



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW COMMITTEE

KEVIN INGRAM, CHAIR

Joyce Mallory, Vice-Chair

*Ruben Burgos, Naryan David Leazer, Monique Liston, Desiree
Pointer-Mace, and Glenn Steinbrecher*

Staff Assistant: Linda Elmer, (414) 286-2231

Fax: 286-3456, lelmer@milwaukee.gov

Gayle Peay, 288-1540

Wednesday, November 7, 2018

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room 301-B

DRAFT

1. **Roll call.**

Meeting convened: 5:30 P.M.

Members excused: Ms. Listeon and Mr. Leazer

Ms. Mallory arrived at 5:34 P.M.

2. **Review and approval of the minutes of the October 30th meeting.**

Mr. Burgos moved, seconded by Ms. Pointer-Mace, for approval of the minutes. There were no objections.

3. **[170701](#)**

Communication relating to the 2017/19 activities of Milwaukee Collegiate Academy.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Ms. Janice Ereth, Children's Research Center, said this is the 7th year of operation and is located at 29th and Capitol with 253 students enrolled in grades 9-12 and all students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. They had 44 graduates last year and all were accepted into at least one university. Ninety two point nine percent of parents who responded to the survey said the school was excellent or good; 12 staff members were interviewed and 11 board members and the school was consistently rated as excellent or good. The educational focus is on project and blended learning. They met all the contract compliance issues this year and received a 73.7% on the score card (last year their score was 71.9%). CRC recommends continual annual monitoring and reporting for the next school year.

Judith Parker - Principal

Anrew Kerick - Director of Teaching and Learning

Phil Smith - Dean of Teaching and Learning

Liquisha Logan - Dean of Student Life

Howard Fuller - board member

Shariqua McGee - board members and parent of former student

Ms. Pointer-Mace questioned about how they are continually improving and also about the care team. The school starts each day with an intervention period to target

students where they really are struggling. They have students look at their own data on the platform and articulate what support they need to develop on their own. In the past year they have been focusing on math along with getting support from consultants. The math chairs are re-examining their practices to close the gaps in achievement. The care team examines disciplinary actions on a weekly basis and tries to pinpoint if the issue is the teacher or the student who needs more interventions. This year there was a lot of conflicts among girls. Two girls who were fighting co-led a Girls Day effort (and there was also a Boys Day event). That taught them what "leadership" really was. Less than half the teachers rated the parent involvement as "good" so Mr. Burgos asked how the parent involvement is. Ms. Parker said the school is working on getting parents more involved. Mr. Fuller is meeting individually with 25 parents (he is currently on #10). He is surprised about the level of pressure on families and is finding a lot of trauma. Ms. Parker agrees that the school needs to talk more with parents and Ms. Mallory recommended using Facetime on parents' phones. Ms. Mallory asked what the school does to encourage civic engagement. The school holds voter registration drives and they have a sustainable democracy project where social issues are researched and studied. The most common reason for students transferring out was they were moving and the school also has a high education standard for students, so those who want to work and have only a half-day schedule and pass with a "D" transfer to other schools. The school sets aside an hour a day four days a week for intervention and work on students' weakest skills. Teachers serve a variety of functions at the school, such as serving lunch, standing at the doors, etc. and the school works on coaching its teachers and has teacher leaders with teacher teams they support. The goal is to build a gym, a cafeteria and another room at the current site. It's difficult as a single school rather than being in a network, which they prefer not to be.

Ms. Mallory moved, seconded by Ms. Pointer-Mace, to continue annual monitoring and reporting. There were no objections.

4. [170706](#)

Communication relating to the 2017/19 activities of the Milwaukee Academy of Science.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Ms. Janice Ereth, Children's Research Center, said this school is in its 10th year of operation and serves elementary through high school students. The population is 99.1% African American and eligible for free or reduce lunch. Ninety one point five percent of 8th graders plan to continue to the MAS high school. They graduated 45 students last year, who also were offered numerous scholarships. Thirty eight point six percent of parents responded to the survey and 85.9% said the school was excellent or good. Section V in the summary lists two school activities for each grade level breakdown (elementary, junior academy and high school). The school met all contract requirements this year. The report card score dropped for the elementary and the junior academy and also the score for the school as a whole. CRC recommends regular annual monitoring and reporting with the expectation that math scores will improve, especially in the elementary school. If the scores do not improve, CRC will recommend probation. CSRC can consider placing both the elementary and junior academy on probation now.

