



*Annual Report
2016-2017*

1. Administrative Summary

The 2016-2017 school year was Eagle Peak's sweet 16. As with an actual sixteen year old, there is the anticipation for new growth and experiences. Yet as often happens, it seems like those things will take forever to arrive. In the case of EPMS, the board has been working for the past two years on our strategic plan to move towards growth. However, there are factors beyond our control which have in many ways placed us in a holding pattern for the present.

The board worked with Peter Gascoyne the previous year in order to ascertain where we stood financially in preparation for the next step of having a campus plan designed. We also asked to meet with MDUSD leadership regarding the possibility of a long-term agreement for our site. This was mentioned in our last Annual Report as well, which helps to demonstrate that we have not been able to move as quickly on this process as we would have hoped. Despite not having that agreement in place, we did meet with an architect in order to begin the process of long range planning for the site we currently occupy.

In addition to the inability to reach a long term lease agreement to date, there has still been the issue of the Northgate CAPS petition. The organization was able to obtain the number of signatures needed to move their petition forward to the state Board of Education. Eagle Peak Montessori joined MDUSD in their campaign to persuade the Contra Costa Board of Education to move this petition forward to the state board, with a recommendation to deny the petition. The CCCOE voted in September to do just that. The hope is that the State Board of Education will also see that the petition is flawed, and will not allow the issue to move forward to the ballot.

Looking more inward at our program there were both highs and lows. Allison Lloyd, our long-time music teacher decided to change careers, but we were fortunate to retain her on our staff as a reading pull out instructor. Allison ran with the program, and through her efforts, we saw 83 % of her students make at least a years growth in reading. At the beginning of the year, we partnered with River Montessori in bringing out Erika Ohlhaber to do a two day workshop on Montessori Math. Eagle Peak also contracted with the Shelton School in Dallas, to provide training to the teachers on ADHD and Dyslexia in the Montessori classroom. As part of our ongoing goal to share training with other schools, we invited River Montessori to participate with us.

One of the unforeseen impacts on the year was a larger attrition of 5th grade students moving into 6th grade. We retained only 14 of our students out of a possible 34. This had not happened previously. We also lost another Upper Elementary teacher during the summer and rather than replace her, we reduced the Upper Elementary to 2 classrooms.

In true Eagle Peak fashion, we turned this downturn into a positive by having Shazia Burke, a credentialed science teacher take on the project of a science pull out program. We also took a portion of that classroom to use as space for the reading pull out program and special education.

While the loss of the students was unexpected and disappointing, it allowed us the space to create new programs to serve our children even better.

2. Achievement of Academic Goals

We are now in the third year of the CAASPP test (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress). It is difficult to see the statewide and school-wide scores and not question the test as a whole. It is the measure the state will use for the foreseeable future, and so adjust we will. However, it needs to be noted that the high-speed connection Eagle Peak was not working well during testing and students were repeatedly “kicked off” and had to restart. We can only assume that this impacted the scores in a negative way. This was reported to the district, as well as a possible test irregularity.

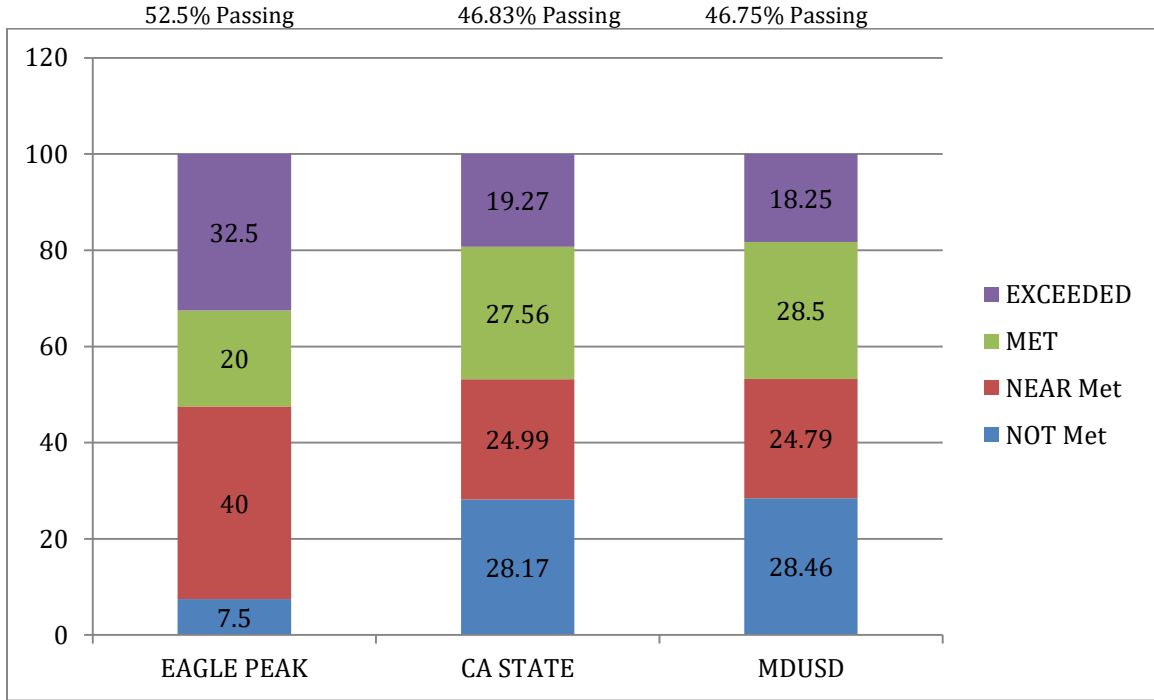
While our scores are in some cases higher than the overall district and state scores, we are lower in some grades as well. Math continues to be the lower area of achievement and the question is why. Montessori Math is strong in concepts and practice. This is the reason we be provided training this summer on Montessori Math and common core. The desired outcome was a greater understanding of how to blend these two components for greater student success.

In addition to the CAASPP assessment, California has also implemented a new accountability system that measures school success in a different manner. Previously, schools were judged on the percentages of students who passed the test. Each school was compared to each other and themselves for growth. Now, there is only a comparison within each school’s annual progress. They take the scores of each student and average them together to get a “score” for the school. This score is compared to the lowest passing score, and measured as being above or below that score. At this time, the state is still training administrators on how to read this data and how to use it.

