

Summit Middle School

Boulder Valley School District
Colorado

1996-97

Annual Report to the Board of
Education



Summit Middle School
1492 Knox Drive
Boulder, Colorado 80303

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Table of Contents

1. Letter from the Board of Directors	1
2. Mission Statement	2
3. Goals and Objectives	3
4. Content Standards	4
5. Policies	14
6. Articulation of Curriculum with High Schools	18
7. Courses Offered, 1996-97 Academic Year	21
8. Scheduling	24
9. Program and Student Assessment	25
10. Enrollment and Demographics	28
11. Faculty	30
12. Governance	32
13. Community Support	33
14. Grants, Partnerships, and Studies	36
15. Budget	37
16. Facilities	40
17. Appendix: Teacher Profiles	42
18. Appendix: Common Area Classroom Usage	52

The quotes appearing in the left column of this report are comments from Summit's fall 1996 parent satisfaction survey.

1

Letter from the Board of Directors

We are very proud of, and pleased with, the first year of operation of Summit Middle School. Through the incredible effort of Summit's teachers, administrative staff, parents, and students, Summit is off to an excellent start in fulfilling its mission of providing a challenging curriculum to students who value scholarship, achievement, and creativity.

Summit was conceived during a round-table discussion among 14 parents in early January 1995. Some of these parents had been trying to work with an existing middle school to establish a focus (magnet) school since May 1994. On February 21, 1995, the Summit Organizing Committee submitted two proposals to the Superintendent — one for a focus school and the other for a charter school. Within a week of our public announcement, we had received written expressions of interest from over 200 families. Membership in our Organizing Committee and subcommittees increased steadily.

Upon the Board of Education's rejection of both our focus school and charter school applications for the 1995-96 academic year, the Summit Organizing Committee appealed to the State Board of Education. After four months of contract negotiations with the Boulder Valley School District, a five-year charter school contract was approved for Summit Middle School on October 12, 1995, to open for the 1996-97 academic year.

Without a principal, teachers, textbooks, or even a site on which to start a school, Summit received over 500 applications from students interested in attending the school. In April 1996, Summit was sited on the Southern Hills Middle School campus after the Board of Education determined that space was available for both schools sharing some facilities. Summit opened its doors to 250 students on August 23, 1996.

This first annual report presents some of the unique aspects of our first year. We believe that Summit is making a very real and positive contribution to the District and is meeting the demand among students and parents for a high-level academic middle school program.

We thank the members of the Board of Education for giving Summit the opportunity to prove itself a viable choice in the Boulder Valley School District. We are grateful to the numerous employees of the District for their support and patience in working with us on the business details of operating a charter school. We look forward to continuing to work with you in the years to come.

Sincerely yours,

Summit Middle School Board of Directors
Christine S. Howard, Chair

"My son is challenged, never bored, and as much as he complains about it, it is clear he is happier this year at school than ever before."

2

Mission Statement

- To provide a rigorous, academic curriculum that promotes high levels of student effort and academic achievement.
- To foster high self-esteem through stimulating intellectual challenge and meaningful academic accomplishment.
- To inspire in students a lifelong love of learning and a desire for self-development.
- To create a community of peers who value scholarship, academic achievement, and creativity.
- To serve as an excellent preparation for students intending to study in the International Baccalaureate program and other college-preparatory high school programs.

“Overall I am extremely happy with the school, the teachers, and the curriculum.”

3

Goals and Objectives

Summit was founded upon, and its program based upon, the following goals and objectives:

- To expand educational choices within the Boulder Valley School District by offering middle school students the opportunity to enroll in a rigorous academic program modeled upon the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program.
- To provide the option of advanced classes for any student on a self-selecting basis.
- To group students according to subject mastery rather than grade classification or age.
- To challenge each student in every course.
- To elicit academic achievement commensurate with each student's ability.
- To maintain an unwavering commitment to the mastery of education fundamentals (content) and the development of critical-thinking skills (process).
- To enhance each student's social and emotional development and to foster positive relationships among peers.
- To recognize that its customers are students, parents, and the community, and to be responsive and accountable to their concerns.
- To strive to reflect the diverse population of the Boulder Valley School District.
- To meet or exceed District and State curriculum, content, and performance standards.
- To monitor the program and evaluate it regularly.
- To ensure safety, civility, and an optimum learning environment.

"We are totally satisfied with Summit and feel the teachers are exceptional. The thrill of excelling at a challenging level is well worth it for our daughter."

4

Content Standards

On December 19, 1996, the Boulder Valley School District adopted academic content standards for the district in four subjects: English/language arts, science, mathematics, and social studies. Each of these content standards is given below, along with information on how Summit's curriculum meets or exceeds these standards.

English

1. Students read and understand a variety of materials.

At all levels, students at Summit read, understand, and respond to a wide range of literature — including poetry, short stories, novels, and plays — to enhance their love of learning and reading.

In order to meet this standard, students at each level:

- learn and use comprehension skills, such as previewing, predicting, inferring, comparing and contrasting, re-reading and self-monitoring, summarizing, identifying the author's purpose, determining the main idea, and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor, simile, symbolism, and other figures of speech;
- make connections between their reading and what they already know, and identifying what they need to know about a topic before reading about it;
- adjust reading strategies for different purposes — such as reading carefully, idea by idea; skimming and scanning; finding information to support particular ideas — for use in successfully supporting thesis statements in essays;
- use word recognition skills and resources such as context clues, word origins, and word-order clues; reference guides; roots, prefixes, and suffixes of words for comprehension; and
- use information from reading to increase vocabulary and enhance language usage.

2. Students listen, speak, and write effectively for a variety of purposes.

At Summit, students develop basic writing skills, focusing on the standard five-paragraph essay in response to a wide range of tasks, audiences, and purposes. At each level, and for each literature unit, students write a minimum of one essay combined with a writing option from one of three additional project choice areas: creative writing, visual, and presentation. Students present their work to the class on a regular basis, thus learning and exercising solid speaking and presentation skills. Listening skills are developed and refined at all levels through basic note-taking skills as well as through response to, and critiques of, peer presentations.

"I am delighted with almost every aspect of this school."

3. Students write effectively with a command of the grammar and mechanics of composition.

At all levels of English at Summit, students learn and use correct grammar in speaking and writing, apply correct usage in speaking and writing, use correct sentence structure in writing, and demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. Instruction is based on comprehensive pretests and student need as demonstrated through individual writing efforts.

Goals at each of the four levels of English offered at Summit are for students to:

- identify the parts of speech such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections;
- use modifiers, homonyms, and homophones in writing and speaking;
- punctuate and capitalize titles;
- use correct pronoun case, regular and irregular noun and verb forms, and subject-verb agreement involving comparisons in writing and speaking;
- use prefixes, root words, and suffixes correctly in writing and speaking;
- expand spelling skills to include more complex words;
- demonstrate use of conventional spelling in their published works;
- use resources such as spell checkers, dictionaries, and charts to monitor their spelling accuracy;
- use simple, compound, and compound/complex sentences in writing and speaking; and
- punctuate direct quotations, use possessives, and employ correct paragraphing in writing.

4. Students demonstrate thinking skills by synthesizing information, analyzing, and evaluating arguments, and developing and defending argumentative positions.

Summit students at all levels:

- make predictions, analyze, and draw conclusions regarding literature, and discriminate between fact and opinion in literature and in their own and peer writing;
- use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing to define and solve problems;
- recognize, express, and defend points of view orally and in writing;
- evaluate literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting,

“My son realizes that he must work hard to carry his present load at Summit. He is starting to get more organized to do this. . . . He has only positive comments about all his teachers, even if he isn't interested in [a] subject much.”

realism of dialogue, and use of literary devices such as metaphor, paradox, alliteration, etc.;

- identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influences of a speaker, author, or director; and

- evaluate the reliability, accuracy, and relevancy of information.

5. Students apply research skills to locate, select, and make use of relevant information.

In order to meet this standard, Summit students:

- select relevant material for reading, writing, and speaking purposes;

- understand the structure, organization, and use of various media, reference, and technological sources as they select information for their reading and writing;

- paraphrase, summarize, organize, and synthesize information;

- give credit for others' ideas, images, or information, using parenthetical citations and bibliographical references; and

- use appropriate, specific information to produce a quality product.

6. Students read, recognize, and understand literature as an expression of human experience.

Using the *Framework of Inquiry for Literature*, students analyze literature, beginning with a literal grasp of the characters, setting, and plot, and working toward an understanding of each literary piece in a wider framework, focusing on an understanding of universal themes.

Specifically, students:

- know and use literary terminology, including setting, character, plot, exposition, rising action, conflict, climax, falling action, resolution, theme, foreshadowing, and figurative language;

- read literature to investigate common issues and interests;

- distinguish the elements that characterize and define a literary classic;

- read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar; and

- read classic and contemporary literature, representing a wide variety of cultural traditions throughout the United States and the world.

"[My son] loves going to school. He enjoys the challenge of classes offered at Summit."

Science

The Summit science curriculum meets both the BVSD and Colorado State science content standards for the middle school years.

The Summit science curriculum is an accelerated one which teaches three years of middle school science curriculum in two years. The curriculum emphasizes content through exploration of theories and major concepts by experimentation. Each core class requires researching, designing, completing, and evaluating a year-long scientific investigation. The two core courses offered are entitled *Biological Sciences and the Environment* and *Physical Sciences and the Earth*. There is an upper level course offered entitled *Chemistry/Physics*. This course is similar to a ninth grade science course.

One-semester elective courses which have been offered include Astronomy and a world climate course entitled *Stormchasers*.

1. Students understand the processes of scientific investigation and design, conduct, communicate about, and evaluate such investigations.

Standard 1 is met by all courses offered by the Summit science curriculum. All students are required to conduct a scientific investigation. Experiments are performed in each science class. Students in the core classes and in *Chemistry/Physics* are required to keep a laboratory notebook. This notebook provides a mechanism for both self and peer evaluation and as a means of communication.

2. Physical Science: Students know and understand common physical and chemical properties, forms of matter and energy, and the laws that define their interactions.

Physical Sciences and the Earth and *Chemistry/Physics* are the two courses which address this standard. Matter and energy as well as physical and chemical properties are investigated. These concepts are defined. Experiments are performed to explore the interactions of matter and energy. In each of the courses, composition and structure is a consistent theme of discussion and exploration. Transfer of energy is explored through calorimetry and other related topics. Conservation of energy is addressed in many ways, including chemical reactions. These topics are some of the ways that Standards 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 are fulfilled.

3. Life Science: Students know and understand the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment.

This standard is satisfied through *Biological Sciences and the Environment*. Characteristics and structure of living things are explored through careful observation of the environment in which they live. These observations are written and shared with classmates. Dissections comprise a large part of this course. Many representatives, both invertebrate and vertebrate, are scrutinized. Microscope explorations constitute much of the experimental investigation. Always the connection is made between the atomic, microscopic, and macroscopic worlds.

"[My son] is happy and looks forward to going to school. He loves his teachers. It's an adjustment learning to balance extracurriculars with homework. He is learning, though, and I can think of no better time to learn this than now."

Interactions of living things are explored through a “Create Your Own Mini-Environment” unit. Students design, monitor, and create an environment in a terrarium. Nitrogen and water cycles are investigated. Cellular energy generation is included in energy transfers and transformations. The human body is explored by comparison to the microscopic and macroscopic worlds of the organisms studied. Evolution and genetics, especially the structure and importance of nucleic acids, are addressed. These topics are examples of how the third standard is realized.

