

MONITORING REPORT
ENDS POLICY #6
PREPARED FOR THE GUFFEY COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS
December 2024

By Kelli Burke/Administrator and Lynda MacDonald/Principal

E-6 School Community Connection

The school and the community will work together to accomplish the following:

- 6.1** Student work is intellectually powerful, embedded in the local setting, holds personal meaning and is authentic – related to “real life”;
- 6.2** Community expectations for schools and students include a large focus on the local environment, work outside of school, long-term projects, active learning and public performance of academic work;
- 6.3** School and community interactions are rich, complex, varied and natural;
- 6.4** Schools and communities actively collaborate in seeking to make the local environment a good place in which to live and work;
- 6.5** Students value their local places and see them as having the potential to sustain a life of quality;
- 6.6** School decision-making is responsibly and democratically determined by the people the school serves for the benefit of the entire community;
- 6.7** All students, regardless of circumstances (economic, cultural, linguistic, geographic, etc) have access to and participate in high quality educational experiences.

Kelli Burke writes:

The teachers and I have shared in the writing of how we are all working together to ensure our school has a healthy and symbiotic relationship with our community. As evidenced by the following monitoring, I am in compliance with this policy.

Written by Lynda MacDonald, 3rd - 5th grade teacher

6.1 - Student work is intellectually powerful, embedded in the local setting, holds personal meaning and is authentic – related to “real life”;

In science we just completed our unit on Space. As a culmination of this unit, the whole school took a field trip to the Space Foundation Discovery Center. There students were able to partake in a Mars Rover lab simulation. The students were put in groups of three. One student was assigned the pilot position, another was assigned the com-cam position, and the third student was assigned the commander position. The commander communicated through the com-cam as to what the pilot needed to do. Students learned to program their robots using direction, speed, and distance. They also learned to work as a team. Following this session, students were brought to a large Mars map where they got to create their own path from a starting point to an ending point (using latitude and longitude) and going around physical obstacles on Mars. Here they learned how to program a Sphero and make adjustments accordingly to reach their destination. When we returned to school, students were treated to an overnight. The main focus of this overnight was to use our school’s huge telescope to view the craters of the moon, the rings of Saturn, and the moons of Jupiter. Students were thrilled. As a final culmination, students helped to write a newspaper article about their experiences. This article was published in the local paper.

Written by Kelli Burke

6.2 - Community expectations for schools and students include a large focus on the local environment, work outside of school, long-term projects, active learning and public performance of academic work;

Thanksgiving break signals the end of term 1 and the start of term 2 and one of our coolest long term projects. The students spend 12 days between the two breaks working through long term projects. The first is our winter program. This year they are rehearsing a play "Who is the next North Pole Star". The students have been working hard at making sure they know their parts for the winter program and that practicing makes perfect! This year's group of students have been working so well together, even when they are not rehearsing, they are practicing on their down time at school. We also have extra help from the community and family members helping make this happen. The students will also be involved in a Santa's workshop with Dana and Stacy (volunteers) at The Bakery. Another long term project that has been a tradition at our school is the 8th Grade Project. This year's 3 - 8th graders are already working hard at doing their research and community services that their projects require. At the end of the year the 8th graders will be presenting their projects to the school, community and parents.

Written by Kelli Burke

6.3 - School and community interactions are rich, complex, varied and natural;

We have many volunteers (locally) who not only support the school through monetary donations but also by volunteering their time and expertise with the students. All of our volunteers have been in their roles for years and continue to do so. Most are experts at what they are helping out with or teaching.

- Schools to Pasture Field Trip - La Dolce Vita Ranch will be an annual Field Trip for students to learn about the Water, Energy, and Life cycles. This family has been affiliated with the school now in many ways.
- Veteran's Day Event - Cripple Creek's American Legion comes to the school and tells their stories and what it means to be a Veteran. - This is an annual Event
- Music Class - Local longtime volunteer
- Hands on Science and Robotics Class - Local longtime volunteer/This year we pulled out the school's telescope to check out the many moons and Saturn's rings.
- Math Support - 3 Local volunteers
- P.E. - 2 Local volunteers as well as parents
- Art Class - Local Bakery
- Drama Class through December - Local volunteer and Mrs. MacDonald
- Winter Program - Local volunteers and grandparent
- Santa's Workshop - Local Bakery
- Christmas Art Project - 9 Local Volunteers helped by working with students to create a Christmas Gift for their families.
- Our 2nd annual "Guffey Ugly Sweater Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony". Kids sang Christmas carols and participated in the tree lighting ceremony and Ugly sweater Contest hosted by The Bakery and the school. Local Community support throughout that week to make it all come together.