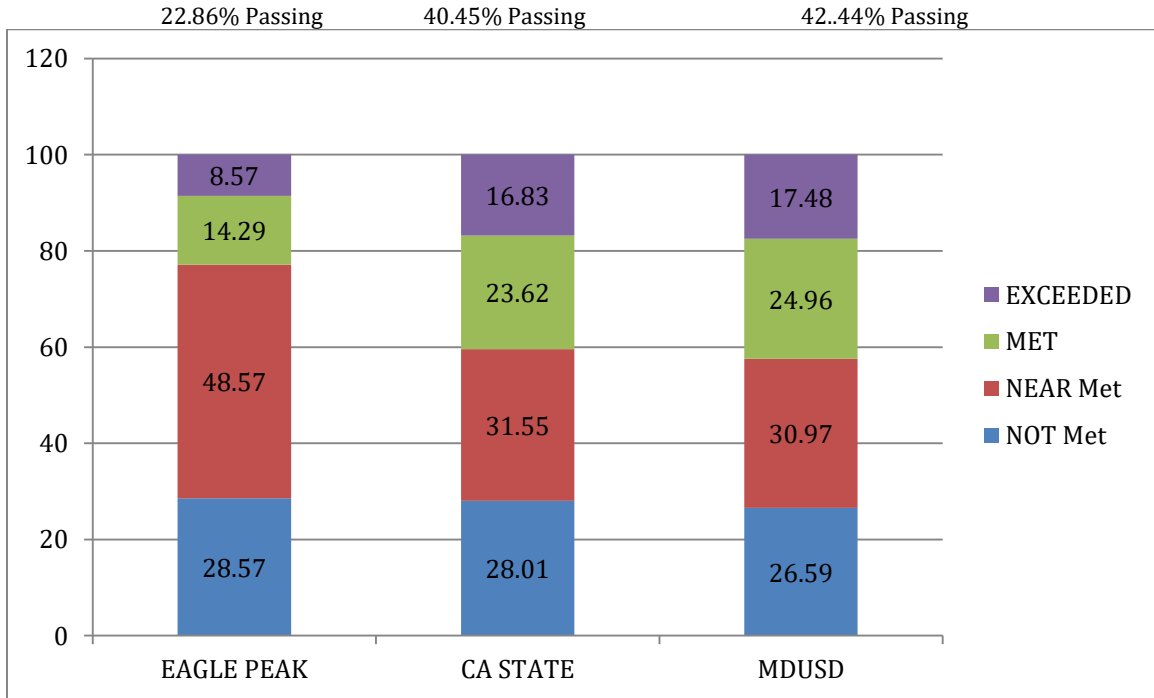
The charts below show Eagle Peak’s scores in comparison with the district and state overall.

