughter from a store while she turns red and screams, and to see people looking at you wondering what is wrong with this girl who is clearly too old to be acting this way. You feel angry at them because they don't know what she's been through, and they don't know what she's dealing with. They just see a girl who can't behave in public.

I know what it's like to dread IEP meetings and conferences, because you know what you will hear. You know you'll have to sit there while her providers go around the table and tell you about how hard she is to manage, how she runs away during class, how she will never learn to read if she can't focus. You sit there close to tears and wonder why they can't see the wonderful girl you see at home.

I know what it's like to have a difficult child. Thanks to Mapleton Public Schools, though, I also know what it's like to be the parent of a child who is finally starting to succeed. This year we put her in 1<sup>st</sup> grade at Explore Elementary in Mapleton, and things couldn't be more different. The administrators and teachers know how to deal with a child who has experienced trauma. They know how to make her feel safe and loved at school, and what structures and supports my child needs in order to finally begin to learn what a first grader should know. To them, she isn't difficult or defiant. She is the same wonderful, kind, curious, intelligent, silly girl I see. Thanks to her teacher and administrators and staff at Explore, she hasn't been suspended once this year. In fact, she isn't even on a behavior plan anymore. After 4 months, they said she didn't need it.

Thanks to the administrators and staff at Explore, I know what it's like to have a daughter who loves school, who comes home and tells me all about the magnificent things they're making, and about how owls are nocturnal. I am now cautiously optimistic when I visit the school for Student-Led Conferences or an IEP meeting. I know I will hear good things. The staff and administrators at Explore have never made me feel that they don't like me or my child.

I know that there are good teachers at every school in every neighborhood, but when it's your own child, you want to know that you're entrusting her to people who love her and who will take good care of her. I feel comfortable having her in Mapleton Public Schools, with good programs like EL, and teachers who are trained in how to treat kids with trauma. Having a place where she feels loved and accepted and successful is more important to me than any test scores.

I would like for every parent to feel about their child's school the way I feel about Explore Elementary. I truly believe that the people in Mapleton understand how to work with the kids in our area, and how to reach them despite the challenges they might have. I also believe that they are the right people to bring that same experience to the kids and families in District 14. They know our kids, and they love our kids. I hope you will give them the chance to know and love yours as well.

Sincerely,

Mom of a child at Explore Elementary



Mountain States Toyota  
201 West 70th Avenue  
Denver, CO 80221

January 9, 2019

To the Adams County 14 School District Selection Committee:

As a local business owner, I strongly support the application of Mapleton Public Schools to become the managing partner to neighboring school district Adams County 14. Mapleton Public Schools is a tremendous asset to the neighborhood exemplified by transformative leadership and strong community partnerships.

Through our long-standing relationship with Mapleton Public Schools, we have witnessed first hand their dedication and commitment to the families of the District and by greater extension, the surrounding community. Parents, business owners and community members, through volunteer efforts, aligned in urgency and rallied District voters to approve a historic \$3 million mill levy override and \$150 million bond measure in 2016. This voter-approved bond supported a District-wide facilities reinvestment plan that funds replacements, renovations and/or repairs to nearly every school in Mapleton. The Mapleton community is invested in the future of the District.

The mission of Mapleton Public Schools speaks to the heart of our business community. Their commitment to foster stewardship of community resources and enhance property values in the surrounding area has attracted families that choose to make Mapleton their long-term home.

Our company is proud to partner with Mapleton Public Schools in their unwavering pledge to honor the history and values of our local community. We feel confident that they will extend that same pledge to the broader community that incorporates Adams County 14 School District.

Mapleton Public Schools personifies exactly what a school district should be: a bold leader in the education landscape that consistently strives to be forward-thinking and a reform innovator.

We enthusiastically lend our voice on behalf of the collective business community in supporting Mapleton Public Schools' potential partnership with Adams County 14 School District.

