



# 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, Samuel L. Coleman, Desiree Pointer-Mace,  
Raynetta Hill and Aycha Sawa*

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**Gayle Peay, 288-1540**

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Tuesday, October 13, 2020

5:00 PM

City Hall, Room 301-B

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**This is a virtual meeting. Those wishing to view the proceedings are able to do so via the City Channel - Channel 25 on Spectrum Cable - or on the Internet at <http://city.milwaukee.gov/citychannel>.**

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**To participate via phone: (408) 650-3123**

**Access Code: 655-621-405**

**1. Roll call.**

*Meeting convened: 5:02 P.M.*

*Member excused: Naryan David Leazer*

**2. Review and approval of the minutes of the October 6th meeting.**

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

**3. [190974](#)**

Communication relating to the 2019-21 activities of Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy.

**Sponsors:** THE CHAIR

*Ms. Janice Ereth, Children's Research Center (CRC), said the 2020 school year ended on March 13, 2020 when the students last attended in person. The school is located at 29th and Capitol and serves 9th through 12th grades. In March, the school had 289 students and 89.8% were there for the entire school year, which is the school's retention rate. Students had a return rate of 79.8%, 99% of the students are African American, 75.5% are eligible for free or reduced lunch and 19.4% are special needs. They met all but one contract provision - 2 teachers were not licensed - both had applied earlier in the year, but not yet approved by March. The response rate of 54.7% was of parents who completed the survey and 97% of them would recommend the school to other parents. The school has 14 board members and Ms. Ereth was able to interview 11 by phone and all of them rated the school as "excellent" or "good". The*

major recommendation was for more funding to meet the students' needs and to improve the school facility. The CRC recommendations for improvement included having staff work collaboratively and hire a reading literacy coach to improve students' reading skills; improve math competencies and provide additional support to special education students to improve their math and reading skills. The school's goal is to have ALL students go to college and finish college. Attendance and retention rates both increased this year, while the return rate decreased. On the score card, schools could only earn a maximum of 62.5% points and, of those they could attain, the school attained 82.5%. Students were offered approximately \$3.8 million in scholarships. CRC recommends continuing annual monitoring.

Judith Parker - Principal

Philip Smith - Dean of Teaching and Learning

Samantha Mewes - Director of Counseling and Alumni Engagement

William Attewell - Communications and Technology

Rashida Evans - Board member

Ms. Parker said a reading coach has been hired and she has been working with teachers on how to teach reading and vocabulary. The math team spent the summer improving the curriculum and they are paying special attention to the special education students to make sure that they are growing. The school is 100% virtual right now. They are identifying students who need more support and they have a team created to provide this support to both the students and their families. The deans meet each week and prioritize teacher coaching and supporting teachers. Both Ms. Parker and Ms. Mewes are each teaching a course as a budget-saving measure. 100% of students and parents received orientation and every adult in the school serves as a mentor to a minimum of 10 students. The mentoring is done daily and mentors helped the students and parents get onboarded and communication is done through a variety of means. They had a parent-teacher conference, which was recorded and distributed to all parents. There will be more than there were in the past as they feel communication is the key during the pandemic. They are sending out as many avenues of communication as they can. Their 3rd Friday count was 316 students. They do have a special plan for students who can't participate live during classes - the work must be done within 48 hours.

Mr. Smith said with all staff being mentors, the school has a monthly rotation of learning with a major focus on data. Ms. Parker noted that, for many families, the older students are assisting younger siblings on getting online. Office hours are offered every afternoon.

Mr. Attewell said there are 10 students who assist with technology issues; most of the technology issues are resolved within 24 hours. All students have new computers and a hot spot.

Ms. Parker said they work on having students meeting socially and they also provide positive feedback to keep students motivated. The school is concerned that its students might be exploited as essential workers, as well as they are concerned about the health and safety of students, families, alumni and former students who had to return from a college campus. They are going to be administering academic tests at home so they know where their students are academically. They are concerned about disrupting education if they do a hybrid model of virtual and in-person learning.

Ms. Evans said they are shooting for moving into a new space in 2022.

Ms. Mallory commended schools for mentoring students and asked about the staff/teachers' self-care.

Ms. Pointer-Mace commended the school for structuring its school day to meet students' schedules.

Ms. Hill commended the student's skill in a competition in January and the school's thoughtfulness in working around screen fatigue.