4. Earth and Space Science: Students know and understand the structure, processes, interactions, and dynamics of the Earth and other objects in space.

The emphasis of *Physical Science and the Earth* is to understand the physical properties of the Earth, its history, climate, atmosphere, and weather. This course has followed recent earthquakes, which emphasize the dynamic conditions of the Earth. Students in this course have an introduction to the solar system. Students opting for the Astronomy elective explore this discipline in considerable depth. The *Stormchasers* course exposes students to measurements and weather patterns that affect their daily lives. *Biological Sciences and the Environment* addresses the critical nature of water to life on this planet. Together these courses fulfill Standard 4 of the science content areas.

5. Students know and understand interrelationships among science, technology, and human activity and how they can affect the world.

Every course offered at Summit is united with technology. All Summit students will participate in the Jason Project in conjunction with Electronic Data Systems (EDS). Technology permits the immediate interaction of scientists in the field with students. Data collected on migration patterns of local birds will be sent to scientists who will assimilate this information from around the country and disseminate the results to the students electronically.

One emphasis in the curriculum is how theories in science, the way information is gathered, and the type of information available are changing because of technology. Students understand that science involves a particular way of knowing and understanding common connections among different disciplines.

In every Summit science course, writing and critical analysis are emphasized. Students discover the connection between English courses, where essays are written, and science courses, where essays are also written. Skills developed in each discipline assist their overall educational growth. Statistics and quantitative data analysis use fundamental principles of mathematics. Symmetry, a key concept in biological sciences, is used in mathematics as well. The historical perspective of discoveries enhances the understanding of their importance. Discoveries and technological advances have shaped social developments and movements throughout history. In every Summit science course, these connections are stated whenever present.

6. Students know how to appropriately select, and safely and effectively use tools (including laboratory materials, equipment and electronic resources) to conduct scientific investigations.

“I have been very pleased with classes and expectations for student behavior and achievement. The curriculum and teachers are just what we hoped for. My son complains about school and the amount of work he has, but would anywhere, I think. He actually has learned a lot about how to settle down to his work, organize his time, etc., and is doing fairly well in spite of his complaints.”

Safety is crucial to an effective science program. All Summit students and parents sign a safety agreement. All Summit students sign an Internet agreement to have access to these resources. Students are taught in all courses to be respectful of all laboratory materials and equipment. Safety glasses are worn by all students in the laboratory.

Mathematics

1. Students develop number sense, and use numbers and number relationships to solve problems. They communicate their reasoning used to solve these problems.

Throughout the Advanced Numerical Topics, Algebra I, and Geometry courses, students are required to work with numbers through solving problems. Estimation is often suggested before solving a problem. Various methods of solving problems are encouraged which nonetheless result in the same final answer. Students are required to show how they arrive at their answers.

2. Students use algebraic methods to solve problems by exploring, modeling, and describing patterns and relations involving numbers, shapes, data, and graphs. They communicate their reasoning used to solve these problems.

In the Advanced Numerical Topics course, the main emphasis is learning algebraic methods to solve problems. Algebraic expressions, equations, and inequalities are introduced and used in a variety of contexts. The Algebra I course consists of algebraic methods used for problem solving. Tools are taught for specific problem-solving, and creativity is encouraged. Word problems make up a part of each chapter, allowing the student to explore the best method in which to apply the tools they have learned. One- and two-dimensional graphs in x and y , geometric representations of the equations, and statistical problem-solving are part of the course. The Geometry course also requires students to be able to apply algebraic concepts in problem solving. Students are required to show how they arrive at their answers.

3. Students use data collection and analysis, statistics, and probability to solve problems. They communicate their reasoning used to solve these problems, and accurately display the data in a way that conclusions can be drawn.

Statistics makes up a unit in the Algebra I course. Mean, median, mode, range, tree diagrams, probability, and the normal curve are covered. Students are required to collect data for various problems, using data from their own experiences. Graphs showing the data students have collected are required to show the relationship between variables plotted on the axes.

4. Students use geometric concepts, properties, and relationships in one, two, and three dimensions to model and solve problems. They communicate their reasoning used to solve these problems.

In the Advanced Numerical Topics course, students explore line and angle relationships, polygons and circles, as well as basic three-dimensional geometric figures. The Geometry course focuses on shapes in one, two, and three dimensions for problem solving, geometric reasoning, and logic. Students

“Overall, we are very pleased with our student’s experience at Summit. We are very grateful to all of the staff for their hard work and concern for the students.”

are put to a fairly rigorous standard in supplying proofs for problem-solving. In the Algebra I course, students see and use geometric representations of the algebraic problems when possible.

5. Students use a variety of measurement tools, techniques, and systems to solve problems. They communicate their reasoning used to solve these problems.

In the Advanced Numerical Topics course, students take measurements in the English and metric measurement systems, and use these measurements to calculate quantities such as area and volume. Students in courses are asked to use various techniques to solve problems. Creativity and exploration are encouraged in all areas. Students are encouraged to share their reasoning with the class, and are required to show how they arrive at their answers on paper.

6. Students make connections between concepts and procedures to effectively use computational skills to solve problems. They use appropriate techniques for the problem or situation (e.g., estimation, mental math, paper and pencil, calculators, computers). They communicate their reasoning used to solve these problems.

In the Advanced Numerical Topics course, most of the problem solving requires the use of multiple types of computation. Students decide what computations are needed for the problems and the best technique to use for the computations, e.g., mental math, paper and pencil or calculator. In addition, students communicate the strategies and reasoning they use to solve problems, both orally and in writing, as part of classroom work, assigned homework, and in formal assessments. In all courses, students are asked to think about orders of magnitude as much as possible. Calculators are allowed and encouraged for problems that involve real-world data; mental math is encouraged when a calculator is not necessary. Estimation is also encouraged so that students will become able to quickly arrive at approximate answers when that is desired, as well as a way of checking on the likelihood that their calculations are correct. Students must be able to explain their reasoning on all problems.

Social Studies

Summit has met or exceeded all District and State content standards in social studies. We currently offer four classes: World History, American History, U. S. Government, and World Geography. All classes are one year long. Social studies content standards are listed below, each followed by a description of how Summit meets or exceeds each standard.

History

1. Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.

This requirement is touched upon in all courses, but is developed primarily in American and World History classes. Both courses are divided chronologically into different eras, with reinforcement from textbooks and primary sources, lectures, activities, and tests. Each unit introduces the important people and

“I feel Summit teachers have been doing an exceptional job. I am very pleased with my daughter’s progress and achievements. I would like to see weekend homework abolished. The school is on the right track. Thank you for your dedication. You all are actually making our kids think!”

events associated with a given era, and provides students with the background they need to analyze the historical relationships between them. Assessment is determined through a combination of presentations, essays, papers, and other activities for different units.

2. Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.

One of the most important skills students will take with them from Summit is the ability to do thorough research. All classes teach students how to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and discuss appropriate uses for each. During the year, students spend a substantial amount of time in the library developing independent research projects. Teachers and librarians spend as much one-on-one time as possible helping students learn how to use the various electronic and traditional resources available for students in the library and over the Internet. Later in the year, we hope to bring in a guest speaker from Norlin Library at the University of Colorado who will teach students to search for resources at the University from our own computer lab over the Internet.

3. Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.

Students at Summit are encouraged to compare and contrast different societies and eras they have studied during the year through comparative reading assignments, lectures, discussions, and essays. Whenever possible, students are asked to draw parallels between the lives of the people they are studying and their own lives. This standard is thoroughly developed in World History classes, but is reinforced regularly in other classes whenever the opportunity presents itself.

4. Students understand the impact of economic activity and scientific and technological developments on individuals and societies.

One of the primary historical themes students study in all of Summit's social studies classes is the role of economics in the lives of individuals and societies. They discover through readings, lectures, and class discussions that economics and technological development are tightly related, and they have often worked together to dramatically alter the lives of people throughout the world. In history courses, students explore how people in all societies have searched for ways to improve their economic standing in life, as well as studying the technological advancements that have allowed them to better exploit their resources.

5. Students understand political institutions and theories that have developed and changed over time.

Another primary theme reinforced in all social studies classes is the importance of political theory and issues of governance. Historically, students read, hear, and write about the political development of ideas and the people who wrote them. Within a given society, students see how political institutions evolve over time, and learn how political, economic, social, and environmental systems are interrelated. Students discuss the historical significance of different systems of governance — such as democracy, republic, dictatorship, and communism — and learn to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each through essays and discussions.

“We are very pleased with Summit. My son is very happy and seems to be thriving with the challenges facing him.”

6. Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces through history.

The effects of philosophy and religion on various societies are reinforced in all classes through textbooks, primary source materials, class discussions, and essays. Students follow the chronological development of different philosophical and religious ideas that have shaped the world through history, and learn to integrate them with the various political, economic, and environmental systems mentioned above.

Geography

1. Students know how to use and construct maps, globes, and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments.

In Geography classes, students independently design and create different maps, charts, and graphs to display information about people, places, and environments in their world. In all classes, students regularly see a wide variety of geographical data in a variety of formats in their textbooks and other materials supplemented by the teacher. These skills are equally reinforced in history classes, where geographic data about past civilizations is presented in a wide variety of formats in textbooks and other materials.

2. Students know the physical and human characteristics of places, and use this knowledge to define and study regions and interpret their patterns of change.

Our Geography classes divide the world into thirteen “realms,” each defined by certain physical and/or cultural characteristics shared within the region. The introduction to each realm includes lectures, discussions, and activities designed to identify the major physical and cultural characteristics of that realm. As the unit progresses, students begin to analyze how these characteristics shape and define each other over time through activities, projects, and/or papers.

3. Students understand how physical processes shape Earth’s surface patterns and systems.

Students take knowledge learned in earth science classes about physical processes which affect the earth — such as weather and climate, plate tectonics, and solar radiation — and place them in the context of their effects on human societies. Students read, hear, write about, and discuss the profound impact these forces can have on societies over time and how people adapt to them.

4. Students understand how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape diverse patterns of human populations, movement, interdependence, cooperation, and conflict.

Within each realm studied in our Geography classes, students analyze how people are distributed, how they move, how they trade, and how they disagree. This is done through reading assignments, class discussions, activities, and projects. Emphasis is placed helping students understand the complex interaction of the many social, economic, and political systems which interact to create any society. Current events brought in by the teachers and students also invite discussions on many of these topics.

“Kudos to the wonderful teachers. You’re doing a great job.”

5. Students understand the effects of interactions between human and physical systems and the changes in meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

Resource use and distribution is closely related to economics and is introduced in the same types of reading assignments, discussions, activities, and projects mentioned in number four above. The study of resource distribution also allows students to study a wide range of maps and unique ways to display geographic and economic information.

6. Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand and interpret the past and present and to plan for the future.

In independent and, sometimes, group projects, students in Geography are asked to design their own cities and/or countries. The exercise requires them to take into consideration a range of economic, social, political, and environmental parameters defined by the teachers. Students normally have to justify their reasoning in writing, as well as presenting it to the class. Students are also asked to apply knowledge of people, places, and environments from different eras in essays and papers during the year.

