



# 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, Desiree Pointer-Mace,  
Glenn Steinbrecher, and Raynetta Hill**

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**Gayle Peay, 288-1540**

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Thursday, February 6, 2020

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room 303

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**Amended 2/3/20 - CRC will also be making recommendations on Monitoring Practices.**

**1. Roll Call.**

*Meeting convened: 5:34 P.M.*

*Members present: Kevin Ingram, Joyce Mallory, Glenn Steinbrecher, Desiree Pointer Mace, Raynetta Hill and Naryan David Leazer*

*Member excused: Ruben Burgos*

*Also present: Gayle Peay - staff; Janice Erlith and Susan Gramling - Children's Research Center*

**2. Review and approval of the minutes of the December 4th meeting.**

*Ms. Mallory moved, seconded by Mr. Steinbrecher, for approval of the minutes. There were no objections.*

**3. [190981](#)**

Communication relating to administrative matters of the Charter School Review Committee for the 2019-2021 school years.

**Sponsors:** THE CHAIR

*Susan Gramling and Janice Ereth present for Children's Research Center (CRC). Ms. Gramling wanted to first discuss the policies document first - only the highlighted items are the proposed changes. Mr. Leazer asked how this body can evaluate if there are fewer than 10 students, which many of the cohorts are; Ms. Pointer-Mace said most entire classes have more than 10 students. Ms. Ereth thought the smaller cohorts tend to be the high-achievers, rather than the low-achievers, so this body is getting that data. The DPI policy is to not report on cells smaller than 25 students, but that would mask too much data that would be important for CSRC to have. Ms. Ereth has provided data to schools on an individual basis, but not in a public report for confidentiality reasons.*

*On page 2, on Item D, CRC wants to calculate the teacher return rate based on those teachers eligible to return (such as if they moved out of state or were asked not to return). The Committee supported amending the text to "more than 25 miles from a Milwaukee County border" rather than "out of state".*

*Ms. Gramling said the new text also creates standards for the Forward exam that the*

*students/school needs to attain/maintain for both English and math. Ms. Pointer-Mace noted that "proficiency" is a continuum and they might be classified as proficient or advanced based upon the test results at that time.*

*Ms. Ereth suggested eliminating the requirement that all new students in high school be assessed within 60 days for proficiency in math and English. Ms. Pointer-Mace agreed with eliminating this requirement as there are other tests that test for these proficiencies. Mr. Leazer might increase the requirement to 90 days, but he would like to retain this requirement to ensure that students are assessed upon entry to a high school. Ms. Ereth said all students are tested as part of their local measures assessments; this becomes merely a requirement that isn't helpful. Mr. Leazer did agree to strike this and there seemed to be a consensus of members to strike it.*

*Ms. Ereth said that as schools use project-based learning, they don't necessarily have courses, so text was added to cite a state statute for schools similar to Central City Cyberschool so this text can permit them to be as innovative as they wish to be. The committee approved that change.*

*On page 5, the fourth bullet, a current requirement to have all 11th graders take the ACT and then requires that students need to re-take it. CRC would like to have the re-taking of the ACT be voluntary if a student did well. The text is amended to read, "All students are encouraged to re-take the ACT in 12th grade."*

*Ms. Ereth said the first bullet under #2 just created one cohort, rather than two cohorts, and at least 50% of the students will increase their scores by one point. Ms. Ereth would like to delete text for measuring progress between 10th and 11th grades due to a change in testing methods. The Committee chose to add "at this time", but leave the text in there. The same text will be added for 11th to 12th grade.*

*Ms. Mallory moved for approval of the recommendations with the recommended modifications, seconded by Ms. Pointer-Mace. There were no objections.*

*For the pilot score card, Ms. Gramling said all of the changes are to reduce the weight of point-in-time assessment and give more weight to improvement. Ms. Gramling said that the number of possible points that can be earned in math was increased from 10 to 12.5. These points will be coming from reducing the number of points earned by taking the Forward test from 5 to 2.5 points. Five points for the high schools will be moved for attaining benchmarks or progressed by at least one point. 2.5 points will also be removed from point-in-time testing from both 9th to 10th grade testing, as well as from 11th to 12th grade, which follows the same standard of rewarding progress rather than point-in-time testing. The hope is to provide kids with enough credits to move from 9th to 10th grade, where they tend to drop out, and get them to 11th grade, where they tend to stay in school once they attain that grade. There were no objections; Mr. Steinbrecher liked the changes.*

*Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Mr. Steinbrecher, to accept the proposed changes. There were no objections.*

*Carl Cera and Jose Gupta present on the ML Tharp draft. Mr. Gupta is now the owner; Mr. Cera has resigned from ML Tharp. The business reviews the monthly reports submitted by the schools. They rely a lot on the auditors' reports for each school and will follow up as needed. Mr. Steinbrecher thanked them for the comprehensiveness of their reports. There is only one school that Mr. Cera is concerned about; he doesn't worry about a small loss for one year, unless those losses turn into a trend. Most of*

*the schools don't generate a lot of money through fundraising and they don't have dedicated staff to do fundraising; Central City Cyberschool will start strong fundraising. Currently internal controls are in place to minimize potential fraud at all the schools, despite their small size.*

*Downtown Montessori - has sound financial results and they are the most solid financially of the schools. They have about a quarter-million in surplus every year and have over \$1 million in cash. They have a large surplus. Their expenses have increased by 4% each year.*

*Central City Cyberschool - They generally have strong financial results, except a little in 2017/2018. Since 2109, their revenues have been increasing each year as they add grades. Their net asset balance (assets minus liabilities are \$2.8 million). The one issue the school had this year is their audit was submitted late and they requested an extension, but they submitted past the extension. Their score was decreased by 2 points due to that. The school's DPI grant is over 5 years. Jessica Schmansky said the failure to meet the deadline was probably her error.*

*Darryl Lynn Hines Academy - there was a small deficit this year (approximately \$18,000), but it's in a solid financial position. They have \$1.3 million in cash, so a solid cash position. A very good audit and financial report.*

*Milwaukee Academy of Science - this school is financially sound, with 2019 being a break-even year for them; Mr. Cera is not concerned as the school has a solid surplus of \$2.5 million. Their audit report was submitted late after their extension date due to some of their financial accounting people leaving after the school year. There was an 8.6% increase in expenses from 2018 to 2019 due to repairs and maintenance.*

*Howard Fuller - Up until a couple of years ago, they were in a rough financial position, but they have done significant fundraising over the past couple of years (half a million dollars last year and the prior year \$1 million), so they are now in very good shape financially. Mr. Cera thinks they can maintain that pace of fundraising. There was one finding in the audit that a special education teacher that did not have a valid license, which the school did address. Mr. Steinbrecher had a question about the fundraising total (which Mr. Cera had just rounded).*

*Milwaukee Math and Science Academy - Mr. Cera will be going to this school in the next month and the mid-year review for this school will be scheduled after that. They have had a deficit for the past 3 of the 4 years and last year's deficit was 8% of their budget; they will be in serious financial trouble in 3-4 years if they continue this trend. Their assets to liability ratio keeps decreasing; they are still okay, but the fact that this is a trend is troubling. The school is also reducing its student enrollment, which will decrease its revenue. Mr. Cera would like to get a projection for the next 2-3 years. The Committee suggested decreasing their financial score card even more based upon their assets to their debt ratio, from a 44 to a 40. Ms. Mallory would like this body to be informed prior to any problems and ask for financial projections, for three years, when they come before this body for its mid-year report. Concept Schools receive 10% per pupil received from the state. Mr. Steinbrecher would like to see the actual amount Concept Schools received last year and Ms. Mallory would like to see the total amount they received since the school began.*

*Escuela Verde - is very sound financially and has always had a solid surplus every year; this year's surplus is a little lower, but Mr. Cera isn't concerned. They are getting*

*their audits and monthly financial reports in on time. Mr. Steinbrecher found a minor item on page 25 that will be struck and on page 26, the notes payable is listed twice, so Mr. Cera will strike one.*

*Ms. Mallory moved, seconded by Ms. Pointer-Mace, to accept the reports with the proposed changes. There were no objections.*

*Meeting adjourned: 7: 24 P.M.  
Linda M. Elmer  
Staff Assistant*