



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW COMMITTEE

KEVIN INGRAM, CHAIR
Zaynab Baalbaki, Vice-Chair

Bill Christianson, Catina Harwell-Young and Dr. Terri Brookshire

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Monday, November 3, 2025

5:00 PM

Virtual

Discussion on these items will be solely limited to each school's annual performance report. A vote may be taken on acceptance of each report.

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Access Code: 524-860-037

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1. Roll call.

Meeting convened: 5:03 PM

Members present: Kevin Ingram, Bill Christianson, Catina Harwell-Young and Dr. Terri Brookshire

Member excused: Zyna Baalbaki

2. Review and approval of the minutes of the Aug. 27th meeting.

Mr. Christianson moved, seconded by Ms. Harwell-Young, for approval of the minutes. There were no objections.

3. [250609](#)

Communication relating to the 2025-27 activities of Milwaukee Academy of Science.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Dr. Baylor, Evident Change, said that the school had approximately 1575 students and 82 out of 92 teachers returned from the prior year. For attendance rate, they didn't meet the 90% goal for the elementary students and 91.9% of parents attended at least one parent-teacher conference. For the junior academy they also did not meet the attendance or parent attendance goals nor for the high school. All students had a graduation plan in place and 100% of their seniors graduated. The school met all of its

contract requirements, except for at least 50% of 10th graders maintaining their composite scores on the pre-ACT and 14 teacher licensure issues were found, out of 192 teachers. Evident Change recommended that leadership development be provided and data-informed decision-making and ensuring rigorous academic support with emphasis on special education and enhance classroom environment and academic rigor. Emphasis should also be placed on reading, writing and math and professional development for educators.

Anthony McHenry - last year an additional campus was opened and they knew that adding over 400 students coming from 26 different schools would have a negative impact on their year 1 academic scores. Dr. Lita Mallett agreed that both campuses share one campus and they opened up another middle school, which did affect their scores. They brought in 600 new students in a span of three years.

Mr. Christianson said the numbers are pretty successful in Pre-K, but then trend downward as the students head into third grade. Dr. Mallett said this year they have been focusing on best practices for reading and they hope to see that trend go in a different direction.

Mr. Ingram noted that assessment methods seem to change with each DPI Commissioner.

Mr. Ingram asked about the processes they are putting into place to ensure they have licensed teachers by the close of the school year. He noted many applicants often do not respond to e-mails from DPI, so schools need to ensure its teachers are responding to e-mails. Mr. McHenry said it is a challenge and is more of a challenge than it has been in the past. MAS does have two staff responsible for tracking licensing and, although they have a 95% retention rate, that does mean they are losing six licensed teachers each year. They will be more aggressive on tracking this and also ensuring that teachers are aware of when their licenses will lapse. Mr. Ingram noted that the Forward exam has not changed for a number of years and he asked what strategies the school has for moving students toward meeting Forward exam expectations. Dr. Lita Mallett said they have moved most of their students to basic or above and the focus this school year on high-quality Tier 1 instruction. Mr. Ingram likes to see the college scholarships as it demonstrates that people do think these students can succeed. He was concerned about the large number of students that withdrew (34) and Tresca Meiling said many of their students come from transient families

Mr. Christian moved to accept Evident Change's recommendation for annual academic monitoring and reporting with continuing emphasis on reading and math, seconded by Ms. Harwell-Young. There were no objections.

4. [250606](#)

Communication relating to the 2025-27 activities of Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Dr. Baylor, Evident Change, said the school had approximately 180 students and all teachers returned from the prior school year. The goal was to have students attend 90% of the time (and students attained 89%) and 100% of their parents attended both parent-teacher conferences. They met all contract requirements except one relating to student proficiency and three teachers were unlicensed for at least part of the school year. The recommendations were to focus on collaboration with the families and expand engagement beyond the school building and incorporating student voices. The school wants to support reading readiness in the early grades. Evident Change recommends annual monitoring with special emphasis on basic reading and math. Mr. Ingram asked if the school was interested in increasing enrollment. Dr. Smith said the school did a lot of outreach over the summer and also worked on marketing and

branding. So far this year they have had a significant increase in their enrollment (about 50 students) so they currently have 227-230 students and more are coming. They are tracking their applications and have found that most of the parents said that word of mouth was the deciding factor for them. Mr. Ingram asked how they are helping their elementary students move from meeting expectations to exceeding. Ms. Fletcher said a reading specialist was hired and they have created intervention plans and are working with small groups. They are working on one-to-one and small group learning to make sure their students are moving ahead and are challenged. Mr. Christianson asked if enrollment is scaled up, will the smaller class sizes and one-to-one learning still be supported? Ms. Fletcher said they will ensure that every student is heard and will change how instruction is managed. Dr. Brookshire asked how the school is supporting its teachers. The school does follow-up for re-testing and put testing dates on the school calendar and does check-ins to see how the teachers are progressing and support them as there is a lot of communication they receive, which can be overwhelming for new teachers. Mr. Christianson moved to accept Evident Change's recommendation for annual monitoring with special emphasis on improving reading and math scores, seconded by Dr. Brookshire. There were no objections.