CAASPP MATH COMPARISON

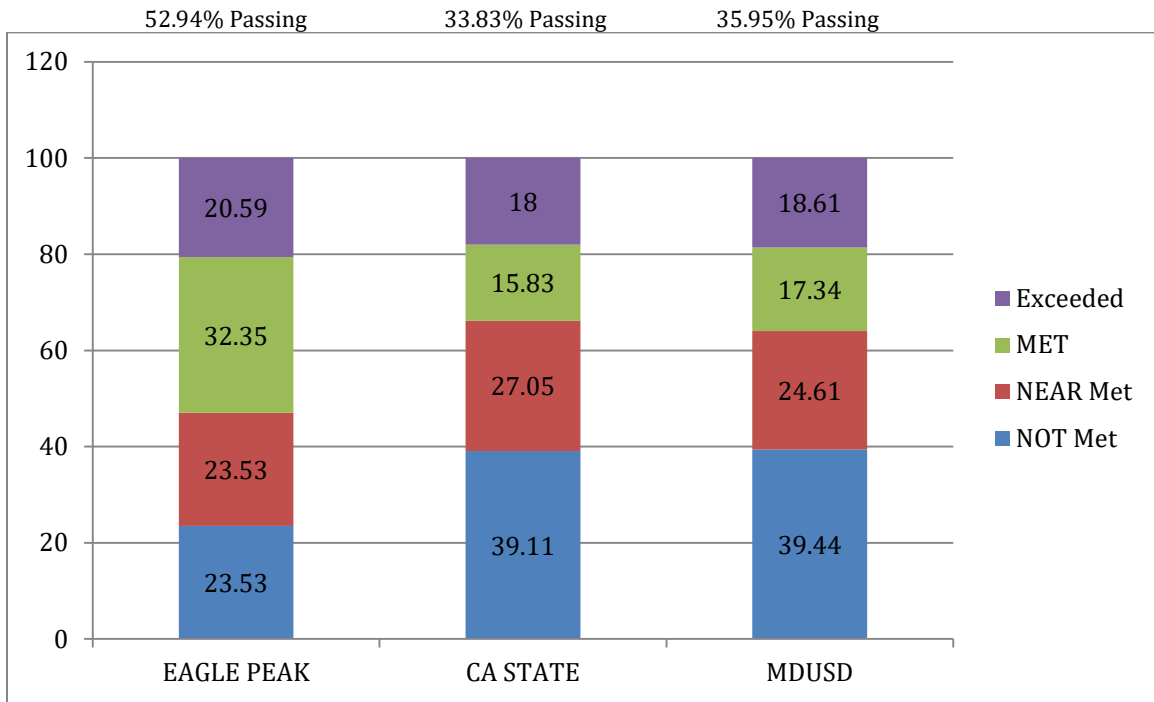
3rd Grade Math



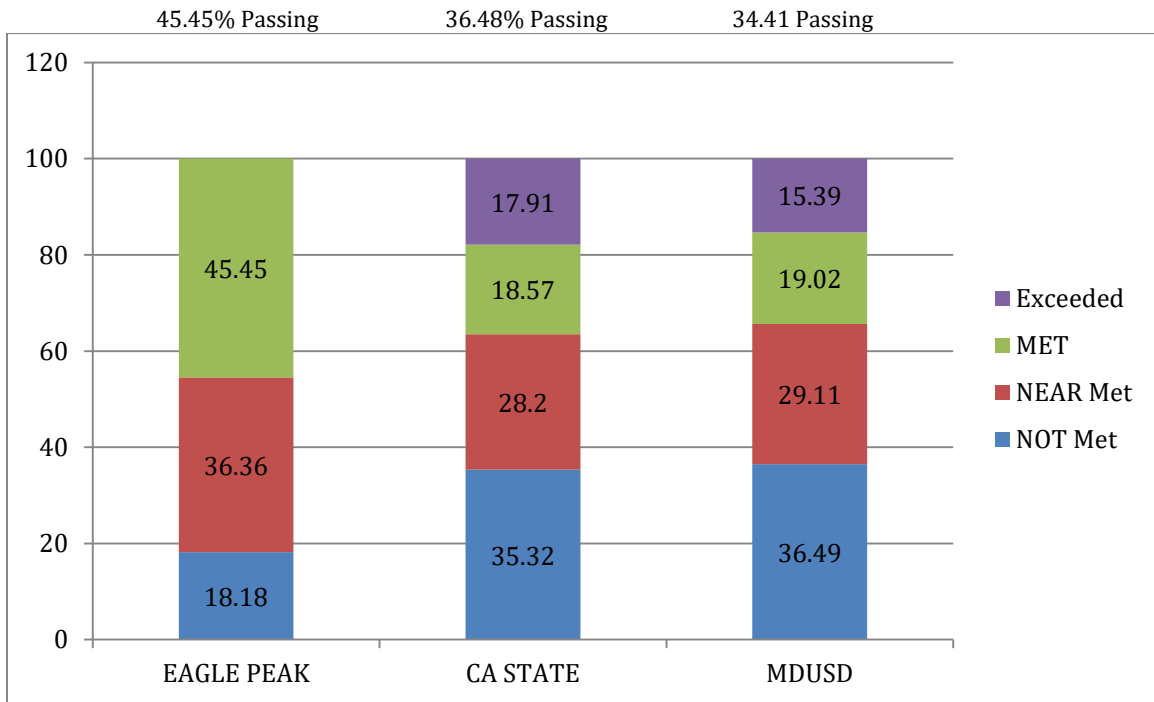
4th Grade Math



5th Grade Math



6th Grade Math

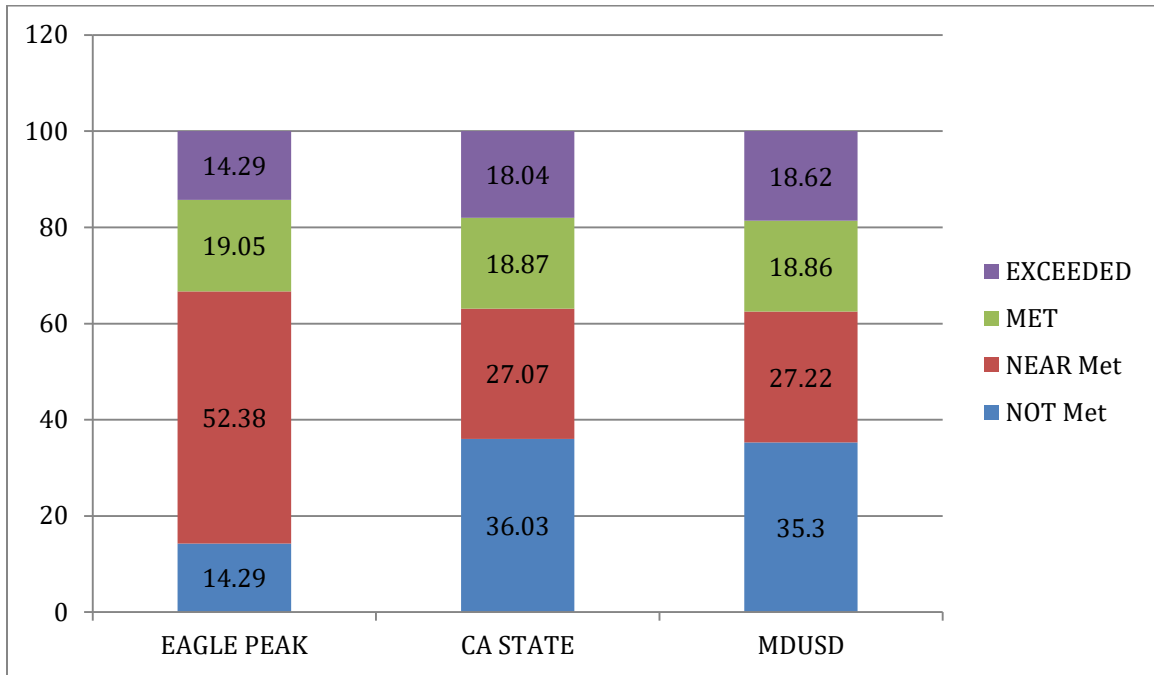


7th Grade Math

33.34% Passing

36.91% Passing

37.48% Passing

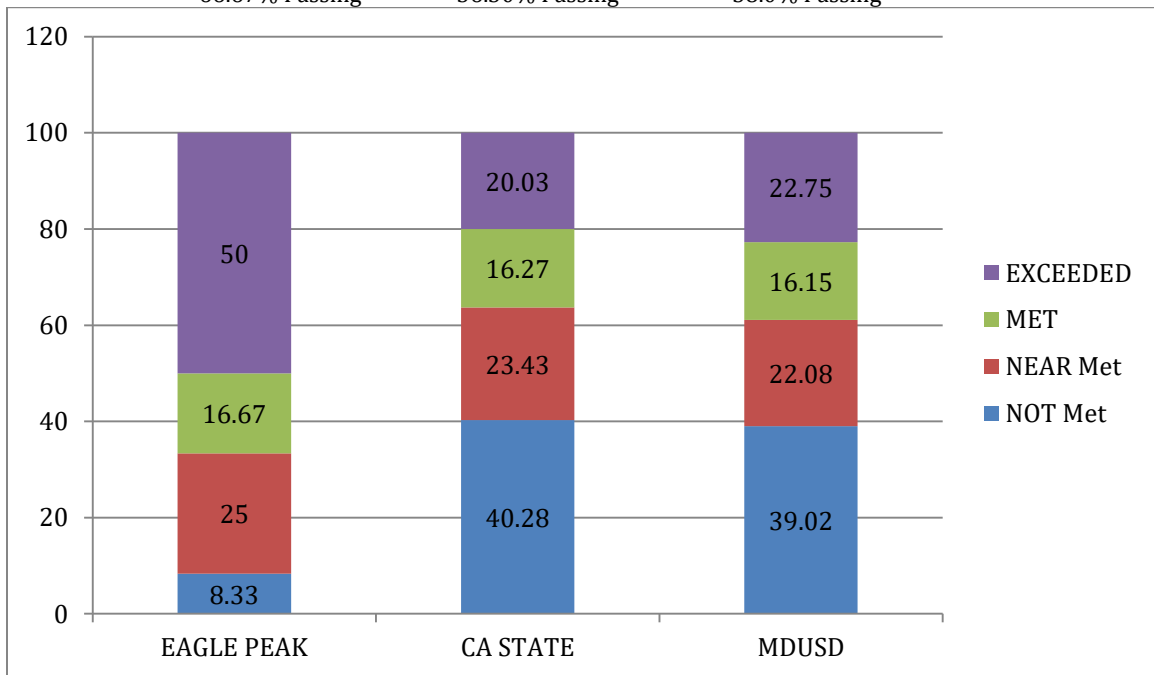


8th Grade Math

66.67% Passing

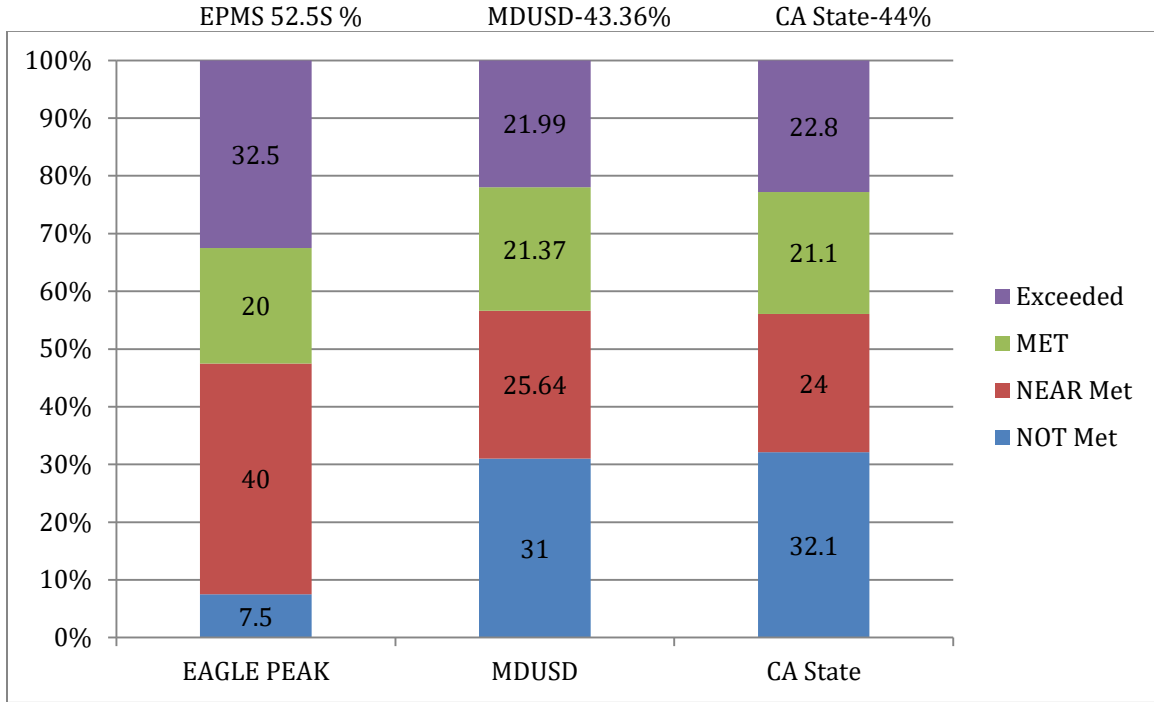
36.30% Passing

38.0% Passing

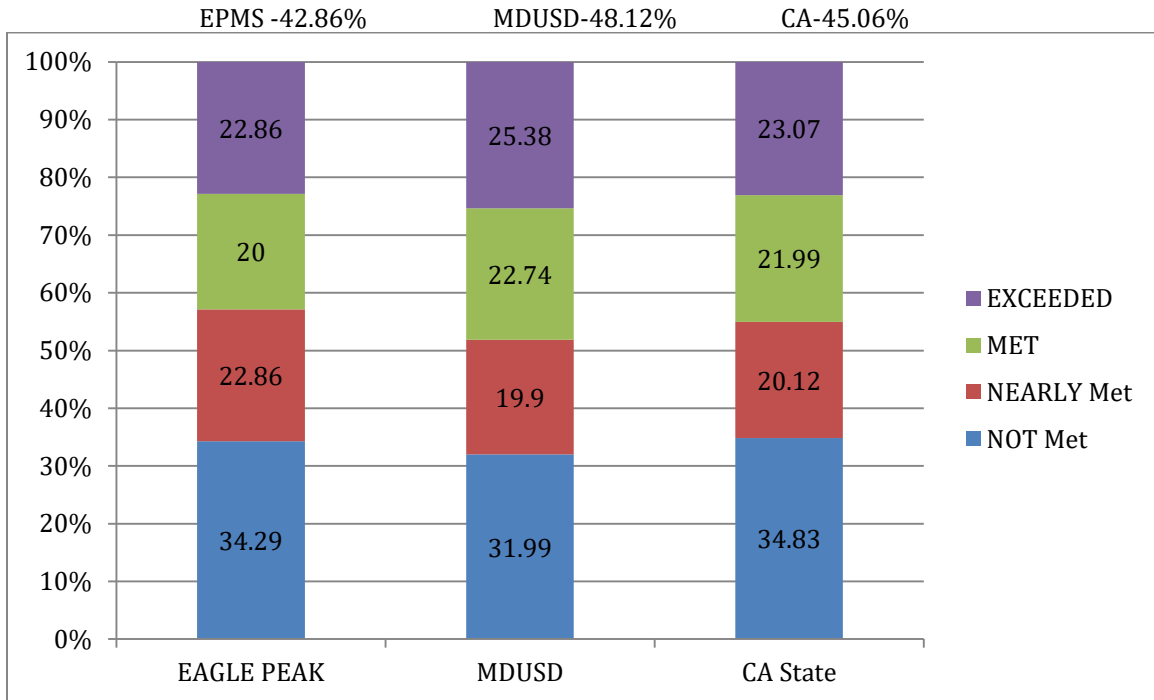


CAASPP ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS COMPARISON

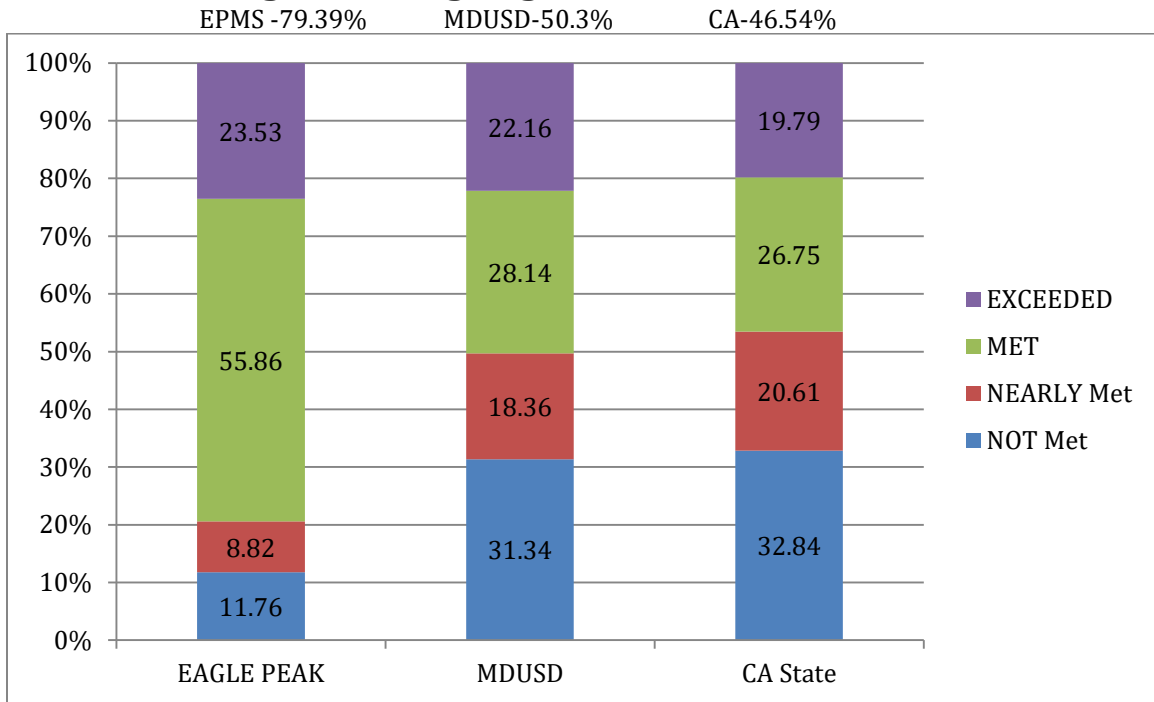
3rd Grade English Language Scores



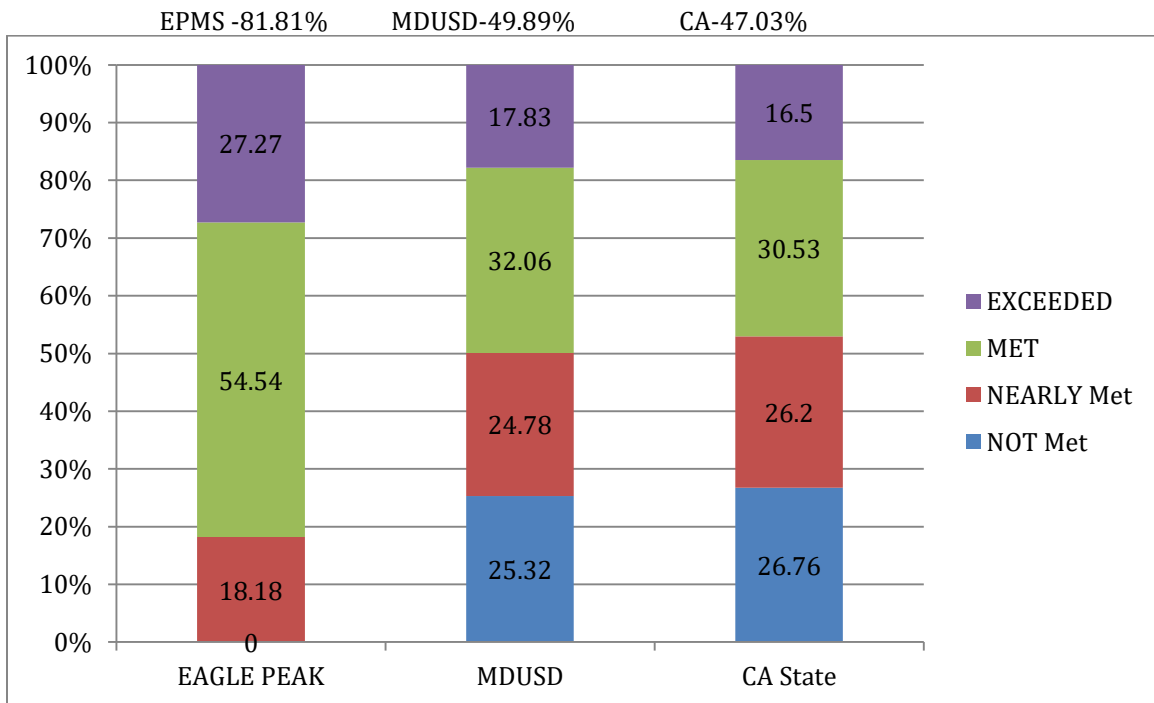
4th Grade English Language Scores



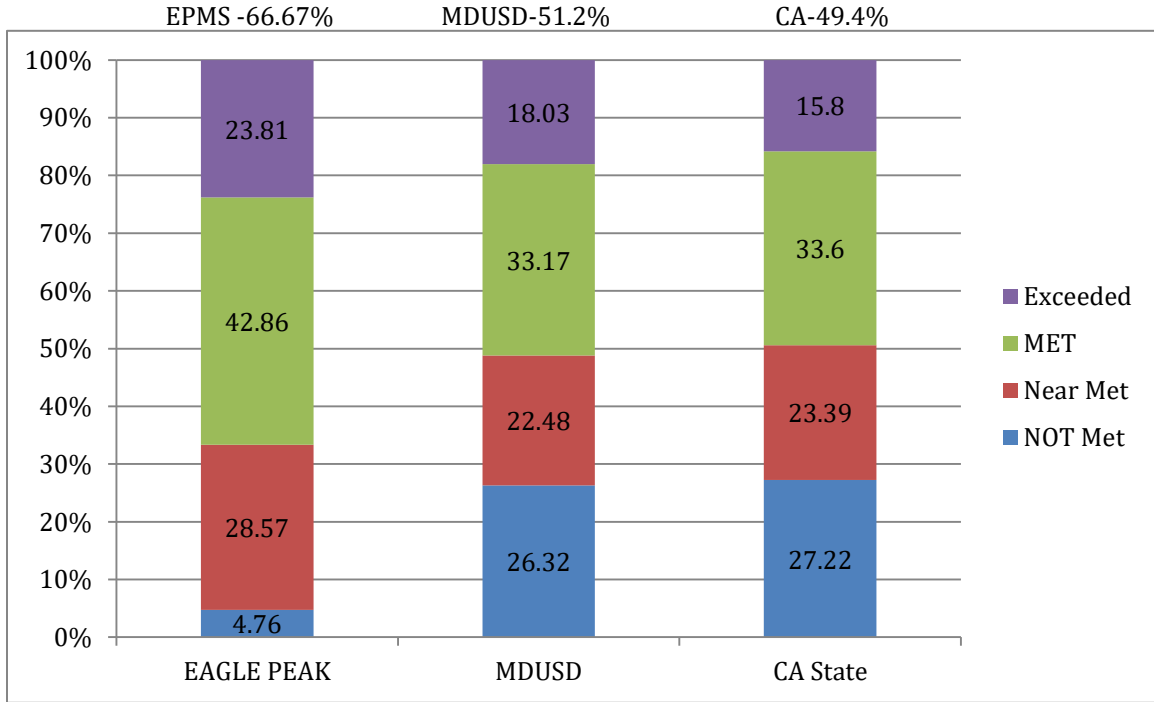
5th Grade English Language Scores



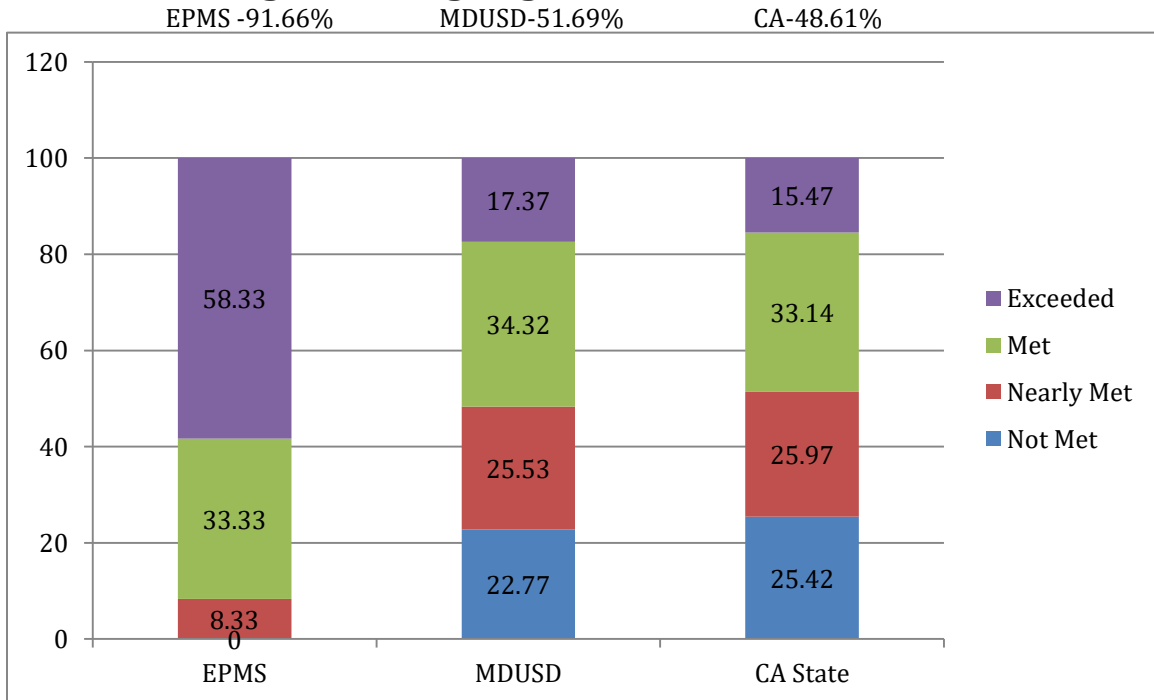
6th Grade English Language Scores



7th Grade English Language Scores



