

SUMMIT @SCHOOL | *A weekly study of the people and trends shaping education in the mountains*

The Peak School graduates to high school curriculum next year

By Kelsey Fowler
kfowler@summitdaily.com

May 2017 will see a new class of high school graduates in Summit County — no longer just from Summit High School, but The Peak School as well.

In a meeting Tuesday, Feb. 18, a panel of parents, teachers and administrators from the private school discussed plans to expand from middle to high school next fall for the 2014-15 school year. The school plans to add classrooms further back into the warehouse space at its current location.

Renovations to the building at 40 W. Main St. in Frisco will begin this spring, and head of school Rebekah Jordan said they plan to use the space by the end of August.

“There wasn’t any other option in Summit County and there’s a choice now,” Peak School parent Megan Morgan said in the panel. “There are different opportunities for all of our kids.”

Currently, there are 47 students in the school. The high school program will grow to be between 50 and 75 students when full, Jordan said. Right now, it is not part of the school’s growth plan to expand to elementary school too, she said.

The Peak School is broken up into Division I (D1), which



KELSEY FOWLER / KFOWLER@SUMMITDAILY.COM

Left, head of school Rebekah Jordan and humanities/Spanish teacher Dana Karin joined a panel of Peak School parents Tuesday, Feb. 18 to discuss how the school will transition into offering high-school level courses next year.

typically corresponds to students in sixth and seventh grade, and Division II (D2) which equates to eighth and ninth.

Next fall, students will have the option to enter Division III (D3), equal to grades 10 to 12. These students, according to

the Peak School, are expected to understand who they are becoming as scholars, as citizens and as human beings and to engage all of these traits in their pursuit of a post-secondary education and life.

The divisions, Jordan said,

allow students to spend more or less time on specific concepts as needed within different subjects. Breaking up students just chronologically is not always most effective for academic growth.

At the high school meeting,

Jordan addressed what a progressive high school experience should look like from a content perspective. She said instead of just English nine through 12, D3 students will have thematic-based units in the humanities. For example, one planned theme is “Art and Politics: the intersection of power and culture” and within that theme, students will study one topic per quarter: Shakespeare, Poetry and Nature, the Medicis and the Renaissance and Asia: Kabuki, Celadon and political dynasties. Other humanities themes would include “Gods and Monsters” and “The American Story: Told and Untold” at the D3 level.

Humanities and Spanish teacher Dana Karin said, “We live in a free country and as democracy we have the right to vote. Our job is to prepare informed citizens, so they can form their own opinions and shape the country in whatever way they want to.”

The Peak School also offers leveled math, to make sure the students have the skills necessary before moving on to the next level, as well as offering chemistry, physics and other upper-level science electives.

Karin explained the curriculum is on a two-year rotation, with an “A” and “B” year. For example, D1

PEAK SCHOOL, 5

Colorado Mountain College to host live webinar on health equity

On Wednesday, Feb. 26 Angela Glover Blackwell will host a live webinar, “Achieving Health Equity in Colorado” at Colorado Mountain College locations in Rifle, Edwards and Breckenridge, as well as the

Central Services offices in Glenwood.

Blackwell is the founder and CEO of PolicyLink, and is known nationally as an advocate for advancing economic and social equity for low-income people and communities of color. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Howard University and a law degree from UC-Berkeley. Her book “Race and America’s Future” was published

in 2010.

The event will run from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. with lunch and a community discussion to follow the webinar. The event will include participation from health care and social services professionals, and individuals who are struggling to have their health care needs met. The college requests an RSVP by Monday, Feb. 24. Visit [http://](http://whoozin.com/W64-3YW-XGCR)

whoozin.com/W64-3YW-XGCR to make an online reservation, or call 970-384-8523. The webinar is underwritten by a grant from the Colorado Trust, as an extension of its mission to improve health care access and affordability across the state. This is the first of four webinars planned on health-related topics.

— Kelsey Fowler

Get a **JUMPSTART** on your news.

You already check in throughout the day for news updates, but now you can read tomorrow’s top stories tonight with our hourly updates from 6 to 10 p.m.



SUMMITDAILY.COM

PEAK SCHOOL

From page 2

students will learn modern history one year, then foundations of civilizations the next. When a student enters Peak determines which one he or she learns first.

Even with the expansion to high school, Karin said the maximum class size would most likely be 16, with most classes now having 12 to 14 students.

“Peak is all about personalizing to every individual in the school at an individual pace,” Morgan said.

Students are not awarded traditional letter grades at the school, but rather evaluated based on their own goals for a particular assignment.

“It’s about understanding that subject, progressing to the next level,” parent Russell Whitt said. “Everything builds on the subject before, and that’s a critical difference from making an ‘A’ and moving on.”

After turning in an assignment, students receive feedback and have the option to go back to the project and go deeper into the learning. Students

strive for “Division Mastery Objectives” or DMOs.

In order for students who will partake in D3 to apply to college, the Peak School will submit a narrative transcript. There is no grade point average, but rather students graduate with a standard outline of courses taken, as well as a narrative summary of their growth and performance. Karin, who graduated from a progressive school herself and attended Brown University and Barnard College, said colleges often welcome this level of in-depth information about each student.

At the meeting, Jordan discussed how colleges are now very familiar with narrative transcripts and often value them to help paint a fuller picture of the applicant.

“They are looking for students who will be a good fit, who will take ownership of their work,” she said. “Students who are accountable for their education.”

In D3, every three weeks students will attend college counseling sessions for exposure to colleges

and other post-secondary options. The high schoolers will be able to explore what interests them and understand personal preferences so they can build a plan of how to get to a school, with choices such as community service and course selection. Every month as well, the D3 students will have an ACT or SAT prep class.

Jordan said students will graduate with four to five years of English on their transcripts, but it will just look different from a standard report from a school like Summit High School.

“The designations on the front page look very similar, you’ll see the student took a half-year, high-school level English class on Shakespeare,” she said.

“It’s not just about being connected, they are in control of their education, in charge,” Morgan said. “As a student, they have responsibility for where they are going.”

Applications for the 2014-15 school year are available now online at www.thepeakschool.org. The deadline is March 4.

lunch



Carefully crafted homemade specialties served from 11am-3pm every day

noun - Step off the mountain and enjoy your lunch.

verb - The family of four *lunched* at Burke & Riley's and had a great time.

OPEN DAILY 11AM-2AM

JUST A STEP AND A JIG FROM THE BASE OF PEAK 9
520 S. Main | Top Floor | La Cima Mall | Breckenridge | 970.547.2782



SUMMITlife

Thursday: Food & Drink

Serving up food & drinks features, restaurant news and events coverage

BUY 1 GET 1 FREE

GRINDERS & SANDWICHES

Expires 2/26/2014





LAKE DILLON TAVERN

HAPPY HOUR
3 - 6:30pm
½ Price Apps
\$3 CO Draft Beers

119 E La Bonte St, Dillon, CO 80435 • 970-468-2006

Submit Your Photos

Send in your pictures of people and events across Summit County. Your picture could be in the paper!

email photos to editor@summitdaily.com | Include Name & Location



ASPEN SNOWMASS.

FREE ENTRY CASH PURSE



BUD LIGHT

BIG AIR FRIDAYS

EVERY FRIDAY through march 28
fanny hill snowmass

registration info and more at aspensnowmass.com/bigair



WE ARE SILVERTHORNE



NO MORE ENROLLMENT FEES

Several new membership options

TRY 1 WEEK FREE!

FOR MORE OFFERS...



check out wearesilverthorne.com



www.snapfitness.com/silverthorne
358 Blue River Pkwy Suite B • 970.468.9801