Sincerely,

Tim Van Binsbergen

General Manager – Mountain States Toyota



18551 East 160th Avenue  
Brighton, CO 80601-3295  
(303) 655-2900 FAX (303) 655-2870  
Chris Fiedler, Ed. D. Superintendent

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
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Blaine Nickeson, Director  
Mandy Thomas, Director  
Jennifer Venerable, Director  
Lloyd Worth, Director

January 10, 2019

Adams 14 School District Selection Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Mapleton Public Schools for the role of management partner to Adams 14. As a neighboring Adams County School District, I strongly believe our communities are united by the shared vision of a quality public education for all students. We collectively support the experiences that value and honors the fundamental belief that a free, appropriate education is an undeniable right of all children in the State of Colorado.

Mapleton Public Schools initiated a resoundingly successful “reinvention” campaign that continues to be refined and honed to guarantee that all students can achieve their dreams. Instead of repeating strategies that were clearly not working, the staff, students, parents and larger Mapleton community banded together to completely transform, from bottom to top, the way education is viewed, and learning delivered.

The innovative and game-changing leadership style of Mapleton Public Schools serves as an inspiration to area Districts inspiring them to seek meaningful change to address tough issues in the educational arena. Districts must consistently be flexible and relentless in the pursuit of removing obstacles and 100% committed to providing students with the necessary skills and competencies that will enable a future beyond graduation.

As Districts from rural roots that emerged in the 1950’s to address the growing Denver area population, Mapleton, 27J and Adams 14 have a shared history and culture that connects our communities at a deeper level. We need to make every attempt to preserve and honor our heritage while embracing the diversity of the changing landscape as new developments and neighborhoods reinvigorate Adams County.

Mapleton is in a unique position to deliver experienced, relevant management and create a powerful vision for turnaround to the Adams 14 community in a way that feels authentic and deeply rooted. I encourage Adams 14 to imagine what could be if they were to partner with Mapleton to achieve Adams 14’s goal to advance the District’s mission and vision via systematic improvement and turnaround efforts so that students are highly competitive in an ever-changing world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Fiedler', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Chris Fiedler  
Superintendent

Adams 14 School District  
Selection Committee

To Whom It May Concern,

I had the great privilege of serving on the Mapleton Public Schools Board of Education from 2008 to 2013. During this time, I was able to work closely with Superintendent, Charlotte Ciancio, and the Executive Leadership Team to lead the work of reforming and reinventing our District, ensuring a pathway for every student to succeed.

Mapleton's Board of Education operates with the understanding that they are part of a dynamic team of leaders at Mapleton. Every decision in the District is made with thoughtfulness and a determination to do all that is possible to assist students in achieving their dreams. Superintendent Ciancio works closely with the Board to ensure that they are a focused voice advocating for student achievement, professional collaboration and community involvement. In addition, District leadership works collaboratively with teachers and staff to prepare students for the future, providing support for effective and rigorous instruction.

As a former Assistant Director for Diversity Initiatives at the University of Colorado at Boulder, I understand the importance of advocating for all students, providing educational opportunities, raising academic expectations, and encouraging a celebration of the diversity that makes up our District. Adams 14 and Mapleton have much in common, from diverse populations to a rich community history.

I strongly support the application by Mapleton Public Schools to become the Management Partner for Adams 14 School District. Mapleton has had similar struggles in the past to raise the educational bar for students, but that challenge was faced boldly, reinventing our District and tackling those issues head on. The leadership in this district does not back down from a challenge. They believe that there is an urgency to find solutions and prepare students for the future.

I know that Mapleton will honor the history and diversity of your community, partnering with your district to provide academic support for every student and collaborating with teachers and staff to ensure that they have the tools to succeed. Mapleton will stand with you in the struggle and be a partner on this journey to better educate students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Garcia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R".

Raymond Garcia  
Former Board Member, Mapleton Public Schools





# Mapleton Education Association

1235 W. 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 101-Westminster, CO 80234

303-457-3324 Fax: 303-452-5163

Jason Gutafson, President [gustafsong@mapleton.us](mailto:gustafsong@mapleton.us)

Mary Beth Murphy, Vice-President [murphym@mapleton.us](mailto:murphym@mapleton.us)

January 9, 2019

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this letter of support to accompany Mapleton's application for the District 14 External Management Organization. I wholeheartedly believe in and support Superintendent Charlotte Ciancio and the Leadership Team she has assembled for Mapleton Public Schools. I have a long history of working with Charlotte and her team, both as a classroom teacher and as the President of the Mapleton Education Association (our District's teacher's union).