“We admire and are so positive about Summit! Teachers, curriculum, principal, attitude!”

5

Policies

Policy Development

Summit develops policies as necessary to replace BVSD policies and procedures waived in the Charter School Contract, and to address operational issues which may arise or require clarification. These policies are developed and reviewed by the Summit Board of Directors, often with the assistance of committees which have expertise and experience in specific areas to which the policies pertain. All policy matters are directly addressed by the Board of Directors. Issues resulting in policies can be, and have been, raised by parents, teachers, administrators, and Summit Board members.

Summit developed policies and procedures in its original charter proposal, which were subsequently approved for waiver by the Colorado Department of Education. In the 1996-97 school year, Summit has developed the following policies and procedures which replace additional District policies and procedures (District policy numbers are in parentheses):

1. Procedure: School Building Administration (CF)
2. Job Description: Principal (CFA*-R)
3. Procedure: Personnel Records (GBL)
4. Procedure: Professional Staff Positions (GCA)
5. Procedure: Professional Staff Development Opportunities (GCL)
6. Policy: Evaluation of Professional Staff - Teachers (GCN-1; also: AFC-1 AFC-1-R and GCN-1-R)
7. Procedure: Evaluation of Professional Staff - Teachers (GCN-1; also: AFC-1 AFC-1-R and GCN-1-R)
8. Administrative Staff Evaluation Procedures: Principal (GCN-2; also AFC-2)
9. Policy: Discipline and Dismissal of Teachers (GCPD)
10. Procedure: Discipline or Dismissal of Professional Staff (GCPD-1-E)
11. Procedure: Nonschool Employment (GCQA/GCQAA)
12. Procedure: Professional Research and Publishing (GCQB)
13. Procedure: Support Staff Development Opportunities (GDL)
14. Procedure: Evaluation of Support Staff (GDN; also AFD)

The following policies and procedures are specific to the operation of Summit and do not necessarily correlate to a BVSD policy or procedure:

1. Job Description: Counselor
2. Job Description: Office Manager
3. Additional Criteria for Evaluation of Administrative Staff
4. Administrative Staff Evaluation Procedures: Counselor
5. Administrative Staff Evaluation Procedures: Office Manager
6. Homework Policy
7. Grading Policy
8. Parent Teacher Communication Policy
9. Parent-Teacher Conferences: Child Resource Team
10. Cooperation with Fairview High School

"I am very pleased with the work my son is doing in school. . . . I am thrilled he is at Summit! The jump from 5th to 6th has been very wide and my husband and I have spent lots of time helping [him] adjust to it in terms of homework and responsibility for doing the best job possible."

Grading Policy

Summit offers courses at different levels in each of its five core subjects: English, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and science. In addition, students can choose from a rich assortment of electives.

Detailed grading procedures are developed in each subject area based on the following principles:

1. Grades will primarily measure individual student achievement, as measured by performance.
2. In order that grades accurately reflect student achievement, grade inflation will be neither encouraged nor tolerated.
3. Letter grades will be given for all core courses, on a scale of A to F. At the teacher's option, and with the concurrence of the Principal, an elective course may be evaluated on a pass/fail basis.
4. In cases where numerical scores are given for student work, grades will be calculated on the following basis: A = 90% and above, B = 80% to 89%, C = 70% to 79%, D = 60% to 69%, F = below 60%.
5. Pluses and minuses may be attached to letter grades at teacher discretion. A "plus" will mean achievement near the top of a grade range and "minus" near the bottom.
6. Grades will be reported to parents quarterly (the end of October, mid-January, the end of March, and the beginning of June).
7. All students will also receive a mid-quarter progress report the end of September for the first quarter of the school year.
8. In addition, mid-quarter progress reports will be sent in the other three quarters to the parents of any student who is earning a grade of D or F.
9. Each semester, the two quarter grades (and a semester exam grade, if appropriate) will be averaged for a semester grade and will be reported, together with the current quarter grade, to parents.
10. While the basis on which grades are calculated will vary from subject to subject, in general the letter grades will have the following meaning: A = Outstanding, B = Proficient, C = Adequate, D = Deficient, F = Unacceptable.

"I'm really happy. Summit has exceeded my expectations in the area of engagement. [My son] comes home animated and excited about what he is learning. We can discuss current events and he is happy!"

Attendance and Homework Policy

Homework is an integral aspect of the ambitious curriculum which Summit Middle School offers. Homework assignments emphasize genuine learning and build upon concepts and skills presented in the classroom, rather than stressing rote, repetitive drill, and "make-work." Students generally have some homework every night.

Because of the level and pace of most courses at Summit, students need to attend school regularly, unless prevented by illness or emergency. Parents are strongly encouraged to plan family vacations and other optional events at times which will not conflict with the school calendar.

Excused absences shall include, but are not limited to, those caused by illness, injury, surgery, medical appointments, family emergencies, bereavement, religious holidays, participation in scheduled extracurricular events, school field trips, and in-school suspensions. If parents have a question in advance about whether an absence will be considered excused, they should call the Summit Middle School office. Once the student returns to school after an excused absence, it is that student's responsibility to obtain a list of missed assignments. He or she will have twice the number of days missed to make up the work for full credit. Beyond that time limit for excused absences, or in the case of unexcused absences, individual teachers have discretion regarding credit for missed work.

In general, if some serious reason, like illness, prevents a student from attending school, he or she should probably not attempt to do homework until well enough to return to school. Obviously, however, some circumstances that require an absence will also permit the student to work on those assignments which he or she is missing. In that case, a student or parent may call InfoCall, the Parent-Teacher Hotline, for the missed assignments.

Summit will not, as a rule, provide homework assignments in advance of anticipated absences. However, individual teachers may, at their discretion, provide assignments in advance, and the Summit office can assist parents in contacting a student's teachers with such a request. Summit's office and teachers are here to serve you and to help students catch up on missed work due to excused absences.

Summit Homework Hotline

Summit maintains a Homework Hotline on the Boulder *Daily Camera's* InfoCall system. We thank the teachers for their willingness to go the extra kilometer to make homework information readily available to all students. This free service allows parents to monitor homework habits and to become active partners in their student's education.

Students can use the hotline to confirm assignments. Parents can call to make sure students are completing all assignments in a timely manner. Some recordings contain just the following day's assignment, while others may include information for the next few weeks. Messages may also contain test and quiz reminders and important dates for long-term projects. The category numbers are published regularly in the large InfoCall display ad in the *Daily Camera*. The Homework Hotline does not excuse any student from entering homework assignments in his or her assignment book when they are given. However, it provides a backup and a source of accurate information should a student miss school or otherwise lose track of an assignment.

*"Summit is a great school!
My kids are constantly
challenged."*

Discipline Policy

Summit began the development of its discipline policy during the summer of 1996 by first surveying parents and students to find out what concerns they had, and what suggestions they might like to make with respect to discipline. The information received from this survey was used as a starting point for the development of Summit's discipline policy. Handbooks and discipline policy statements from other middle schools and charter schools were researched. In the survey, parents had stated that they felt it was important to have Summit's discipline policy in place and clearly communicated to students on the very first day of school. Thus the "Expectations for Student Behavior" handout was sent home with students on the first day of school, to be read, signed, and returned to school as the first homework assignment of the year. In addition to this handout, the teachers developed a section on discipline that spelled out consequences for classroom behavior problems for inclusion in the student handbook, which was distributed in early September.

In October, parent satisfaction survey questions with regard to discipline were developed. The results from this survey were favorable, with most parents indicating that they felt that discipline policy had been clearly communicated, and that discipline at Summit was neither too strict nor too lenient. Since then, Summit has continued to work on the implementation of discipline policy, and on refining and developing administrative and staff procedures for handling discipline-related issues. In addition, Summit has sought to provide staff development resources in this area by inviting speakers and consultants on classroom management to make presentations to faculty, and also to work directly with teachers.

"I appreciate the teachers at Summit. I appreciate [the counselor's] involvement with students. I appreciate academic excellence emphasized. I would like to see a little less homework."

6

Articulation of Curriculum with High Schools

One of the goals of Summit is to prepare students for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program at Fairview High School and other challenging high school programs. Although this does not mean that all graduates of Summit will enroll in the IB program at Fairview, or even in Fairview, it nevertheless is beneficial to cooperate with Fairview as to expectations of the high school, the content of the respective schools' courses, the courses currently available at Fairview, and the courses which may be available at Fairview in the future.

Toward that end, the Summit principal, counselor, and faculty members have been meeting, since the fall, with the principal, IB counselor, IB coordinator, and faculty members at Fairview. Discussions have included the specifics of the curriculum in the various disciplines. As a result of the overall discussions, certain course offerings have been initiated or adjusted. Course content has been modified in certain cases to achieve better articulation. These efforts are continuing.

By all accounts, the interaction between Summit and Fairview has been enjoyable and productive for the faculties of both schools, and both schools are enthusiastic about continuing this interaction. Dennis Dee, the principal of Fairview, is delighted with this interaction between the schools.

A significant component of the interaction between the two schools is the involvement of parents who have students at both Fairview and Summit, and who are active at both schools. This involvement provides a bridge between the two schools upon which the faculties and administration are building the details of a closer relationship.

To ensure that Summit graduates are properly placed in high school classes, our faculty has been meeting with their peers at Fairview High School. Fairview was chosen for initial discussions due to its proximity to the Summit site and due to its IB program. Following are articulation summaries of each Summit academic department to date.

English

Summit's English faculty has just begun meeting with the Fairview faculty. They anticipate working to coordinate literature texts to avoid overlap as well as to clarify the basic skills and knowledge required for our students' successful transition into the IB Program or any other rigorous academic high school environment.

Science

The Summit science curriculum meets or exceeds the middle school district curriculum standards. Students from Summit should be well prepared to meet the challenges of high school. The curriculum does not conflict with course

*"I think Summit is great!
Thanks."*

offerings at the high school level; rather it will enhance the knowledge and interest of the students as they advance in the high school curriculum. Fairview has accepted the Chemistry/Physics course offered at Summit as equivalent to their ninth-grade IB course offering for those students who receive their Summit teacher's recommendation. Students mastering this course at Summit will, upon entering ninth grade at Fairview, take a Geology course concurrently with the tenth grade Biology course.

Mathematics

Summit's mathematics faculty have met with the mathematics department at Fairview High School to discuss prerequisites for their IB program and possible substitution of our courses for theirs if our courses are equivalent in content. Plans are under way to meet with the other local high schools also to discuss similar information.

Summit's goal is to work with the high schools so that our students will be well prepared to continue on in the high school courses. If a student is not adequately prepared, then that student would repeat the course at the high school level. At this point, we expect that any student with a grade of "C" or higher will be prepared to continue. However, we are open to feedback from the high schools, and are prepared to modify our curriculum to provide a smooth transition for all of our students.

Advanced Numerical Topics (ANTS)

This course is the prerequisite for Summit's Algebra I. Advancement to Algebra I is recommended for any student who receives at least a "C" in the course. This recommendation would be the same whether the student continues on to Algebra I at Summit or in high school.

Algebra I

The text used, Foerster, is a standard Algebra I text. Summit's curriculum covers most, if not all, of the text, giving the student a solid foundation to continue on to Algebra II. Summit's recommendation for any student completing Algebra I is that he or she receive at least a "C" to continue on to Algebra II, whether they continue at Summit or in high school.