5. [250605](#) Communication relating to the 2025-27 activities of Escuela Verde.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Dr. Baylor, Evident Change, said the school had approximately 113 students and 12 out of 13 teachers returned. The goal for student attendance was 90% and students attained 81% of that goal and 83% of parents attended parent-teacher conferences. They met all of the goals relating to grade promotion and graduation and they met all contract requirements, except one teacher was unlicensed and one was teaching a class outside of the licensure. The scorecard was 78 out of 100. Evident Change recommended that the school analyze its student data and do targeted test prep in order to improve its test results. Evident Change recommended another five year contract and annual monitoring with special emphasis on reading and math.

Ms. Harwell-Young asked how the school is ensuring proper licensing is following. Joey Zocher said all its current teachers are licensed and they are ensuring that all teachers are aware of the deadlines. One new thing is that the IRS is stepping in with the licensing programs so people with back taxes cannot get their licenses, although they can get on a payment plan. This has affected several of their teachers. Mr. Ingram noted once the DOR designation is on someone's record, that is out of DPI's hands.

Mr. Ingram asked about the fact that half of their students are ESL and they also have 31 students who qualify for special education. Laurel said they have been focusing on their test prep and it's difficult as the ACT is only offered in English and that makes it very challenging so they are working on teacher prep at all levels. They do with the local colleges and universities for their former students.

Ms. Harwell-Young moved to accept Evident Change's recommendation for another five-year contract and for annual monitoring with special emphasis on reading and math, seconded by Mr. Christianson. There were no objections.

6. [250608](#) Communication relating to the 2025-27 activities of Milwaukee Math and Science Academy.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Dr. Baylor said the school had about 214 students and 15 out of 16 teachers returned.

The student attendance

goal was 92%, but students only attained 84% and 92.4% of parents attended parent-teacher conferences. The school met most of its contract requirements, but not the year-to-year expectation for 4th-8th grade students and staff holding DPI licenses. Evident Change recommended strengthen collaborative relationships between students/parents/teachers, recruiting more diverse teachers and expanding their ESL and digital citizenship initiatives. Evident Change recommends the school receive another five-year contract and annual monitoring.

Ms. Crystal Bielmeier said they didn't have enough teachers to cover all their reading groups last year and this year they changed their schedule around to ensure each group is covered by a licensed teacher.

Mr. Ingram noted that the school is no longer on probation and he questioned what plans there are to move students forward on the Forward exam. The school met with the Cooperative Education Service Agency (CESA) and they are looking to see what is working and also practicing twice a month with test-type questions created by AI.

They are also using software on what skills each student lacks and they then work on that. Their overall students' math scores have increased so they think this is working. They are being very deliberative on what they are teaching in the classroom.

Mr. Christianson moved to accept Evident Change's recommendation to renew a five-year contract and annual monitoring with emphasis on reading, math and writing, seconded by Dr. Brookshire. There were no objections.

7. [250607](#)

Communication relating to the 2025-27 activities of Downtown Montessori Academy.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Dr. Baylor, Evident Change, said the school had approximately 225 students and all teachers returned. The student attendance goal was 93% and students attended 94.4% and 100% of parents attended conferences. The school met all contract requirements and partially met one goal, relating to DPI licensure. The school scorecard was 83.7 for the entire school. Evident Change recommends collaboration, to strengthen governance through diversity and annual monitoring.

Mary Widmann is new to Downtown Montessori, who has been an educator for over 25 years and reading is her passion, which is one of the initiatives she brings as well as being mindful of Montessori practices. Students know the math in the Montessori way, but struggle with the Forward exam. Their scores are improving.

Mr. Ingram encouraged them to continue engaging parents and accepting and acting on their advice, as well as getting parent representatives on the board. If parents reach out to the board and feel they aren't getting the appropriate response, then they reach out to the CSRC. The fact that they hired a consultant is a positive sign. You cannot serve the students if you're not serving the parents.

Ms. Harwell-Young moved to accept the recommendation for annual monitoring, seconded by Mr. Christianson. There were no objections.

Meeting adjourned: 6:42 PM

Linda M. Elmer

Staff Assistant

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety through the City's Legislative Research Center at <http://milwaukee.legistar.com/calendar>.