Our teachers frequently voice that they feel supported and empowered in the jobs that they perform. We are recognized as professionals and our District culture fosters and encourages support, growth, and collaboration; teacher voice and input can be seen at every level.

Collaboration is valued in Mapleton. Per our Negotiated Agreement, "The District and the MEA believe that collaborative decisions lead to improved student achievement." In our schools, collaboration is demonstrated via Leadership Teams which are determined by each school's staff. School Leadership Teams meet regularly and are empowered to make decisions large and small, including daily schedule, school-specific calendars and professional development and school-wide behavior management plans. At the District level, we (MEA Leaders, Superintendent Ciancio and two Central Administrators) meet monthly at Professional Council. At Professional Council we use a collaborative process to discuss and problem solve larger District issues. Finally, we meet with Board members and Central Administration annually to review and re-evaluate our Negotiated Agreement through an interest-based process. Our Negotiated Agreement shows what we've achieved through trust and collaboration, represents and enforces a professional atmosphere, and builds the climate and culture of our District.

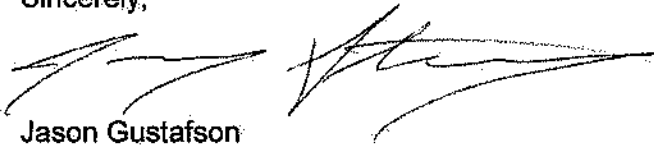
District support for our students and staff is a priority in Mapleton. Several years ago, we were starting to see high teacher turnover at the middle school level. It was obvious that teachers needed support in ways to engage students and increase achievement. Charlotte brainstormed with one of our teachers and came up with a new program, Career X. This program engages middle school students and helps them begin to think about career paths and see how academics are an essential part of their future goals. Last year this program served five middle schools and this year it expanded to serve all eight of our middle schools. Career X provides almost 200 field experiences each year. Each year, each middle school student has 24 field experiences and gets to choose six different hands-on, project based, career-oriented classes. Feedback from students, parents and staff has been very positive. Anecdotal data has shown a decrease in disciplinary issues during Career X classes and an increase in retention of teachers at schools with Career X. Our Teacher Evaluation system also focuses on support and growth. Together, administrators and teachers chose the Danielson Framework. This is a growth model evaluation system that focuses on support. Both our remediation levels are focused on support and growth rather than dismissal.

Ensuring all voices are heard is important in Mapleton. When we have any sort of visioning or strategic planning, all stakeholders (students, parents, community members, classified staff, licensed staff, and administration) are included in the process and in the conversations. At the school level, Charlotte's ability to coordinate and get all groups working toward the same goal has resulted in increased student learning, higher graduation rates, and higher student numbers every year. At the District level it has meant improved facilities from our success at the ballot box, and at the state level it has meant wide recognition of our educational innovation.

Mapleton has retained the family atmosphere they had when I started in the District 27 years ago. We have been able to maintain an intimacy that has been developed through hard work. This starts with our School Board and Central Administration. Their mission and beliefs are apparent in our schools and are reflected in the academic focus and student-friendly atmosphere. Our students thrive in an environment of intimacy that prioritizes relationships as the foundation for the learning and success of every student. This work is Charlotte's masterpiece, what she has been focused on, working toward and developing for over a decade. I have seen the positive results at many school sites. I have also witnessed similar powerful changes in people from Mapleton's compassionate treatment. Even the smallest gestures make a big difference.

I would encourage you to give Charlotte and her Leadership Team the consideration that they have earned. There is no better organization you could choose as an EMO to help District 14 improve than Mapleton Public Schools and Superintendent Charlotte Ciancio.

Sincerely,



Jason Gustafson  
MESA Art Teacher  
President, Mapleton Education Association



*Affiliated with NEA • CEA*

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Annetth Martinez, and I am a senior at Global Leadership Academy in the Mapleton Public School District. I have been a member of the Mapleton community and student at GLA for 10 years. In May 2019, I will graduate from Global Leadership Academy and plan to continue my education at Metropolitan State University in Denver. I am filled with pride to have been a part of a school and district that provides so many opportunities and so much support for its students. I have been a part of both academic and extracurricular programs for both my school and district. I have participated in district sponsored sports since middle school, and am currently a member of the GLA Principal's Leadership Council as well as the Superintendent's Student Leadership Committee.