Geometry

Our text, Moise/Downs, is the same as is used in the Geometry Honors courses at most high schools in the area. Students are required to do well on the standard Moise/Downs tests (provided in the test booklet) and to be able to write rigorous proofs throughout the course. This course work should be equivalent to the standard set by high schools in the area for their Geometry courses. Summit's recommendation for any student is that he or she receive at least a "C" in order to be able to continue on the next level course, whether at Summit or in high school.

"The entire staff is dedicated and the academic curriculum is of high caliber."

Social Studies

The Social Studies Department at Summit has begun a series of discussions with their counterparts at Boulder Valley high schools in an effort to articulate curriculum between the different programs. The goal of these meetings is to determine the best combination of course offerings at both the middle and high school levels which will satisfy District and State requirements. We are also interested in learning what types of deficiencies, both in content and critical thinking skills, typically have been observed at the high school and in discussing ways to fill those gaps.

Foreign Language

The Spanish teachers from Summit and Fairview have met and scheduled times in March for class observation and further articulation on the intersection between the programs. The German teachers have already met. Fairview's German program is in accordance with Summit's curriculum, and will accept any students at the level recommended by Summit. Summit is using the same German textbook as most high schools in the district, so there will be no problem with articulation. Additional meetings between the Foreign Language Departments of the two schools will be scheduled for spring semester.

"I'm delighted with the academic rigor at Summit plus I'm thrilled with the no-nonsense approach it takes in quickly and effectively accomplishing tasks."

7

Courses Offered, 1996-97 Academic Year

Core courses and current enrollment (offered every day, spring semester, unless otherwise noted):

English

English 1	43
English 2	113
English 3	69
English 4	24

Social Studies

World Geography	88
World History	117
American History	35
U.S. Government	9

Math

Advanced Numerical Topics	102
Algebra 1	93
Algebra Plus	33
Geometry	13
Algebra 2	8

Science

Biological Sciences and the Environment	108
Physical Sciences and the Earth	106
Chemistry/Physics	35

Foreign Language

Introductory Spanish	33
Spanish 1	83
Spanish 2	10
Spanish Hybrid	22
French 1	56
French 2/French Hybrid	10
German 1	36

Students Taking Core Courses as Electives

World Geography	1
Biological Sciences	4
German 1	2
French 1	2
French 2/French Hybrid	2

“Summit is doing a great job!”

Elective courses and current enrollment (offered every other day, spring semester, unless otherwise noted):

Art

Drawing/Cartooning 1	19
Drawing/Cartooning 2	25
Painting	31
Sculpture 1	26
Sculpture 2	23

Computers

Internet and the World Wide Web	Fall Semester
Personal Computing	16
Programming in Basic	64

Drama

Drama	Fall Semester
Musical Theater	29

English Department

Creative Writing	Fall Semester
Journalism	Fall Semester

Miscellaneous

Health	27
Sewing	45
Study Hall	131
Time Management and Study Skills	17

Math Department

Algebra Tutorial (for Algebra 2 students)	Fall Semester
Advanced Numerical Topics (ANTS) Tutorial (for Algebra 1 students)	23
Pre-Advanced Numerical Topics Tutorial (for ANTS students)	24

Music

Advanced Band	26
Beginning Band	15
Choir	27
Select Strings	15
Select Winds	20
<i>Silver Rain</i> (Advanced Choir)	22
String Ensemble	Fall Semester
Wind Ensemble	Fall Semester

Physical Education

Physical Education	257
Physical Fitness	24

“This is a tremendous school. The science and English teachers are motivating and excellent.”

Science Department

Astronomy Fall Semester
Global Climate 40

Social Studies Department

China: The Red Dragon Fall Semester

Extracurricular Activities

Summit offers its students the following extracurricular activities: sports (co-ed flag football, softball, track, football, basketball, volleyball, and wrestling), dances and socials, Quiz Bowl, Math Counts, Math Olympiad, Odyssey of the Mind, theater outings, drama productions, student council, concerts (instrumental and vocal), study skills, field trips, Science Fair, tutoring by faculty, yearbook, and student newspaper.

“The parents at this school are incredibly involved and committed.”

8

Scheduling

Summit Middle School offers a seven-period day, with the five core courses (taught every day) and two periods of electives (taught every other day). Those two periods of electives usually consist of four different elective selections, one typically physical education. Schedules are adjusted at the semester break in order to accommodate the changing needs of Summit students and new electives.

Because our stated goal is to place each student at the appropriate level, we usually have four levels in English, social studies, mathematics, science, and foreign language. Placement is not necessarily by grade. In fact, all but one of our subjects include students in two grades, and most include students from all three. Several of these subjects are currently taught only once per day (singletons).

In addition, we attempt to give our students their choices from varied electives, including tutorials in math, various art classes, sewing, study hall, musical theater, global climate, Basic computer language, personal computing, health, time management, as well as an assortment of special musical ensembles, from a beginning band and choir to *Select Wind*, *Select Strings*, and a special vocal group, *Silver Rain*. Theoretically, a student's schedule could require five singletons, a tutorial, and one of the specialized music groups.

In order to achieve the required extremely flexible schedule, a Summit parent had to develop Summit's own scheduling algorithm, used in August and then again in December/January. As a result, every student was able to take his or her core classes and tutorials. All but two were able to take the requested specialized music classes, and this spring 80% were placed only in the electives they selected. Students were personally interviewed by our counselor when their choices could not be accommodated.

Balancing this schedule was eased by our average core class size of 19.9 this spring, resulting in more class sections. Excluding study hall and physical education, our electives average 21.5 per class.

"I have been very pleased with Summit."

9

Program and Student Assessment

In accordance with the BVSD standardized testing schedule, the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) will be administered to all Summit 7th grade students in April. Additionally, the Summit Board has allocated funds to give the CTBS to all Summit students in grades 6 and 8 to gather data for evaluation of our program and students' progress in years to come.

English

Summit students will be evaluated based upon the following four areas of assessment, to be administered in the spring:

1. Writing Assessment: Students' essays will be evaluated based upon a standard rubric.
2. Reading Assessment: Students' reading ability will be evaluated using passages from actual texts required at the next level. Comprehension will be assessed as well as the ability to re-state the passage. Levels of comprehension will be classified as independent, instructional, or frustrational.
3. Grades: Students' interest and motivation will be assessed based upon current English grades. A minimum grade of 70 percent is suggested for advancement to the next level.
4. Portfolio: Students will be required to submit an example of their best work from the current year.

Indicators of misplacement

1. Reading comprehension at the frustrational level.
2. Consistent difficulty completing reading and/or writing assignments on schedule.
3. Writing skill significantly below level.
4. Failure to consistently grasp literature beyond the literal level.

Science

Students' mastery of material will be assessed in a variety of ways. These include primarily evaluating written work; however oral presentations are also used. Assessment will be determined by the following:

Homework: One to two homework assignments will be given each week.

Exams: Two exams will be given each quarter.

"Everyone works hard at Summit: students, teachers, and staff. Our daughter struggles in some classes, but she is learning a lot. She likes almost all of her teachers and classmates. The mixed-age classes work very well."

Quizzes: Seven quizzes will be given each quarter. One quiz will be dropped. Therefore, six quizzes will count toward the grade. Quizzes will be given weekly with no quiz during the week of an exam.

Laboratory Work: There will be on average two laboratory experiments a week. Laboratory work will be recorded in a laboratory notebook. There will be a minimum of five parts to the reporting of the experiments. These include observation, procedure, data collection, data analysis, questions and conclusion. These lab notebooks will usually stay in the classroom.

Assignments in Class: This encompasses assignments done in class. For example, each student throughout the year will be responsible for leading one discussion on a current scientific event.

Research Reports: The first semester of the year, the students will be responsible for a library research report. The first quarter will involve topic selection and initial library research. The second quarter will consist of a rough draft and a final draft. During the second semester, the students will engage in an experimental investigation.

Course work may be individualized if students demonstrate prior mastery of a content area.

Mathematics

Assessment is based mainly on tests and quizzes. Tests are given at the end of every chapter, and cumulative tests are given at the end of each semester. Quizzes are given at least once weekly to assess knowledge on the current material.

During second semester, Geometry and advanced Algebra I classes will also be graded on a project which students will present to the class as a whole.

For a student to have successfully completed a course and be promoted to the next sequential course, the student must have an average of 70% or higher overall, and an average of 70% or higher in quizzes and tests. In addition, the student's ability, developmental level, and motivation will be considered when recommending a student's placement in math for the next academic year.

Social Studies

Initial placement in courses will be made following an interview with the teacher, as well as a written assessment of the student's writing skills. Students will have to demonstrate advanced knowledge of both content areas and critical thinking skills in order to be placed out of introductory courses.

A student's grades will determine whether or not a student has sufficiently mastered enough material to advance onto more difficult courses. Grades of "A," "B," or "C" will automatically qualify a student for advancement to the next level. In the case of a "D," the teacher will meet with the student and the student's parents to determine what course of action will be in the student's best interest. A grade of "F" will normally require the student to re-take the course.

"School staff members and teachers have done a wonderful job of creating a positive and effective learning environment for the students. My son loves to come to school now; he is challenged and happy."

Grades in all classes will be determined from as many different types of activities as possible to accommodate different types of learners. Tests and quizzes will include multiple choice, short answer, matching, and essay questions. Students will also be graded on homework assignments, class participation, presentations, and a variety of projects and papers during the year.

Foreign Language

Next fall, students will be placed into level I, II, or III, based on the following:

1. Successful completion of the preceding level for advancement into levels II and III and requires a grade of “C” or better. If a student receives a “D,” then the teacher will conduct an interview and administer a written exam to determine if the student should move to the next level.
2. An interview to be conducted by the teacher.
3. A written assessment to be administered by the teacher.
4. For entering sixth graders, placement will depend on previous foreign language exposure, an interview, and a written exam administered by the teacher.

“Summit has been an exceptional experience for my daughter. Well done!”

10

Enrollment and Demographics

The 1996-97 school year was the first year of operation for Summit Middle School. We had received a total of 531 applications throughout the summer to fill our capped enrollment of 250 in the three middle school grades: 6, 7 and 8. By opening day on August 23, many students had dropped off of the waiting list. Admission was on a first come, first served basis for this first year. Altogether, 23 students left Summit since the start of school for a variety of reasons, including moves, difficulty adjusting, and transportation problems (transportation is not provided). We have filled those slots from our waiting list, maintaining an enrollment of 250, because of our commitment to serve the community as our funding and enrollment cap permit.

Summit drew its student population from various school situations: home schooled, private schools, schools throughout the Boulder Valley School District, and, following Colorado's open enrollment policy, a few students from outside the Boulder Valley School District (Table 1).

Table 1. Students' Last School Attended before Summit

Public School	201
Private School	39
Out-of-District School	2
Home Schooled	7

Summit's current enrollment is given in Table 2. We anticipate that Summit will have from 45-60 openings next fall. Siblings of current students and children of staff and subscribers to the original contract will have priority; by February 13, 46 students in these categories had indicated a desire to enroll for the 1997-98 school year. Any remaining slots will be filled according to a BVSD-run lottery.

Table 2. Enrollment by Grade Level

Sixth	101
Seventh	106
Eighth	42

"Summit has changed my child's life. He loves school again. We are delighted with it!"