8th Grade English Language Scores



As with all Montessori programs, there are ongoing formative assessments which take place as well. These are methods the teachers use to monitor the students' progress on a daily basis. In addition to the formative assessments, we also have standards based testing that we do for our own local purposes. We currently use the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment), and we adopted Fontis and Pinnel for grades 4-8. In 2015, we added the NWEA (Northwest Education Assessment). This is a computer-based test which is similar to the design of the CAASPP. The hope is that this will serve a dual purpose in preparing the students for the CAASPP, and help us to monitor their progress in a way that resembles state accountability. As we learn more about this test, we have discovered that three years worth of data is required to measure accurate growth. We are not certain if we will remain with this program past our current contract.

Academic Program Update:

After the first successful year of the AP program, we realized that we needed to add a teacher for math. So for the 2016-17 school year, there were three teachers in the AP classroom with the 33 students. While this provided for the curricula needs, we hope to have a better logistical plan moving forward.

3. Development of Learning Attributes

Eagle Peak Montessori is dedicated to creating a learning environment where children work to develop independence, responsibility, self-respect, respect for others, and compassion. We believe that these values lead children to develop a greater self-confidence in all areas (social-emotional, physical and academic). The Montessori philosophy, which is our school's foundation, helps children to develop these attributes through their work in the classroom. Children are given freedom within limits, which is the basis for them becoming responsible and independent. Our classroom environments are also built on the concept of the students helping to develop the "rules" and expectations for each other. This aids the child in developing a true respect for other children, as well as compassion for those who have gifts and challenges different from their own.

Our charter defines the nine attributes that we consider essential for success, not only in the academic arena, but in life as a whole. These attributes are addressed through our Individual Learning Plan (See appendix A for an example of this document), which is developed in grades 1-3 in collaboration between parents and teachers. Students in grades 4-8 have input, along with their parents and teachers, in developing their goals for these attributes.