My experience in this district has been wonderful. I have made great relationships with people in and out of school, with both staff and fellow students. Through my connections with others, I am better prepared for my future. My experience in the classroom has also been amazing, because the teachers truly care about us as people. They treat us with respect and always encourage us to understand the lesson rather than just getting a passing grade. These relationships are what make Mapleton Public Schools unique.

I would encourage students from different districts to look into any school in Mapleton Public School District. Every student is different and they, district staff, meet our needs. We all learn differently and at different speeds and Mapleton has the ability to provide students with different learning options so they can find the school that works best for them. We are more than a school district, we are a family: a family that respects and accepts one another.

We are one of a kind, there is no other district like Mapleton. Each school in our district is a small school by design, so students have options and get to choose. Students are provided with the education and the resources they need. Our education is not just about getting grades and a diploma, but growing as an individual. Adults in the district go above and beyond for students, no matter what the circumstances are.

We keep improving as a whole district and as schools. We continue to work hard to improve our test scores, help students in and out of school, and make our community better.

The Mapleton community is accepting and caring; a welcoming environment that feels like home. Adams 14 students will feel all of this if they become a part of our community, our family. In reality, they are our community, they just live on the other side of the street. As a part of Mapleton, they will be guided toward success, as all of our students are. They will have the ability to achieve their dreams.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annetth Martinez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'A'.



# ADAMS COUNTY SHERIFF

**Michael T. McIntosh, Sheriff**  
*SheriffMcIntosh@adcogov.org*

**Harold Lawson, Undersheriff**  
*UndersheriffLawson@adcogov.org*

To whom it may concern:

For the past three years Adams County Sherriff Office and Mapleton Public Schools have worked collaborative and effectively to develop an SRO program in Mapleton schools that accomplishes the desired outcomes of each organization. Mapleton has demonstrated the ability to remain open to ideas and merge those ideas with their needs and organizational beliefs. Our ability to establish a relationship that allows the needs and beliefs of the school to meet the demands of the Sheriff's Office have aided in the development of a program that leaves us better suited to support and keep students and staff safe.

The ability to work together to accomplish a desired goal is an example of the relationship that has been established. Mutual respect and attention to issues and goals allows all involved to benefit from the expertise of others. I look forward to the continued partnership that has been developed and the continued push for professional growth.

Sincerely,

Sergeant Michael Miller

Adams County Sheriff's Office

Juvenile Services Unit

**Headquarters**  
332 N. 19th Avenue  
Brighton, CO 80601  
(303) 655-3210  
<http://facebook.com/AdamsSheriffCO>

**Detective & Patrol Divisions**  
4201 East 72nd Avenue, Suite C  
Commerce City, CO 80022  
(720) 322-1313

**Jail Division**  
150 North 19th Avenue  
Brighton, CO 80601  
(303) 654-1850

**Flatrock Training**  
23600 East 128th Avenue  
Commerce City, CO 80022  
(720) 523-7500  
<http://facebook.com/Flatrocktraining>

<http://AdamsSheriff.org>

# STEVE O'DORISIO

7403 RACE STREET | WELBY, COLORADO 80229 | 720.333.1117

January 10, 2019

Dear Adams 14 School District Selection Committee:

It is my privilege to represent the Mapleton community as Adams County Commissioner, guiding issues in social justice, equity and neighborhood prosperity to meet the needs of our modern residents. My personal experience as a community member brings a diverse wealth of schema to my role in Adams County.

Mapleton's small-by-design, individualized education models of choice are sought-after by area families anxious to secure quality public education programming. The values and beliefs of Mapleton Public Schools extend beyond the boundaries of the district with a strong commitment to public education and a deep commitment to the equitable access to opportunities for all children. The school districts of Adams County have much in common and shared discourse can be a positive experience when we highlight what unites us- an unwavering commitment to the children and families of Adams County.

I love Adams County and having grown up in Colorado, I understand the Colorado way of life. I advocate for healthy and affordable living for all our residents and promote clean and safe public schools and neighborhoods. As a community member, I have witnessed time and again that the guiding principles I follow as a Commissioner resonate with the leadership of Mapleton: hard work, dedication to families and community, and a passion for public service. Mapleton Public Schools is a strong candidate for managerial partner to Adams 14 and I support their application.