Written by Amy Owen, 6th-8th grade teacher

6.4 - Schools and communities actively collaborate in seeking to make the local environment a good place in which to live and work;

Our community has always been involved in our school hence the name Guffey **Community** Charter School. The community has always done an outstanding job in collaborating to make the local environment a good place in which to live and work. So many opportunities have already come our way this year. In the fall our community is always amazing when it comes to Halloween! Our annual Halloween parade had incredible community turnout. Two businesses, The Wild Spirit, offered to have a little dance party for the students, and Mountain Aries Market had a raffle and hot apple cider to help round out the day. For Veteran's Day, local veterans from our local American Legion in Cripple Creek came to share their experiences. This program was well done with representation from veterans who had worked in various branches of the military. They also invited us to visit their museum for a field trip. Last year we started a new tradition at Guffey **Community** Charter School thanks to a group in the community. This tradition involved students hanging decorations from our outdoor trees. The following Thursday, two families provided a hayride with caroling through town. The event ended with an Ugly Sweater contest and the tree lighting. This event was a great way to bring the community and school together with both a children and adult category. The SFCSFD sang for us. Soon we will be having our winter program. Many community members have asked if they can come in and make crafts with the students during this holiday season. The fire department will once again be providing Toys for Tots and a past parent will come to be Santa Claus. The Bakery is providing an opportunity for community members to donate items the kids can then "shop" for their families. A local church has already donated boots and coats to assure our kids are prepared for outdoor play throughout the winter. It is amazing how our community supports this school and the opportunities that come to us because of our community.

Written by Shawna Swindell, K-2 grade teacher

6.5 - Students value their local places and see them as having the potential to sustain a life of quality;

This fall, the students had the opportunity to take a field trip to a local cattle ranch owned and operated by the family of one of our 2nd graders. The ranch, La Vita Dolce Vita, is a family run cattle and sheep ranch that focuses on ecological sustainability through ranching practices. The students were able to explore the land through various activities led by field experts. Students learned how specific ranching practices can actually work to improve the health of the land and how that can directly impact the health of the plants and animals that feed off of the land. The students also learned where their food comes from and how the health of the land can impact the quality of the foods we eat every day.

Students also had the opportunity to visit Colon Orchards, a family run apple orchard that teaches organic farming practices. Students learned how the orchard plants and cares for the trees, how to overcome natural disasters, and how the farm regrows new trees from existing stumps of old trees. Students are given the chance to taste apple cider and pick their own apples from the trees.

Written by Lynda MacDonald, 3rd - 5th teacher

6.6 - School decision-making is responsibly and democratically determined by the people the school serves for the benefit of the entire community;

Every decision we make as Administrator/Principal involves input at many levels. We both have learned over our many years working here, the love this community has for our school. GCCS has a strong, professional, supportive staff. All of our focus goes towards supporting our students. Every decision is made with careful consideration of our students first, then their families, and finally our greater community. The staff meets daily (at lunchtime) to discuss students' needs (social, emotional and

academic), curriculum, and upcoming events. Classroom teachers have autonomy within their own classrooms to make decisions related to the classroom. However, we are in constant communication to support one another. Decisions that involve the whole school are made collaboratively with those involved. The Accountability committee is made up of staff, board members, and parents who help to give feedback and support to what is happening in the school. We also get feedback from parents through parent teacher conferences, private discussions, as well as annual surveys. From the above interactions we can discern if additional support, expertise, time or resources are needed. This is where the families and community have a major role in GCCS. We have observed and participated in opportunities where students, families, and the community have collaborated to make decisions that enhance the value of GCCS for our students. The Schools-to-Pasture field trip was a good example of this. Within our school and our community we are surrounded by people with diverse backgrounds and experiences which allows for valued and valuable input to be provided before making a decision. This is what truly creates a community and makes GCCS so amazing.

Written by Kelli Burke

6.7 - All students, regardless of circumstances (economic, cultural, linguistic, geographic, etc) have access to and participate in high quality educational experiences.

At Guffey School, while our budget is tight, we have so many opportunities to ensure that all students have access to and participate in high quality educational experiences regardless of circumstances. For one thing, we have an amazing community that is always willing to support families in need. Our Pie Palooza is a great example of this. The money we earn from the Pie Palooza helps support our budget for specific projects so that the money that would normally go toward these projects, can now go toward other areas. At the beginning of the year, rather than asking families to provide a huge list of school supplies, we ask families to pay a small amount toward classroom supplies. The school then buys these supplies which are communal. This year we had a huge donation of school supplies from Faith Lutheran Church in Woodland Park. This donation has helped and will continue to help throughout the school year, saving the school money. We also ask that families help to contribute toward the cost of field trips. However, if they cannot, a student would always be included. The start of this school year has been full of field trips where students are getting hands-on experiences and lots of outdoor educational experiences. This will continue throughout the remainder of the new year.