



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, October 25, 2017

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room 301-B

1. Roll call.

Meeting convened: 5:55 P.M.

Member excused: Ms. Pointer-Mace

2. Review and approval of the minutes of the October 19th meeting.

Ms. Mallory moved, seconded by Mr. Steinbrecher, 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 6th year of operation and serves 9th through 12th grade and there are 259 students enrolled. 99.2 % of students are African American and 99.3% are economically disadvantaged with 18.5% have special education status. The school met all of the contract obligations and CSRC expectations and this year's score card score is 71.9% and they are above the 70% expectation. They show the most significant increase in 10th graders progressing from 9th grade in the Aspire test as well as as in the school's graduation rate, as calculated by the WI Dept. of Public Instruction; they have a graduation rate of 96%. CRC recommends annual monitoring and recommends the school reduce student behavior issues and expand the Summit model to the 10th grade in addition to the current 9th grade, as well as work on adding staff to support students in reading and math. The Summit model that the school has now adopted has resulted in students self-leading themselves more.

Judith Parker - Principal

Andrew Kerick - Dean of Instruction

Ms. Parker said that last year all students except one graduated (whom the school is working with and who has an IEP and has until age 21 to graduate). Ms. Parker said the school is known for working with students so they can succeed. Ms. Mallory asked about the gender breakdown of the suspended students, which is generally 50/50, but at times more girls are suspended. The school offers 3 girl-mentoring programs and 2 male-mentoring programs, as well as restorative justice circles. The

school also checks in one-on-one with students who are referred to the dean's office and has also instituted earlier contact with the parents. Graduation plans are shared with parents, per Samantha Mews, Director of Counseling, it gets mailed home for 9th-11th grade and in 12th grade a parent's signature is required. There might also be phone conversations with the parents. They also offer financial aid nights and track those who submit and those who do not. Ms. Mews also provides former students with financial aid applications throughout their academic careers.

Ms. Ereth said that the introduction of Summit increased parental involvement and student attendance. Ms. Parker said there was a noticeable improvement of attendance in the 9th grade and students were also more enthusiastic and the parents are still very much involved.

As a result of Common Core, students are writing much more and it's being integrated across the curriculum. The school doesn't want to give the students test questions as additional homework, but are trying to work it in as part of a "What do I need" time as well as test-taking skills. One hundred percent of the 44 students in the 12th grade were accepted into college, although the ACT test scores were very low. Ms. Parker said what they learn at MCA is a work ethic and students are driven to take advanced classes and the teachers are talented at bringing equity to people who have not have equitable access. Of the 44 12th graders, 67% are enrolled in college. For MCA graduates, 83.6% are enrolled in post-secondary education state-wide. 16% of their students have completed college and many former students are working to get back into school because it is financially difficult. The school has a part-time alumni coordinator, who is also a teacher at the school, but they also try to track people through Facebook and other social media.

Both College Possible and Pearls for Teen Girls support MCA students in college.

Ms. Mallory moved, seconded by Ms. Liston, for continued annual reporting as recommended by CRC. 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 said this is the 9th year of operation and is at 2000 W. Kilbourn and there was a small change in that there is now a president and CEO and principals for each academy. The students are K4-12 and had 970 students at the end of the last year with the most students in the elementary grades. Their population is 99.9% African American and 11% in special education. The academy met all contract obligations in all the academies and the score card for the high school was 73.5% and for the elementary school was 68.6% and the overall score was 69.5% and was 70.5% for the prior school year. The elementary score card dropped due to the Forward exam. CRC is recommending continuing regular, annual monitoring and a renewal of their contract for 5 years. The elementary school increased in all of their local measures and a small increase in the percent of their students that were proficient or advanced in the Forward Read measure. There are separate recommendations for each academy presented by CRC, which are detailed in the report for the school.

Anthony McHenry- Chief Executive Officer

Chris Schwab - Chief Academic Officer

Michael Bodwen - Elementary Principal

Jenny Trojan - Principal of the Junior Academy

Tom Shamel - High School Principal and Acting Principal for the school

Mr. McHenry does see improvement across all measures for its students for those measures it has multiple years of data for comparison.