Sincerely,



Steve O'Doriso  
Adams County Commissioner, District 4

To whom it may concern:

As the former vice president of Mapleton Public Schools Board of Education, and as the current Special Education Data Technician for Mapleton, I fully support the appointment of Mapleton Public Schools, led by Superintendent Charlotte Ciancio, to oversee Adams 14 during this amazing opportunity for the students and families in your district.

As a board member, I have been direct witness to the decision making process of Superintendent Ciancio and her leadership team, and how they partnered with the Board, our families, and the community to always do what's best for students. It is common practice in our district that when families phone or show up with needs, we make those a priority, even if it means pulling someone out of a meeting. There is a philosophy here to provide materials to educate all stakeholders on a topic, and present experts to address any questions or concerns up front, before considering any decision. There are no surprises in the boardroom.

Superintendent Ciancio's accolades speak to both her person and her experience. She has an excellent relationship with our Board, our unions, and community. Our staff is a family here; we work as a team. When mistakes happen, those are viewed as growth opportunities and we come together to support each other.

No other entity will understand the needs of your students and families better than our leadership team. Your neighborhoods are our neighborhoods; we have the same population demographics and we have already faced the same challenges you are facing now, with much success. A corporate, for-profit entity, will only take advantage of your situation for financial gain; Mapleton has no stake other than doing what is right for students, families, employees, and the community. When I asked Superintendent Ciancio why she wanted to take on this effort, her response was "if not us, then who?"

In my current role, I have provided support to my counterpart in Adams 14 and she actually left our last meeting with hope and a glimmer of light that things can get better. Mapleton results are available for you to review outside of our CAFRs on both a local and national stage. For more insights on how we turned around our own district and what you could look forward to by selecting us, please take the time to review the following:

1. April 2016 A+ Colorado publication, "[Radical Change, Modest Gains](#),"
2. the May 2012 [Denver Post article](#), "How one of the lowest performing school districts in Colorado changed its fortunes by becoming all-choice,"
3. A [press release](#) from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on how Mapleton's new investment accelerates success for students.
4. [NPR expose](#) "A District Where No Two Schools Are Alike."
5. ERIC feature, "[Training for Succession](#)"

I am certain, given how similar our districts are, that our leadership will listen to your unique needs and help you grow your students, staff, and rebuild your community into that which you all deserve with minimum overhead and maximum results.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I am so excited for your district about this new opportunity and wish you all the very best.

Jennifer Raiffie  
720.987.7620  
[raiffieje@mapleton.us](mailto:raiffieje@mapleton.us)



January 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

It is a great honor to be given the opportunity to speak on behalf of Mapleton Public Schools and share my experiences in such a unique school district. I have literally been a student in Mapleton my entire educational career and looking back now I cannot imagine being anywhere else. The intent of this letter is to express my gratitude for Mapleton Public Schools and share the reasons why I believe Mapleton would be a great system of support for another school district.

As a student, I know that I had choices with what school to attend, but I always chose Mapleton. I made this choice over and over because of the teacher support and school models. I have attended four different Mapleton schools and I have always been impressed by the talent and commitment of each teacher. It was the foundation set forth by all my teachers that set me on the path of educational and personal success. Another reason that I support Mapleton is the school model of each individual school. I had the opportunity to advance my educational interests by moving to the International Baccalaureate model at York International. The different models at each school allow students to pick the situation that best fits their own interests and learning styles.

The most unique thing about Mapleton Public Schools is the small school structure. We may not be large in numbers, but we are a strong community of students and friends. Small schools, in turn, create a comfortable workspace for students and teachers. I feel a close relationship to all my teachers and I am always given the opportunity to receive support. The relationships I have developed in such a small setting have been amazing and an essential part of why I enjoy Mapleton. I also believe this is why I have been successful in Mapleton.

Overall, I hope in sharing my experiences in Mapleton you are all given an understanding of why Mapleton Public Schools should provide support to the Adams 14 school district. Mapleton will offer experience and proven success in every possible way.

Michael "Alex" Vidal

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alex Vidal'.

York International  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade Student  
Videlalex2@gmail.com