In addition to developing these skills, we believe that we need to address the needs of the whole child in order to help our students grow into successful adults. This includes working with the psyche, or spirit. Eagle Peak has been fortunate to be able to continue all of our fine art and physical education programs, even through the financial crisis over the past few years. Art, music, physical education, and environmental education are all components of a well rounded educational experience.

In our charter, we discuss that one of the attributes we consider important for successful learners is that students take personal responsibility in the learning process. We encourage students to be part of the rule setting and enforcement in the classrooms, etc. In 2005, we started our student government. This group of students is elected by the student body, and holds weekly meetings. There is a cabinet, consisting of officials elected by the entire student body. They write speeches and get to address each class then the students vote. The meetings are when students gather and discuss concerns that have been placed in the classroom suggestion boxes, and then brought to the student government meeting. Each classroom elects a class representative in addition to the cabinet. The students discuss these amongst themselves, and the staff leader intervenes when necessary to provide guidance or background for situations. Each semester, the student government is responsible for organizing and assisting in a school event. In the fall, that event is International Day, and in the spring it is the "Wacky Week" event. The group also works to find a charity each year to support. (Due to the age range of our students, they are most often relegated to

raising money for the groups, as opposed to actually working at a center or hands-on experience with the charity.)

As Eagle Peak grows, we are looking for ways to be proactive in assuring that our older students retain the qualities we have helped them develop in the lower grades. During the 2016-17 school year, we continued to come together as Family Groups (see Annual Report for 2012-13) and to hold gatherings. Family Groups were created by dividing the student body into groups of 16-17 students with representatives from each grade level and led by a staff member. We have 5th grade students share quotes, based on the 5 virtues. Sixth grade students lead the group in either the recitation for Peace or Pledge to the Earth. As we move forward, we hope to have more team building activities within our family groups. An additional aim of these groups is to help the older children form bonds with the younger students. We are also considering changing the timing of these gatherings to provide more consistency.

4. Parent Involvement

Parents who enroll at Eagle Peak Montessori School sign a Parent Involvement Agreement and commit themselves to:

- a) Help their child's potential fully develop.
- b) Develop their potential as a supportive parent.
- c) Help the school community develop.

4a. Support the development of their child's potential

- Ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their child (being on time shows respect for the learning community as a whole).

Based on the P2 attendance reports to the state, our attendance average for the student body as a whole was 98%, which still exceeds the district and state average.
- Supporting the teachers and administration in helping their child understand rules and expectations of the school and the community.
- Developing independence in their child. Allow him/her to make choices in the home environment, so that he/she is prepared to make choices in the classroom.

4b. Develop their potential as supportive parents:

- Attending all Parent/Teacher conferences.

Each year the teachers and parents use the Individual Learning Plan document as the foundation for their conferences. This is a document called for in our charter that is created by the parent and teachers together. The parents observe their child in the classroom environment. Then parents look at the "Characteristics of Successful Learners" form, which is based on our student outcomes described in the charter. They consider goals for their child in all of the appropriate areas. When the parents meet with the teachers, they bring this form so they can collaborate in creating a student plan for the year.

Montessori Education truly strives to serve the whole child, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. These conferences allow parents to discuss the complete development of their children.

Eagle Peak teachers send home a report card twice a year. Sibyl Buckner revised our former report card to reflect the Common Core Standards/California Standards. This report card also allows teachers to compose additional narrative responses in each of the core subjects, in addition to the numerical grading scale. These reports are sent home in

January and June. We use these reports to help parents understand how their children are progressing within the state and federal standards.

4c. Help the school community develop

- Reading, supporting, and understanding the goals and Montessori philosophy of the school.
- Participating in Parent Teacher Leadership Group activities, Parent Volunteer opportunities, and Parent Education.
- Completing a minimum of 40 volunteer hours (20 additional hours per additional student). During 2016-17, we had 11,134.25 volunteer hours by parents. This was a slight decrease in the volunteer hours by around 700 hours. This averages to 45 hours per student. However, since we know that parents do not enter all the hours they work, we consider this to be an estimate.

Parents served the school in many ways, some of which are listed below.

- Serving on the Board of Directors and committees of the school and foundation
- Improving the school facility (painting, building shelves and gardens bins, maintaining landscaping and participating in clean up days)
- Supervising lunch, recess, and field trips
- Preparing materials for the classrooms
- Assisting students and teachers with learning activities
- Raising funds for the school
- Volunteering in the office

4d. Parent Education and School Social Events

During the 2016-17 school year, we changed from having a parent organize Parent Education evenings to having the school administration and teaching staff create the parent education opportunities. This year in order to get more parents to PTLG meetings, we combined the meetings with a Parent Education topic.

Eagle Peak does not participate in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Rather, we opted to create our own parent group entitled the Parent Teacher Leadership Group (PTLG). Rachel Beeler continued to be the PTLG chair for the year, and was joined by a small committee in order to

accomplish all that PTLG oversees. This group helps to organize the volunteers for the many jobs that need to be completed, and also serves to give a voice to parent questions in a less formal setting than speaking to the Board of Directors. While the PTLG does not have any governing responsibilities, it is a monthly opportunity for parents to participate more actively in the school.

During the Spring of 2017, we realized that we needed to create a way for families to work towards the commitment towards social justice and anti-bias work that Montessori education and Eagle Peak promote. To this end, we created a Cultural Awareness Committee.