Summit's population includes a large number of bilingual students (8.8%). Languages spoken include Arabic, Chinese, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish.

Table 3. Percentage of Students of Different Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group	Summit	BVSD
African American	2.0%	1.7%
Asian American	6.4%	4.5%
Hispanic American	1.6%	10.0%
Anglo American	88.8%	83.0%
Native American	1.2%	< 1.0%

Student Retention

Of the 207 6th and 7th grade students at Summit, 203 have re-applied for the 1997-98 academic year.

1997 Applications

The demand for Summit continues to be very strong. As was the case for 1996-97, over 10% of all BVSD 5th graders have applied to enter 6th grade at Summit for 1997-98. Nearly one third of 5th graders from the Southern Hills attendance area have applied to Summit. Compared to last year, Summit received fewer applications to enter 7th and 8th grade for next year because we anticipated few, if any, openings in those grades. This was widely known in the community, and we did not encourage applications for those grade levels.

Table 4. Applications Received for 1997-98

Sixth	210
Seventh	27
Eighth	16
Total	253

Attendance

Table 5. Percent Daily Average Attendance
(October 8, 1996 to February 9, 1997)

	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	Total
Female	93.9%	95.0%	90.4%	93.9%
Male	95.4%	95.2%	95.5%	95.3%
Total	94.6%	95.1%	93.7%	94.6%

“We are very pleased with the emphasis on academics and the challenges presented to our daughter.”

11

Faculty

Summit's strength as a school depends on the quality of its faculty. In early 1996, the teacher selection committee received over 100 applications from all across the country in response to job postings at the BVSD Education Center, ads in area newspapers and on the Internet, and word of mouth.

The selection process consisted of an initial screening of application materials by the committee chair. Complete materials of qualified applicants were then scrutinized by the entire selection committee. The applicants with the strongest credentials were invited to teach a demonstration class to Summit student volunteers while being observed by committee members.

Over 50 different Summit students participated in the teaching demonstrations. After a class, the students provided their insights and opinions in response to a set of questions presented by committee members while other committee members answered a teacher's questions and discussed details of the Summit curriculum.

Following the students' input, the teacher was interviewed for 45 minutes. After an applicant departed, the committee discussed the students' feedback and their own impressions of the candidate. The files of recommended teachers were submitted to the Summit Board of Directors, meeting in executive session, for discussion and approval. Approval was contingent upon successful contract negotiations, handled separately by the hiring and benefits committee, security checks by BVSD, and approval of the Board of Education.

The result has been a group of teachers who are not only extremely well qualified, but who have outstanding skills and enthusiasm to bring out the best in middle-school students. By any measure, students and parents have been amply rewarded for the confidence they have placed in Summit.

Table 6. Highest Academic Degree, Faculty

B.A.	5
B.S.	3
M.A.	7
M.S.	2
Ph.D.	3

Profiles of Summit's faculty appear in the Appendix.

"What a great school!"

Teacher Evaluations

Formal evaluations of each teacher are conducted by the Principal and the Evaluation Committee, of which the Principal is the Chair. Teacher evaluations are based on the following:

1. Formal classroom observations by Principal and Evaluation Committee members;
2. Fulfillment of goals in the teacher's Statement of Performance Goals;
3. Completion of the elements in the teacher's Professional Development Plan;
4. Written comments by parents and students;
5. Teacher's contributions to the overall welfare, promotion, and quality of the school.

During the formal evaluations, teachers are evaluated on pace, content level, varied instructional approaches, classroom management, and student understanding.

12

Governance

Summit is a school that is accountable and responsive to students and parents. An elected Board of Directors, consisting of seven members of the Summit community, constitutes the official governing body of Summit Middle School. Reporting to the Board are the Principal, the Guidance Counselor, and the Office Manager.

The original organizers, as well as the Board of Directors, consider that their primary responsibility is to the parents and students in our school. They are the customers of Summit, and thus they are the real governing body at Summit.

The Board has tried to effect policies and procedures which are based on this principle. For example, at Summit courses are "self-selected." That is, guidance is offered by the professional staff to parents and students, but the ultimate course selection is the decision of the students and parents (to the extent possible, subject to scheduling constraints). We do not restrict classes to any specific age grouping within the 6, 7, and 8 grade levels at Summit. Finally, to ensure open communication with parents and feedback from our community, we publish a biweekly newsletter and receive survey input regarding the school. Some results and comments from a recent survey are included in this report.

We believe that the above policies, among others, has led to a high level of community support for, and parental involvement in, our school. Our fund-raising has met our stated goals, and our parent volunteer program is very effective.

Summit Board of Directors, 1996-97

Terms expire May 31, 1998: Christine Howard, Chair; James Cederberg, Chair-Elect; Hunter McDaniel, Treasurer; Patricia Olson

Terms expire May 31, 1997: Ginger Caldwell, Secretary; Charles Demarest; Ron Harmon

Ex-Officio: Steven Haas, Principal; Lisa Singletary, Office Manager

Committees

Most of our committees are standing, while others are *ad hoc*. Committees may consist of parent volunteers, interested community members, Summit staff members, or teachers.

Standing committees include: Teacher Selection, Communication, Technology, Discipline, Enrollment/Registration, Employee Benefits, Curriculum, Finance, Fundraising, Social, Scheduling, and Accountability.

Each of these committees plays a vital role in running Summit, from the hundreds of hours it takes to make a master schedule each semester, to producing the newsletter, to planning social events and public meetings.

13

Community Support

Summit was conceived by a group of parents two years ago. The number of parent volunteers working to make Summit a reality grew steadily throughout the process of applying to the District, the appeal to the State Board of Education, and the contract negotiations. Thereafter, the number of volunteers continued to grow with each successive public meeting. We continued our organizational structure, relying on committees to gather information, explore options, and bring recommendations for discussion and voting by the full organizing committee, and later, the Board of Directors.

Volunteers worked long hours during August 1996, prior to the opening of Summit, to solicit, move, and arrange donated furniture to furnish the faculty work area/lounge, science lab, office and classrooms. Other volunteers worked in August to prepare the soil and lay sod around Summit's newly acquired modular units.

The Parent Volunteer Connection (PVC) was established by a group of parents who had not been active with Summit prior to the opening of school. The PVC has been invaluable in organizing volunteers during this first year of operation. The PVC has an organizer for each subject area to recruit volunteers to help with special teacher requests and events. PVC volunteers are scheduled on a regular basis for lunch supervision and in the office, and the teacher work area, for tasks such as telephoning, copying, and stamping of new literature paperbacks. Over 45% of the families of Summit students volunteer, in some capacity, to support the school.

Parent Satisfaction Survey

Parents have been, and continue to be, the major driving force behind Summit Middle School. Thus, their opinions and reactions are highly valued. While those opinions are always welcome at weekly Board meetings, additional opinions on specific subjects were sought in a Parent Satisfaction Survey sent in the fall. Another survey will be sent in March. A total of 130 responses were received, and 116 made some sort of comment, compiled on 22 typed pages. Every board member and teacher read the responses.

The fall survey included a standard form used by the Boulder Valley School District in the spring of 1996 along with 28 questions of our own on the pace of the curriculum, the appropriateness of textbook choices, homework levels, students' organization skills, placement, and discipline. Parents commented extensively on these subjects as well as the English curriculum, communication, our relationship with Southern Hills, and social activities.

While most parents addressed specific subjects, 30 chose to address the program as a whole. Of these, 28 were extremely positive with comments such as, "This is working," or "I'm really happy." On the standard form, 92% agreed with the statement, "The curriculum at my student's school provides a solid foundation for my student's future."

As expected, the survey proved quite valuable. As an example, many parents indicated the need for a more challenging Algebra class, and we responded with Algebra Plus for the spring. Other changes in response to the survey were an additional tutorial in the spring and a plan by our teachers to coordinate homework and instruct students in study skills.

Survey Results

- Scale: Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1, Don't Know/No Opinion = 0.
- Total enrollment = 250, number of respondents = 130.
- Estimated standard deviations for Summit: 0.03 for category averages and 0.01 for grand average.
- Averages reported for Summit (Fall 1996) and all BVSD middle schools other than Summit (Spring 1996).

Student Learning

I am satisfied with the academic achievement of my student	3.30
My school sets high and realistic expectations for my student	3.47
The curriculum at my student's school provides a solid foundation for my student's future	3.58
Category Average	3.45
<i>BVSD Average</i>	<i>2.94</i>

Learning Environment

I believe my student's school allocates its resources to support student learning	3.63
There is a clear and positive approach to discipline in my student's school	3.43
My student has a positive attitude about his/her school	3.47
My student's school provides a safe environment for learning	3.38
Category Average	3.48
<i>BVSD Average</i>	<i>3.13</i>

Shared Decision Making and Collaboration

At my student's school, staff and administrators work collaboratively	3.43
There is a fair and representative shared decision-making process at my student's school	3.38
At my student's school, the shared decision-making process works effectively	3.34
Category Average	3.38
<i>BVSD Average</i>	<i>3.10</i>

Communication

My student's teachers keep me informed about my student's progress	2.94
School staff members keep me informed about what is going on at the school	3.16
I receive timely responses to questions and requests for information from my student's school	3.27
Category Average	3.12
<i>BVSD Average</i>	<i>2.92</i>

Effective Management/Leadership by the Principal

The principal demonstrates personal and professional commitment to school improvement	3.58
The principal uses effective problem solving and decision-making skills	3.32
The principal of my student's school is an effective leader	3.42
Category Average	3.44
<i>BVSD Average</i>	<i>3.24</i>
Grand Average	3.37
<i>BVSD Grand Average</i>	<i>3.06</i>

14

Grants, Partnerships, and Studies

Three Summit teachers received grants totaling \$1,683 from the Foundation for Boulder Valley Schools. Awards are based on the merits of proposals written by teachers throughout the school district. Summit thanks the Foundation and its sponsors for their generosity.

Mr. Burkhart was granted \$600 for Keyboard Ensemble Performance Support and Electronic Composition. Student ensemble groups will be extended to include keyboard players, and music education will include electronic music composition through the purchase of a channel mixer, amplifier, and dual speakers. This grant was sponsored by Black Roofing.

Ms. Frohbieter was awarded \$483 for Experiments of Dependent and Independent Variables. Students will conduct experiments using small rockets powered by water and compressed air. Using the rockets, students will develop mathematical relationships between the amount of water and air pressure applied and the height attained by the rockets. Truss Joist MacMillan sponsored this grant.

Dr. Sikora won \$600 for Building Habitats. Students will construct and maintain individual habitats. Construction, care for, and observation of these underwater or above-ground habitats will overlap and amplify the environmental studies unit. Sugarloaf Creations provided the funds for this grant.

As the first charter school in the Boulder Valley School District, Summit Middle School has naturally received a lot of attention within the community. Further, as a school which supports a strong, but different, approach to academic achievement, Summit Middle School has received attention from national organizations.

As a partner in Electronic Data Systems' (EDS) Education Outreach program, Summit is involved in the Jason Project, a student research effort into the activity of volcanoes in Iceland and volcanic activity in Yellowstone National Park. Additionally, EDS is providing technical consulting, teacher training, and volunteer support to Summit.

Summit has, on invitation, applied for a charter school grant from the Challenge Foundation.

Summit has been chosen to participate in a two-year national study, "Charter Schools in Action," which the Hudson Institute is conducting with 50 charter schools in ten states.