Ms. Mallory questioned gender breakdowns for suspensions - for the elementary

academy, it's roughly 56% male and 44% female. The school is working on reducing violence in the school and also not just suspending for the sake of suspending. A list of expectations was given to both students and parents and they also have parent meetings with suspended students. Plans were set up with the families when physical violence was involved. The school has increased support to its students who react with violence and they partner with organizations to do this. Mr. Bodwen said they are getting more data on students and working on being more pro-active. Mr. Burgos asked if they monitor students who are in college. The school just recently started an alumni network, similar to Milwaukee Collegiate Academy and are beginning to work on supporting its students as they move through college. Mr. Schwab said that there are more administrative positions created to support the students (his role is only in its 2nd year). Mr. Bodwen said the elementary teacher retention rate was 95.9% and that is something they are working to maintain. New teachers get two days of orientation and support and are also paired with a mentor teacher. Training is also provided three times a year for two days to provide support and prep assistance. There are also teams of teachers and the school made sure new teachers were with the most veteran teachers with that grade level.

Graduation plans are mailed to parents and phone discussions and meetings also occur with parents. 100% of seniors graduated last year, 3 students brought the rate down to 88% as one student took 5 years as he was special education and there were 2 students that transferred to other schools, they did not just leave as DPI believes. They are trying to increase the number of high school students in the higher grades, primarily through a credit program offered in the summer so students can obtain the higher number of credits they need to graduate. The higher-level class sizes are beginning to grow. They are also offering on-line courses so students can earn the higher number of credits needed, particularly in math and science, than are required by other schools.

Ms. Liston recommended changing the chart colors as it appears to be misleading with having the red numbers being good, rather than bad, numbers. Mr. Schwab said there are about 8 students that scored in the low 20s in the science arena on the ACT test and he is proud of that. The students' individual action plans are aimed at how they do in the ACT tests and specific days are ACT-test preparation days.

Mr. Ingram said students seem to meet their target goals in elementary school, but then begin dropping in high school and that can be contributed to the disruption in high school leadership, per the school and Ms. Ereth. The high school now has 2 administrators, which Mr. Schwab feels is really helpful. The school also got approximately 30 new 9th grade students and the 9th grade team meets weekly. Some students do leave the school as it does not have a strong athletic program, but the school notes that it is small, but competitive and more sports are being added, including track and volleyball.

They are also creating partnerships to create more after-school clubs, such as choir, film, etc. They have student retention plans as well as listening to the requests of the students of which sports/clubs they would like to have. The school has been working harder on specific students that aren't doing well and has also toured schools that are doing well. They are also working on getting teachers teaching in areas where they have their strengths.

Ms. Liston moved, seconded by Mr. Burgos, to continue annual monitoring and also grant a new 5-year contract. There were no objections.

5. [170707](#)

Communication relating to the 2017/19 activities of Escuela Verde.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Ms. Janice Ereth said the school is in its 5th year and is located at 36th and Pierce

and it has 6 advisors who serve as the school's leadership team. The school has 106 students in 7th through 12th grade, with only 10% of those students being in middle school. The majority of the students are Latino and 56.6% are bilingual and 17.9% are special education students. The school met all of the contract requirements. The school card was only for the high school as there weren't enough students in the middle school to calculate. The score card was 67.6% and small gains were made in reading and math. CRC recommends regular annual monitoring and that the school focus its improvement on reading and writing. They need to increase the rigor and content of their projects and also get more support staff to assist their lower-achieving students. Their contract was renewed last year.

Bethany Venice - Advisor

Joe Sozcor - Advisor

Gene Caraman - senior

Ms. Mallory said the school needs to have enough middle school students so data can be obtained; is there a decision made if they will retain middle school? This year the school didn't enroll any 7th graders and it is focusing on its 9th through 12th graders.

Ms. Mallory said they need to get enough students that data can be obtained on and she would encourage the school to focus on high school students.

Ms. Venice said the special education services are at capacity this year, but she doesn't feel it is pulling from other services. They also hired additional support staff for English language learners. When students transfer out, it's usually because they didn't care for the educational model the school uses. The school does not do GPAs and gives out 1/4 credits. The school helps students transition to college as they do a senior thesis project as it gives them experience in managing their peers and presenting to advisors. The school works on career and college ready, rather than solely college ready, and works with businesses to prepare students for careers. The school uses a software program that works with Common Core and works with students to hit specific targets in specific areas. Of the two students that entered the workforce, one is going to MATC and the other one is working his way up in the workforce and has plans to enter MATC as well. The proficient students can access a lot of things themselves and so more support is provided to students who need it. They did purchase an online software program which results in skill-building in subject areas as they have access to the entire web and may not be selecting the best resources or citing them as needed. They have hired significantly more teachers and paraprofessionals and a lot of their budget is going to staff. Independent reading has now moved to focused reading groups as independent reading wasn't working as well as hoped.

Mr. Burgoes moved, seconded by Ms. Liston, for continued annual monitoring. There were no objections.

Meeting adjourned: 7:55 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>.