5. Parent Satisfaction

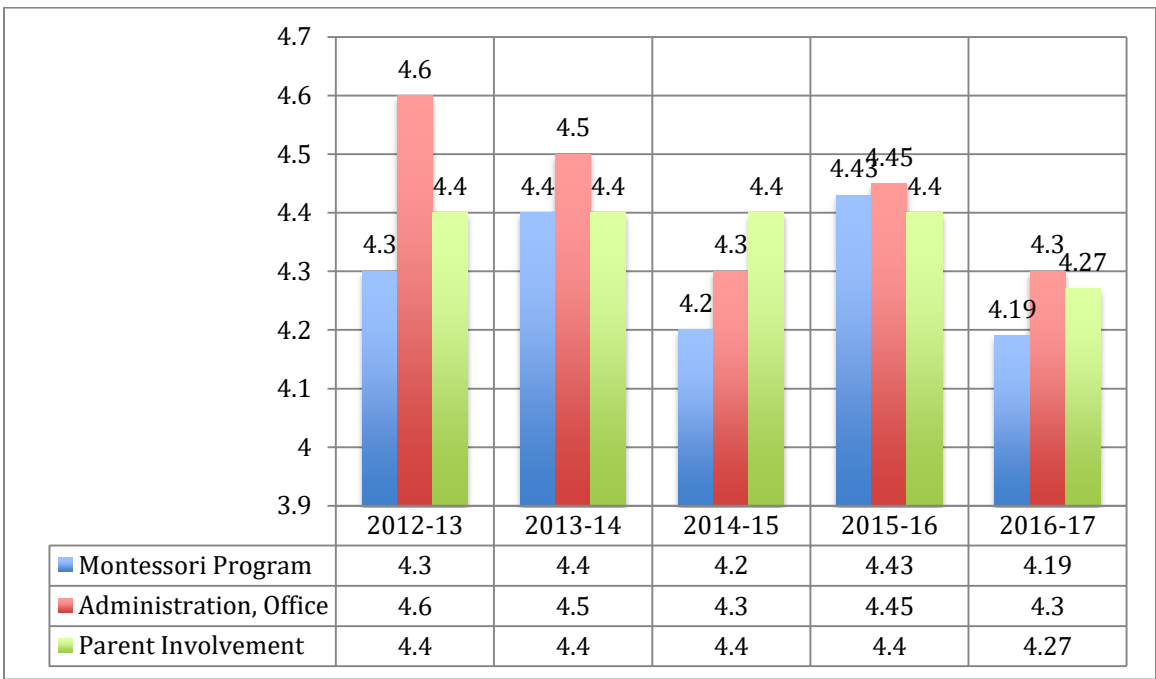
5a. Enrollment Stability

Eagle Peak had an unexpected decline in enrollment for the 2016-17 school year. Approximately 68% of our 5th grade transitioning to 6th grade students moved on to other schools. When we have students in the Upper Elementary classroom leave mid year, we do not always fill those positions. We have found that it is difficult for children without previous Montessori experience to acclimate into an Upper Elementary program. This left us with only 11 sixth grade students for the year.

The lottery process for the 2016-17 school year went well. Each year, the lottery takes place in April of the prior school year. For example, the lottery held in the spring of 2017 was for the 2017-18 school year. Through the years, we have added more fail-safes allowing the system to run more smoothly. Starting in the 2013-14 lottery, each parent was given a receipt when they turned in their application packet. For the 2017-18 school year, we had 114 applicants for 36 1st grade openings. This was up by 25 applicants, just for first grade. There was a total of 190 applicants for the open grade levels in the lottery, however, we only had openings in 1st grade at the time of the lottery. We did open positions in 2nd grade after the lottery. The Eagle Peak Board of Directors voted to freeze enrollment in 5th grade and above, until such a time that we can work with the district on a format which would allow for more information on older students to help determine the appropriateness of the program for the student.

5b. Parent Satisfaction Survey

Below is a comparison of the Parent Survey responses for past four years. (Please refer to past Annual Reports for additional years of data.) We average anywhere from 60-94 responses each year. However, this year only 43 families responded to the survey. We offer the survey both online and in paper form. The office manager then enters the paper form manually into the electronic system. This year there were only 4 respondents who used the online survey, the remainder were all returned in hard copy form.



6. Efforts to Become a Model Learning Community

6a. Relations with Organizations

Eagle Peak Montessori School maintains good working relationships with the Mt. Diablo Unified School District and the California Department of Education. The school has complied with all federal, state and local laws, and regulations.

The school maintains membership in the California Charter School Association (CCSA) and the Charter School Development Center (CSDC). Through these organizations, we remain aware of legislation that affects charter schools. Eagle Peak sends representatives from the staff and the Board of directors to the CSDC fall leadership seminar annually. School leaders also collaborate with other charter schools around the state.

Eagle Peak also maintains membership in the American Montessori Society (AMS), and uses it and other Montessori organizations to recruit qualified teachers. Eagle Peak is also closely linked with St. Mary's College and their Montessori Training program.

Sibyl Buckner, one of our founding teachers, continues to be an instructor at St. Mary's College in their Montessori training program. Allison Lloyd the reading specialist and Ellen Rutgers, an Upper Elementary teacher are also instructors in the program.

Ms. Hammons continues to work closely with the American Montessori Society and the Charter School Development Center. Ms. Hammons was recently elected to the Board of Directors for the American Montessori Society. She formerly worked as a team leader for the CSDC Leadership Institute during the summer for the past six years.

6b. Relations with Educators

Over the past several years, Eagle Peak has worked with several other schools to help them develop Montessori charter programs. Eagle Peak has also partnered with River Montessori in bringing several training providers to the area for teacher professional development.

The 2016-17 school year was the fifth year that Eagle Peak served as an intern placement site for Northgate High School students enrolled in their Careers in Teaching Program. These students worked with the teachers in the classrooms each morning.

7. Staff Development

7a. Teacher Evaluation Process

In the fall, teachers meet with Michelle to set goals for their individual growth. This helps them set a strategy for their year. At the end of the year, they meet again to evaluate how they have progressed in accordance with those goals.

7b. Conferences and In-Service Opportunities

The board voted this year to increase the school's contribution to conferences from \$500 to \$1000 per teacher. In addition to that amount, teachers who need to complete either their Montessori credential or their state teaching credential are given up to \$10,000, to help towards that goal. The EPMS Board of Directors increased this amount from \$4000 during the 2013-14 school year.

Nine teachers from the school attended the American Montessori Conference in San Diego, Ca. Sibyl Buckner and Michelle Hammons presented a session on authentic Montessori in the Charter School sector.

7c. Certification and Credentialing Support

We continue to have teachers participate in the Cal State program. Once the teacher has completed the requirements for their state teaching credential, their pay is increased moving forward. As mentioned previously, teachers receive a stipend to help with the cost of the program.

Eagle Peak supports any of the teaching staff who are required to participate in the county BTSA program.

7d. Future Plans

Each year in our parent survey, we ask questions that directly concern Eagle Peak's relationship with our granting agency (MDUSD) and what the parents' choices would be if Eagle Peak did not exist. We also inquire as to how our parents feel about Eagle Peak growing to middle school.

We brought in Peter Gascoyne to work on a financial forecast for the school. This looked at projections 15 years forward. As we progress, we recognize the need to increase the number of classrooms we have moving forward in order to both accommodate the demand for the program, and to guarantee the sustainability of the school.

We are still hoping to work out a long-term lease with MDUSD for the property where we currently exist. We also are waiting to have resolution to the Northgate CAPS issue.