We are a member of the Colorado League of Charter Schools.

15

Budget

Overview

As a public institution, financial integrity is of utmost importance at Summit. For this reason, and because financial management innovation was not an objective of its founders, Summit has chosen to build its financial management procedures on those used by the Boulder Valley School District. All of Summit's operating revenues are held by the BVSD, and disbursed through normal BVSD procedures for payroll, purchasing, and petty cash. Grant revenues and major fundraising receipts are also held with BVSD. The only funds managed outside this structure are profits from grocery coupon sales, which are held by the Summit Board in a "PTO" account, consistent with normal practice for other BVSD schools. Summit operations are included in the annual audit of all BVSD finances conducted by an external accounting firm.

Budgeting and Expenditure Management

Summit uses a tiered approach to managing its expenditures. The overall budget for the school is organized into approximately 25 major line items, each of which aggregates multiple account codes. Management responsibility (including expenditure authorization) for most line items is delegated to the Principal. Responsibility for the remaining line items, primarily compensation, textbooks, and the contingency reserve, are retained by the Summit Board. The Summit Office Manager produces monthly reports, using data from BVSD's management information system, to track expenses/encumbrances for each line item. The Summit Board then uses this information to make budget adjustments where required. The Office Manager also manages the allocation of each budget line item across the account codes it aggregates. Summit develops its budget for the upcoming school year in March, for submission to the BVSD by April 1. This initial budget is revised based on final legislative action which determines actual revenues. This revised budget will be provided to BVSD by June 30.

Revenues

For the 1996-97 school year, Summit received operating funds from the following sources: direct per-pupil funding from School Finance Act, per-pupil share of funding from 1991 budget election, and activity fees.

The breakdown of revenue from these sources is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Operating Revenues

Per-Pupil Operating Revenue	93%
Budget Election	7%
Activity Fees	< 1%

During 1996-97, Summit has received additional funds from the following sources: textbook loan from BVSD, charter school grant(s), and fundraising.

The additional funds described above have covered startup expenses for Summit. The first item, a loan of \$35,000 from BVSD, was used for textbook purchases and will be repaid over the remaining term of Summit's charter.

Second, Summit applied for and received funds from a federal grant program for charter schools administered by the Colorado Department of Education. This grant program provided \$30,400 for the year ending September 30, 1996, and an additional \$27,000 for the year ending September 30, 1997. These funds have been used to purchase textbooks and pay salaries for the lead teacher prior to school opening. (A sum of \$31,400 was granted and spent in 1996-97, which ended on September 30, 1996. An additional \$27,000 has been approved for 1997-98 and is expected to be available in April 1997.)

Third, Summit conducted a *Tools for Learning* fundraising drive which raised approximately \$33,000. These funds have been used to meet a variety of needs at the school, including science equipment, reference books, and computers.

Finally, Summit received shared usage of the Southern Hills Middle School site together with utilities, maintenance, insurance, and custodial services. These facilities were provided by BVSD in exchange for a 15% concession on School Finance Act PPOR and a 100% concession of Capital/Insurance Reserve funding. The total amount of this concession for 1996-97 was over \$220,000

Expenses

Table 8. Operating Expenses

Teachers' Salaries	53%
Administrative Salaries	18%
Special Education	12%
Administrative Expenses	8%
Instructional Expenses	3%
Equipment/Furnishings	3%
Contingency Reserve	2%
Other	1%

Table 8 shows Summit's operating budget allocations for the 1996-97, including all adjustments approved by the Summit Board as of this writing. As can easily be seen, the largest share of Summit's operating budget is allocated to salaries and benefits, first for Summit's teachers and second for in-school administration. This allocation reflects the Summit Board's strong priority to maintain small class sizes, taught by teachers with at least a baccalaureate degree *in the subject area taught*. Summit nonetheless pays its staff competitive

salaries which are negotiated individually. Summit's average teacher salary of \$29,500 is lower than the BVSD average primarily because of the relative youth of its staff. As this staff gains experience, we expect the fraction of Summit's budget devoted to teacher salaries to increase. The next largest budget categories are Special Education and Administrative Expenses. All of the former, and much of the latter, are purchased from BVSD based on the BVSD's average per-pupil expenditure. Instructional materials, equipment, and other expenses are similar to those at other district schools. Summit's internal contingency reserve was budgeted at 5% prior to school opening. As the year progressed, the Summit Board has gradually allocated reserve funds to meet various educational needs.

16

Facilities

On April 11, 1996, the BVSD Board of Education approved the Second Addendum to the Summit Contract, which provides for the shared use of space with Southern Hills Middle School at its site on Knox Drive. Summit returned 15% of its PPOR funding over the five-year life of the Charter Contract to the District in exchange for facilities provided by the District. BVSD made available for Summit's exclusive use four classrooms in the existing Southern Hills building (including one wet science lab) and six classrooms in three double modular units. In addition, certain common areas were designated for joint use: music room, writing lab, art room, applied technology lab, life management skills rooms, computer lab, health room, hall and gym lockers, gym, mini-gym, cafeteria, auditorium, library, and playing fields. The District also refurbished two existing on-site portables into an administrative building and a building for faculty offices, work space, and lounge. BVSD also supplied the basic furnishings for those classrooms and offices.

With an enrollment of 250, Summit's efficiently schedules the usage of its exclusive-use classrooms at 95%.

Arrangements with the District, however, only tell part of the story. With their tireless efforts, volunteers made the Summit facilities into a real school setting. They solicited corporate and individual donors for cabinets, conference tables, teacher desks, a refrigerator, microwaves, science equipment, computers, and a myriad of other items. They moved, painted, cleaned, scrubbed, and arranged furnishings to suit the educational needs of the school and personal needs of the faculty. They also raked, smoothed, and groomed the grounds in preparation for sodding. Summit volunteers repaired the locks on lockers for students at both Summit and Southern Hills at the beginning of the school year.

Collaboration with Southern Hills

Sharing of the site at Southern Hills has provided the opportunity for the two schools to work together. Sharing arrangements were worked out prior to the start of school for the common-use facilities. These arrangements were approached in a practical and cooperative way and have worked out well. The common area classroom usage schedule is attached for reference (Appendix).

Different solutions have been applied to different rooms. For example, for use of the art room, which involves part-time teachers for both Summit and Southern Hills, use was divided by portions of the day. Summit was able to accommodate the district's scheduling of the Southern Hills' art teacher by adjusting the schedule of Summit's art teacher. The library was made available to Summit students two days per week and to Southern Hills students three days per week. Summit funds augment library staffing and equipment. Joint use of the computer rooms has worked smoothly.

With mutual cooperation, shared use of the gymnasium for gym classes has been smooth. Summit was able to hire a former, longtime teacher from Southern Hills, as its physical education teacher. His relationship with

Southern Hills faculty members was an asset to the cooperative efforts. Southern Hills hired, on a part-time basis, Summit's music teacher to supplement its own staff. Cafeteria staff were scheduled to handle Summit's lunch immediately before the Southern Hills' lunches. The schools' faculties and staffs have helped each other on various occasions.

Students from Summit and Southern Hills have participated together on sports teams. In the future, the schools have agreed to decide whether to participate together or separately based on the participation numbers of both schools. Expenses will be shared based on participation as well.

Although the relationship has worked so far, there are areas that have been identified for which Summit is committed to making improvements. These include improved supervision of Summit students during lunch, closer monitoring of student passing periods, and general better overall supervision to reduce distraction to Southern Hills classes. Augmentation of staffing of the shared health room is under discussion. An good working relationship exists between Southern Hills administration and Summit board members and staff.

Student relationships between the two schools have not been problematic, after some initial tension the first few weeks of school. Many Summit students are from the Southern Hills neighborhood and were classmates and friends of Southern Hills students in elementary school. These friendships have continued.

17

Appendix: Teacher Profiles

These are profiles of the Summit teachers for the 1996-97 academic year, as of February 1997. Some of the teachers are employed part time.

Kirk Adams (Physical Education, Health)

B.S. physical education, health and recreation, minor in sociology, St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Indiana.

A native of Indiana, Mr. Adams taught at Southern Hills Middle School for 12 years and has long been regarded as a teacher who has made a significant difference in students' lives. His coaching career includes football, baseball, wrestling, and basketball. He has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards, and in 1990, he received a national teaching award for intellectual design and gender equity in physical education. Coach Adams spends summers with students touring Australia, New Zealand, or countries in Eastern or Western Europe or Africa. He is planning more overseas excursions with students in the future. Creating a caring and supportive environment in which students can develop academically, emotionally and physically is important to Coach Adams. He has high expectations for his students and encourages them to demand the same of themselves in all areas of their lives. One of his objectives as a teacher is to enhance each student's individuality. Coach Adams enjoys life and learning. Outside of teaching, he likes hunting, fishing, camping, traveling, skiing, and relaxing with family and friends. His wife, Marlene, and sons, Hunter and Brock, provide him with continued love and support. Coach Adams is excited about his position at Summit. He continues working towards his goal of being the best educator possible.

Valerie Ammon (German)

M.A. German studies (soon to be completed), University of Colorado; B.A. Germanic studies, University of Colorado.

As the daughter of an Air Force captain, Ms. Ammon had the opportunity to travel early in life. When she was three years old, her father was stationed in Stuttgart, Germany. This began a seven-year stay for Ms. Ammon, where she learned to speak German through friends, school, and with the help of her parents. She attended German schools from kindergarten through fifth grade and lived in three different towns. After returning to the United States at age eleven, Ms. Ammon proceeded to forget her German in the course of a few short weeks. She did not have the opportunity to speak German again until she took courses in college. She decided to go back to Germany, and spent one year studying at the University of Regensburg and traveling throughout Europe. Ms. Ammon is nearing completion of her master's degree in German studies. She also teaches first and second year German courses at the University. While she is very interested in scholarly activities, she has become even more excited about teaching, and has decided to pursue that career rather than academia. Summit Middle School has provided Ms. Ammon an excellent opportunity to share what she knows with young students. She brings enthusiasm and action to her classroom. She believes that language is a living, active being, which

needs to be fed a diet of practice and humor. She engages her students in practical activities to learn the language.

Amanda Avallone (English)

M.A. English, University of Colorado, Boulder (June 1997); B.A. English, University of Connecticut.

Ms. Avallone comes from a family of teachers and began playing school in the garage as soon as she could hold a piece of chalk. Although the “garage” has changed, and the “students” are no longer neighborhood cats and dogs, the fun and excitement of teaching has not diminished over the years. Born in the foothills of New England’s Berkshires, Ms. Avallone grew up in small-town Connecticut. After college she returned to her alma mater, a highly regarded progressive public high school, where she taught English and French for eight years. After moving to Atlanta, Ms. Avallone taught Upper School English at Lovett, a selective private day school. Other experiences in education range from teaching Windows applications at corporate sites to instructing children in Kenpo Karate. Ms. Avallone has a strong interest in curriculum writing for English and Language Arts. During her years as a classroom teacher, she has written several courses, including “Poetry Seminar,” “From Innocence to Experience,” “Classics in World Literature,” and “Great American Writers.” In addition, she has worked as a curriculum writer for CNN Newsroom, Turner Broadcasting programs, and “electronic field trips.” She is eager to work with other English teachers at Summit to help craft its English curriculum in this exciting first year. Ms. Avallone lives in Louisville with her husband, Bryce, and two cats. No, she does not make the cats write papers or read poetry. She always looks forward to working with her human students and tackling excellent literature with them.