Anthony McHenry - Chief Executive Officer
Chris Schwab - Chief Academic Officer
Michael Bodwen - Elementary Principal
Jenny Trojan - Junior Academy Principal
Tom Schmel - High School Principal
Therese Morris - Director of Special Education

Ms. Pointer-Mace wanted specific instances of what the school is doing to build positive relationships with students to prevent future discipline issues. Mr. McHenry said the basis of the school is to create relationships with parents, students and teachers and administrators. He feels the school is heading in a positive direction with this. They are hiring mission-binding teachers who understand that the work will be difficult. They also have administration set up to support teachers and give them someone to talk to. They have assemblies with talent shows, choosing class presidents and feel those bring the students closer. The school does make calls to the parents to speak positively about the the kids. In the high school, the kids have a "go to" person and have advisory teachers to discuss individual students and know how they are doing in all studies, not just that teacher's studies. They do offer students rewards for performing well. Ms. Pointer-Mace commended the school for having created a common culture across all grades.

Mr. Burgos questioned what the school is doing with the parents. Their goal is to have 100% of their parents contacted every month and last year 99.5% of parents attended conferences. The positive calls are an attempt to get parents involved. Parents are also invited to the talent shows and there is also 1-2 special events per month. The school welcomes parents walking their kids into schools and they respond to parents at most within 24 hours. Mr. McHenry feels the parent involvement is very high - higher than any school he has ever been at. They was a security incident, so the school had to create a policy that it needed one day's notice that parents would attend their child's classroom. They have grades 3 up taking the Aspire/ACT so they can track how individual kids are doing over time. The school has had 100% acceptance rate post-high-school. They do offer credit recovery so students can move forward on the path to graduation. They identify the 20 most at-risk freshman to not graduate; if they can keep the kids in through 9th grade, they tend to remain in school.

Mr. Ingram asked how the school managed to get 20 board members. Mr. McHenry credits support from local higher-education institutions and private individuals who are very involved. The school spends \$850,000 per year on busing students and he thanks for the board for all their hard work and that work has resulted in their considering expanding their school. The local institutions assist the staff with professional development. The school works on creating partnerships that don't focus solely on money, but also other supports.

Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Mr. Steinbrecher, for regular annual academic monitoring with the expectation that local score card numbers will improve, particularly in elementary and junior academy math and reading, and if that does not occur, then probation will be considered. There were no objections.

5. [170707](#) Communication relating to the 2017/19 activities of Escuela Verde.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Ms. Janice Erath, Children's Research Center, said this is the 6th year of operation and the school is located at 36th and Pierce, serving 8-12th grade. Next year they will be serving 9th-12th year. There are 107 students last year. Seventy five point seven percent are Latino and 63.6% are bilingual. The retention rate was 83.8%. The school got high percentages as being excellent or good from parents, teachers and board members. The school also has the issue of early high school students earning enough credits and improving the school staff's development activities. They met all of their contract requirements and the score card dropped to 67.4% from 69% last year. CRC recommends regular annual monitoring and reporting with the expectation that reading and math scores will improve. The other CRC recommendation is to place the school on probation now.

Cynthia Gonzalez -advisor

Zana Balbeche - advisor

Walter Sams - advisor

Joe Sozcor - advisor

Dominque - student (senior) - wants to become a doctor; it's her second year in the United States from Guatemala

Bethany Venice - advisor

Ms. Pointer-Mace said that it is difficult for this school that teaches so differently from the typical school and that its test result may not measure the true students' abilities. She would like to know how the school is going to follow its teaching methods while also improving its test scores. Ms. Venice said the school has begun online learning and walking the students through the units and tutorials to encourage students to use these more. Ms. Pointer-Mace said that all projects lead to more math and reading fluency and EV needs to reinforce that more. Ms. Mallory questioned what the framework that students need to follow and demonstrate that they know this. Do the projects lead to higher-level learning? Mr. Sams said that learning targets are chosen for their projects from standard tests and Common Core. The feedback from advisors also has those targets in mind and asking students how they are achieving those. Math is an issue and the school is pondering providing direct math and students are enrolled in daily math class. Mr. Burgos questioned how the school follows up on its students to see how they are doing in higher education institutions? Ms. Vernice said that the school does try to follow up with their alumni. They have at least 4 former students at UW-M. Last year, sixteen students registered to attend a 2-year or 4-year institution and the school does want to track if the students stay in higher education. The school trains incoming staff on its school software (Project Boundary) and they use it solely for credit and target tracking. The role of the advisor is to make sure the rigor is there and the objectives were met. Other students make assist or learn from other students. Mr. Ingram would like the school to create a scenario that describes the life of the students and how these projects work. CSRC members encouraged this school to bring a team to the Steering and Rules Committee meeting if possible. This school offers unique education opportunities and makes its students feel as if they belong in higher education institutions. EV is a vegetarian school. Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Mr. Burgos, to recommend regular annual monitoring with the expectation that reading and math achievement on both local and standardized measures will improve over the next school year or the school may be placed on probation for the next school year. There were no objections.

Meeting adjourned: 8:24 P.M.

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>.