Krista Brakhage (English)

B.A. English, University of Colorado, Boulder.

Ms. Brakhage is a Boulder native who graduated from Boulder High School in 1983 before moving up the hill to the University of Colorado. She earned her bachelor’s degree in English and her teacher certification in December 1988. After working as an instructor and Director of Education for Sylvan Learning Center in Boulder, Ms. Brakhage accepted a teaching position at Revere High School in Ovid, Colorado, in the northeastern corner of the state. While at Revere, Ms. Brakhage expanded her teaching repertoire though seven daily class preparations, which included everything from eighth-grade English to Advanced Literature for seniors. She also taught the electives Speech, Modern Literature, and Journalism, which produced both the school newspaper and year book. In her “spare time,” she served as junior varsity volleyball coach, speech coach for various district and state speech competitions, and director of the annual high school dinner theater. As an active member of Revere’s curriculum committee, Ms. Brakhage worked to rewrite district curriculum and prepare district goals and proficiencies. Prior to her fourth and last year teaching at Revere High School, Ms. Brakhage spent a year working for the Japan Exchange Teaching Program, a Japanese government-sponsored program that employs native speakers of English to teach in the public school system. On the island of Shikoku she taught at three junior high schools and

one tiny mountain school, rotating her visits weekly. While in Japan, Ms. Brakhage served as editor of *Teamwork Tokushima*, a quarterly publication developed to share teaching ideas with Japanese teachers of English throughout Tokushima prefecture. During her year in Japan, Ms. Brakhage biked around the island of Shikoku, trekked through the Karen hill tribes of northern Thailand, and explored Hong Kong and Macau. In addition to travel, Ms. Brakhage enjoys quilting, mountain biking, and fly fishing. Ms. Brakhage is excited to be a part of the Summit team. She has created an inviting and structured classroom environment in which she shares with students her love of literature and writing. A firm believer in life-long learning, Ms. Brakhage intends to pursue a master's degree in Educational Technology through the University of Northern Colorado in Greeley.

William Burkhart (Music)

Master of Music in conducting, University of Southern California; M.A. in composition, University of Pittsburgh; B.A. University of Arizona.

Mr. Burkhart is a doctoral candidate at the University of Colorado and serves as Music Director of the Lyric Theatre's Children's Opera Program and as Resident Conductor of the Lyric Theatre. He is also Director of the Ghost Ranch Chamber Orchestra, New Mexico. Before coming to Colorado, he served as Music Director of the Pittsburgh Civic Orchestra, I Solisti Chamber Orchestra of Pittsburgh, and the Westmoreland Youth Symphony. He founded and directed the Westmoreland Junior Strings, a tri-level, multi-generational training orchestra for string players. He has appeared as guest conductor for orchestras throughout the country. In addition to his orchestral experience, Mr. Burkhart has conducted choirs for 20 years, including the University of Pittsburgh's Heinz Chapel Choir, with which he toured California. He has directed youth musicals and has trained young singers throughout his career. Mr. Burkhart has enjoyed wide operatic experience as Assistant Conductor of the Arizona Opera Company and Conductor of Operas at the University of Southern California. Mr. Burkhart's vision for Summit Music includes an active musical theater group; vocal, string, chamber music, and jazz ensembles; and composition classes.

Susan Cox (Social Studies)

M.A. east Asian languages and literatures, Ohio State University; B.A. east Asian studies, Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio.

Ms. Cox is currently enrolled in the Teacher Certification Program at Regis University, Denver, and takes history classes at area community colleges. Ms. Cox also studied in the intensive language programs at Nankai University in Beijing and at the Stanford Center in Taipei. Before coming to Summit, she lectured in college-level courses on Chinese culture and history, taught beginning Mandarin Chinese, and taught English as a second language to elementary and high school students in Taiwan. Ms. Cox worked for the Department of Defense for several years on the analysis of foreign language materials. Before that, she worked for the Economics Division of the Congressional Research Service. Ms. Cox has traveled extensively in Asia, Central America, North America, and Europe. Her hobbies include golf, gymnastics, cross-country skiing, hiking, writing, and art.

Angela Dozeman (English)

B.A. English, University of Michigan.

Ms. Dozeman also studied in the Instructional Leadership Program, University of Illinois, Chicago. Before coming to Summit, Ms. Dozeman has taught at the middle school level for three years in a variety of school settings. She approaches her career at Summit with incredible enthusiasm, excited to provide the tools students need to become critical thinkers and independent learners. Ms. Dozeman teaches literature through the study of different genres (one of her favorites is mystery). The English curriculum at Summit give her and her students the opportunity to dissect literature and its components. Students compare styles of writing, observe various perspectives, and see the rationale behind certain techniques used by authors. Lively discussion with active student involvement lead to an understanding of themes, symbolism and characters. Ms. Dozeman plans unique and enjoyable projects to add a kinesthetic dimension to the novels studied. She places great emphasis on writing and the writing process. Ms. Dozeman knows and understands the challenge of the blank page; she helps students fill many blank pages with strong, cohesive writing, with individual flair and style.

Judi Dressler (Mathematics)

M.A. education, University of Colorado, Boulder; B.S. mathematics, University of Western Ontario, Canada.

Ms. Dressler was born in Germany and, after living in England, South Africa, and Canada, came to America at age 14. She just recently became a naturalized citizen. After getting her undergraduate degree, she worked as a consultant in Boston, and then Denver, providing analysis, design, programming, technical writing, support and training on various types of computers, from mainframes to PCs. She has taught German to elementary students and tutored students at the middle and high-school levels. Ms. Dressler has two children, age 12 and 16. ("I wish my daughter could have had a Summit to go to when she was in middle school!") A few years ago Ms. Dressler decided to go back to school to earn her master's degree and her math teaching certificate. After graduation she taught math and worked as an internship coordinator at Metro State College. Ms. Dressler likes spending time with her kids, contra-dancing, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, and playing music.

Greta Frohbieter (Mathematics)

B.S. civil engineering, University of Washington, Seattle.

Ms. Frohbieter worked as an engineer in the aerospace industry for several years before beginning her teaching career. She brings to the classroom a broad perspective on the math topics she teaches, and enjoys presenting applications from her experiences to add interest to various concepts. Ms. Frohbieter was born and raised in the Seattle area and moved to New Jersey to work at RCA Astro-Electronics, a satellite manufacturer. There she worked closely with NASA on the development of earth-observing space platforms, winning awards for excellence in engineering. A highlight of this work was planning

the construction of a large space platform by the Space Shuttle's robot arm, in conjunction with astronauts at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Some volunteer tutoring sparked her desire to teach, and she completed New Jersey's alternative teacher certification program through Trenton State University, for which she was awarded the Geraldine R. Dodge fellowship. Before her recent relocation to Colorado, she taught math for several years in a public middle school in Trenton, which she found both challenging and rewarding. With her husband and two children, Ms. Frohbieter has been enjoying Colorado's excellent skiing and hiking opportunities, and appreciates continuing her teaching career here in the atmosphere of academic excellence offered by Summit. Her expectations for all of her students are high, and she provides all the support she can to help them succeed.

Jim Guinn (Science)

Ph.D. physics, Washington University (St. Louis); M.A. physics, Washington University; B.A. astronomy and physics, Boston University.

For five of the previous six years before coming to Summit, Dr. Guinn was teaching physics and astronomy at Berea College, a small liberal arts college in Kentucky. He and his wife decided to move to Denver after she was offered a residency position at the University of Colorado's School of Public Health. Although moving from Kentucky to Colorado was an exciting change, Dr. Guinn believes that moving from teaching college physics to middle-school science was even more interesting. In addition to teaching the physics courses for majors, Dr. Guinn team-taught an introductory science course taken by all students at Berea College. He learned more about teaching from this course than from any other. Classes with over a hundred students require certain "educational antics" to keep everyone's attention. His "normal-mode dance," which he used to help explain quantum mechanics, became something of a legend in this course. He brings his excitement and appreciation of the fun of learning to his students at Summit. Dr. Guinn was also the Director of the Roberts Observatory, and the Acting Director, for one year, of the Weatherford Planetarium at the college. He enjoyed giving planetarium shows and leading observatory open-nights for the public and school groups. These experiences help him create fun, exciting, and interesting classes at Summit.

Steven Haas (Mathematics)

M.A. public administration, Harvard; M.A. international studies, Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies; B.A. political science, Stanford.

Mr. Haas came to Summit with an unusually broad background in education, government, and private industry. He was a member of the U.S. Foreign Service, with assignments in the State Department in Washington and in Bucharest. He also served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense as a specialist in nuclear arms control verification during the Bush administration. In private industry, Mr. Haas started and managed an international metals trading company in Duesseldorf, Germany, and worked in Colorado for a U.S. defense consulting firm analyzing aspects of Soviet military policy. He speaks German, Russian, Romanian, and Spanish. While in Washington, Mr. Haas began mentoring students at a magnet school for the gifted in science and

mathematics. When he returned to Colorado, he took a position teaching mathematics and physical science at St. Mary's Academy Middle School. Before coming to Summit he had been teaching mathematics at Eaglecrest High School in the Cherry Creek school district. Mr. Haas has lectured, presented workshops, and published papers in the fields of foreign affairs, defense policy, gifted education, and mathematics education. He has been a featured speaker at annual conferences of the Colorado Association for Gifted and Talented and of the Colorado Council of Teachers of Mathematics. In 1995 he presented a paper on "Algebra for Gifted Visual-Spatial Learners" at the Eleventh World Conference on Gifted Children in Hong Kong. In his spare time, Mr. Haas plays tennis, bridge, and guitar, and listens to oldies rock'n'roll. He is also an avid explorer of ancient castle ruins in Europe. He is married and has two children. Mr. Haas is Summit's principal.

Lisa Hanckel (French, Spanish)

B.A. art history, Smith College; Institute of Art, Sorbonne University, Paris; Spanish studies in Morelia, Mexico.

Ms. Hanckel has worked extensively as a counselor, language teacher, interpreter, dance instructor, and cook. She is a native speaker of Spanish. While in college she earned many academic honors and was in the top 5% of her class. Ms. Hanckel's interpersonal skills and academic experience contribute to the excellent rapport she has with her students.

Kathy Hutton (Art)

M.F.A. sculpture, University of Colorado, Boulder; M.A. art, Eastern Washington University; B.F.A. painting and print making, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Ms. Hutton is originally from Virginia. She lived on the west coast until 1987, when she moved to this area to attend CU. Ms. Hutton has been teaching art since 1985 as a college instructor, most recently at Metro State College. In addition, for the past five years, she has worked with "at risk" youth and has taught at the Expeditionary School in Denver. She has had over 50 exhibitions of her work. She had a one-person show in Chicago in 1996. She is a collaborator on an exhibition, which has been touring the nation's colleges and universities since 1992, called "Wake Up Little Susie: Pregnancy and Power before Roe vs. Wade." (She produced this historical sculpture installation while an associate at the Rocky Mountain Women's Institute.) Since 1990 she has worked as a professional artist, exhibiting in cooperative galleries. For two years she was president of the Edge Gallery in Denver. Ms. Hutton enjoys the opportunity to work in a school that strives for excellence, working with colleagues and parents who so obviously care about their students.

Richard Keen (World Climate)

Ph.D. geography (climatology), University of Colorado, Boulder; M.S. astrogeophysics, University of Colorado; B.A. astronomy, Northwestern University.

Dr. Keen is a meteorological consultant, an author, and a photographer. As a researcher at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, he was responsible for observing and forecasting tornadoes over Eastern Colorado. Dr. Keen is the author of seven books, and is currently writing his eighth, *Colorado Weather*. He has written 20 professional papers published in scientific journals. In 1996 he was a scientist in the Juneau Ice Field Research Program in Alaska, where he taught and mentored secondary-school, college, and graduate students.

Christopher Koch (Social Studies)

M.S. human ecology, University of Bordeaux, France; B.A. environmental conservation, French, University of Colorado, Boulder.

Mr. Koch sees social studies as a discipline that combines geography, economics, politics, language, culture, and technology to study the world in which we live, both past and present. He wants his students to imagine social studies as a dynamic subject, where knowledge learned in their other classes can be used to explore a fantastic story: the history of humankind. A native of Boulder, his own exploration of this story began when he left CU to study at the University of Bordeaux, France, during his junior year in college. Living in the old part of the city, history was no longer something he only read about in books, but something that he woke up to each morning, something deeply-rooted in the present. He used France as a springboard for trips to Spain, Morocco and Turkey, where he wandered through layered ruins from ancient Greek, Carthaginian, Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires. After graduating from college, he went to Israel, where he spent the summer diving on a 2000-year-old harbor complex for an archaeological dig in the ancient Roman city of Caesarea. These experiences taught him that, despite our best efforts, history as we know it is not a complete representation of past events. He saw first hand how “history” changes continuously as new information and perspectives are discovered. In addition to his love of history, Mr. Koch has a strong education and professional background in resource management, a field closely related to subjects he is teaching in social studies. His degrees in environmental conservation and human ecology required courses in a wide range of fields, from ecology and economics to political science and sociology. Through these programs, he began to see how the world and its governments are shaped by the interaction of various economic, political, social, and ecological systems. Mr. Koch has worked as a naturalist for Boulder County and Denver Public Schools. He has designed drug/alcohol-treatment and back-to-school programs for the California Conservation Corps. Most recently, he completed a three-year tour as a commissioned officer aboard a NOAA fisheries research ship, where his duties included coordinating all scientific operations, driving the ship for eight hours each day, and serving as the ship’s divemaster. Mr. Koch hopes that, through their classes in geography, history, and government, students will make connections between their own interests and those of other peoples and places and times. He knows that, once these

connections are made, students at Summit will suddenly find their own interests growing into areas they never expected.

Ray Mueller (Computer Programming)

B.A. philosophy, University of Colorado, Boulder.

Mr. Mueller began working with youth in Boulder in 1982 with the YMCA's School-Age Child Care Program. As Director of Youth Services at the YMCA, he helped build a successful school-time and summer-camp program that served over twenty elementary and middle schools throughout Boulder County. During his time with the Y, he was instrumental in the establishment of programs for children from birth through the teenage years, including the Scott Carpenter Skate Park, the JoyCare Infant Center, and Club Mid, an after-school program for middle schoolers. Mr. Mueller left Boulder for a year in the summer of 1992 to take a short-term position as Co-Director for an AmeriCorps Service Program in Washington D.C., where part of his responsibilities included connecting AmeriCorps members in Texas, California and New Jersey to the Internet to facilitate better communication. Upon returning to Boulder, he studied computer science for a year at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Mr. Mueller is currently working as a consultant for the Colorado Department of Education and for the Colorado Alliance for Quality School-Age Programs as a school-age specialist. He is also a volunteer with Boulder Community Network, and with Project Self-Sufficiency at the Woodlands Program in their computer lab. He enjoys cross-country skiing, snorkeling, camping, spelunking, Monty Python, and taking hikes with his wife, Michelle, and their Labrador retriever, Huan.

Sharon Sikora (Science)

Ph.D. chemistry, University of Denver; M.S. chemistry, University of Denver; B.A. Zoology, Pomona College.

Dr. Sikora works hard to bring her love of science to her students by being an enthusiastic and energetic lecturer. She often uses demonstrations in the classroom to provoke excitement and curiosity, while creating a classroom where students feel confident and safe to express their ideas. She offers encouragement and promotes critical thinking through self- and peer-evaluation. Believing that learning is a continuous process, she feels a deep responsibility as an educator to continuously further her knowledge. Dr. Sikora has taught extensively at the university level. She received the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant of the Year award at the University of Denver. She has spent the last year and a half pursuing health/science education at the Denver Museum of Natural History. While at the museum, she developed curricula and taught tens of thousands of students of all ages across the state. She is excited about her teaching position at Summit. She realizes that students come from a variety of backgrounds, yet they are unified by a fundamental desire to learn. Her approach with students is honest; not every teacher or scientist knows everything. It can be inspirational to middle school students that any teacher, scientist or student can find answers to questions through research. This is the spirit she wishes to instill in young scientists. Dr. Sikora has helped create an innovative science program for Summit students to experience: spooling of DNA, investigation of the ozone

gases, dissection of the brain, heart or lungs, etc. She likes working with a principal, faculty and parents who share a common goal: to inspire in the students of Summit a lifelong love of learning and a desire for self-development.

Diana Stough (Spanish)

M.A. Spanish language and literature (minor in women's studies), Colorado State University; B.A. liberal arts and Spanish (minor in Latin American studies and Asian studies), Colorado State University.

A Colorado native, Ms. Stough brings a love for the Spanish language and culture to the classroom. She lived in Mexico as an undergraduate student in Guadalajara, 1989, and as a graduate student in Puebla, 1991. She has taught Spanish at the university level for six years at Colorado State, Metro, CU-Denver, Community College of Denver, and the School of Mines. While living in Mexico, she taught English at the University of the Americas and at a private school. Ms. Stough has several achievements in the area of professional development. In 1994, she attended two Women's Studies conferences at the University of California, San Diego, and at the University of Missouri, Columbia. She presented a joint project about the El Salvadoran poet and author Claribel Alegria, who is an outspoken advocate of the on-going liberation struggle in her country. Ms. Stough also attended a conference in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, in 1992 where she did simultaneous translating from English to Spanish and from Spanish to English. There she presented a paper on the global coffee industry and the role it plays in the Honduran economy and well-being of its people. In 1993 she presented a joint session at the Colorado Conference of Foreign Language Teachers about alternative approaches to teaching grammar and vocabulary in the classroom. Ms. Stough believes in the "total physical response" approach to second-language acquisition: her classes are very active. She believes students retain more of a foreign language if they are physically and emotionally involved in it. She is constantly studying ways to teach culture in the classroom, based on her philosophy that language cannot be taught as an entity separate from the culture of a people. She enjoys sharing her experiences living and traveling in Mexico, Spain, and Honduras with Summit students.

Deborah "Corky" Strong (Counselor)

M.S. education, counseling, Bowling Green State University, Ohio; B.S. education, health and physical education, Bowling Green State University.

Ms. Strong has 17 years of experience as a junior/senior high school guidance counselor. She was the assistant director of undergraduate admissions for three years at Bowling Green University. Since 1993, she was self-employed as an independent college counselor, advising students in college selection, academics, resume writing, and scholarships and financial-aid.

Susan Weissberg (Special Education)

M.A. and B.A. learning disabilities, University of Northern Colorado.

Growing up with the mountains, Aspen, and the great weather kept Ms. Weissberg in Colorado as she finished her undergraduate studies in special education. Her first post-graduate job was doing something that came naturally: skiing. Being the first woman on the Aspen ski patrol paid the bills, but soon Ms. Weissberg landed her first “real” job as a teacher in Bigfork, Montana. Working in Bigfork was a great teaching experience, and she found the Flathead Valley “full of the nicest people and prettiest scenery on earth.” Four years later, Bigfork’s population dropped from 900 to 899 when Ms. Weissberg left for a position with the Dept. of Defense, teaching English as a second language to U.S. military dependents in Germany. The opportunity to learn about the German culture and to work with a cross-section of the American population not often encountered in small towns such as Aspen or Bigfork, while gaining further teaching experience, will always be a fond memory for her. To gain more expertise in the field of learning disabilities, Ms. Weissberg returned to the University of Northern Colorado where she earned her master’s degree. Ms. Weissberg has worked in the field of learning disabilities for thirteen years and is even more enthusiastic about her area of expertise than when she began. She says, “The students with whom I am working at Summit Middle School are very bright but have different styles of learning. We do not regard these differences as true ‘disabilities’ in the popular sense of the word, but rather as cognitive styles which students need to understand in order to maximize their great potential. Many very accomplished people such as Thomas Edison, Hans Christian Anderson, and John F. Kennedy had such different learning styles.” Ms. Weissberg is excited to be at Summit and feels that it gives her the opportunity to work with an outstanding group of students, parents, and faculty. She is available to all students for consultation.

18

Appendix: Common Area Classroom Usage

Common Area Classroom Usage, Spring 1997

Location	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	MWE	IuTh	MWE	IuTh	MWE	IuTh	MWE	IuTh
Art	Sculpture Hutton	Drawing2 Hutton	Explor Nehls	Sculpture Hutton	Art Thal	Art Thal	Art Thal	Art Thal
Applied Technology	Explor Tech Blea	Explor Tech Blea	Explor Shop O'Neill	Explor Shop O'Neill	Explor Shop O'Neill	Explor Shop O'Neill	Explor Shop O'Neill	Explor Tech O'Neill
Cooking Lab			Explor H Shaw	Explor H Shaw	Outdoor Liv Jones	Outdoor Liv Jones	Outdoor Liv Jones	Outdoor Liv Jones
Life Management	Time Adams	Sewing Strong	Health E Hanson	Health E Hanson	Drama Hanson	Health E Hanson	Health E Hanson	Health E Hanson
Computer Lab	Pub Brassem	Microcomp O'Neill	Basic Mueller	Basic Mueller	Basic Mueller	P. Comp Ammon	P. Comp Ammon	
Auditorium	Band Huckins	Orchestra Wallace	Band Huckins	Select Str BegBand Burkhart	Adv Band Sel Wind Burkhart	Choir Burkhart	Music Th Burkhart	Silver Rain Burkhart
Music Room		General Music Huckins	Orchestra Wallace	Choir Burkhart	Choir Burkhart			
Mini-Gym			PE Health Adams	PE Adams	PE Adams	PE Adams	PE Adams	
Gymnasium	PE Klauka	PE Klauka	PE Klauka	PE Klauka	PE Adams	PE Klauka	PE Klauka	PE Klauka
Gymnasium	PE Adams	Fitness Adams	PE Schalk	PE Schalk	PE Adams	PE Klauka	PE Schalk	PE Schalk
Key:	SHMS Common Room Use 50.0%	SHMS Common Room Use 23.6%	SHMS Common Room Use 23.6%	SHMS Common Room Use 26.4%	SHMS Common Room Use 26.4%	SHMS Common Room Use 26.4%	SHMS Common Room Use 26.4%	SHMS Common Room Use 26.4%

Common Area Resource Room Usage, Spring 1997

Location	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	MWE	IuTh	MWE	IuTh	MWE	IuTh	MWE	IuTh
Writing Lab	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in	SHMS Drop-in
Library	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in	Summit Drop-in