*Mr. Ingram liked the mentoring done by the school. He was concerned that the school is losing 50% of its students from 9th to 10th grade. Ms. Mewes said most students leave because they feel they are not connected, so they are working on increasing those connections.*

*Brean Cumberton - MPS teacher, was put in a voucher school in 1990/1991 and wasn't taught to read until she was 26.*

*Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Mr. Burgos, to accept the CRC recommendation to continue annual monitoring. There were no objections.*

4. [190976](#)

Communication relating to the 2019-21 activities of Milwaukee Academy of Science.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Ms. Janice Ereth said this is the 12th year of operation at 12th and Kilbourn and the school serves K4-12th grades. In March, 2020 they had 1,037 students with 57% in elementary levels, 21% in the junior academy and 21% in high school. All students were eligible for free or reduced lunch and their annual retention rate was 92.2% and the return rate was 86.9%. The school met all but one of its contract requirements and that was that 5 teachers were not licensed by the end of the year. 59.3% completed a parent survey, which was online and 94.9% would recommend the school to other parents and 90% rated the school as "excellent" or "good". There are 17 board members, 13 of which were interviewed by phone and they all rated the school as "excellent" or "good". Their primary recommendation was to increase the per-pupil funding per student (\$8,00 per student versus \$12,000 per student that MPS gets), support their teachers more and improve the school facility. There were recommendations for the elementary school, junior academy and high school contained in the CRC report. Their retention rate went from 89% to 92% and the return rate also increased and there was a slight improvement in the attendance rate. Forty students graduated and they were offered \$3 million in scholarships. For the elementary score card, only 5 items can be measured and of those 5, the elementary school scored 92.1% (includes both elementary and junior academy) and the high school scored 89.3%. CRC recommends regular annual academic monitoring and reporting.*

*Anthony McHenry - CEO*

*Chris Schwab - Chief Academic Officer*

*Dr. John Raymond - board member*

*Michael Beaudoin - Principal of the elementary academy*

*Tom Shalmo - Principal of the high school academy*

*Chareese Morris - Director of Special Education*

*Mr. Schwab said that all CRC recommendations are moving forward and they are working on creating a virtual program that mirrors an in-person program. All of the academies are focusing on small groups of students and are using this pandemic to provide better services. They have reduced the student-teacher ratio and are also focusing on professional development, including of paraprofessionals who are leading small groups, particularly with reading. They hope to assist their paraprofessionals through the licensing process. They are particularly focusing on supplying support to their 8th graders as they transition to high school. A week ago they finished collecting data on their students' assessments and they are focusing more on small groups and working on positive enforcement. They meet monthly to analyze the data they collect on their students and they plan interventions early and often as needed.*

*Mr. McHenry said 1,155 students (91%) attended the drive-thru orientation and there was also a virtual open house to meet teachers, learn how to use their devices and classroom conduct rules. The parent-teacher conference will be this week and will be*

virtual; parents sign up for a time that is convenient for them. For those parents who don't participate, teachers reach out to those parents. Their third Friday count was 1,270, which is 20 more than they anticipated or budgeted for and this is the fifth consecutive year they have had record enrollment. Their return rate is over 92%. Attendance is calculated differently based upon the ages of the students (elementary students versus high school students). Mr. Schwab said the new teacher training was shortened and then a combined new/returning teacher training was created since the virtual teaching was new to all. They are requiring that all teachers be Google and Zoom certified. Professional development continues and they still do just-in-time training and the academies all have professional development embedded in everyone's jobs with meetings and coaching sessions. They have started to institute local measures for their students, except for the K4 and K5 students as their technology isn't compatible; they will find another tool to take local measures for those students. The school does intend to administer all standardized tests and they intend to set the same goals for their students as they would for in-person education.

Of the 5 unlicensed teachers, 2 of them are now licensed, one has a pending application and the other 2 need to take additional testing and those were sites were temporarily closed to COVID.

Mr. Schwab said students have access to counseling services and family members now also have access as well, which is new this year. Last year a Parent Engagement Coordinator was hired and she is working with homeless families who have children at the school. 95% of their students live below the poverty level and 45% of them had parents who have lost their jobs. The school offers meal delivery and also day programming at the Boys and Girls Club.

Providing IT support has been a massive undertaking and IT staff is provided for each academy and an additional person was hired. They have given out 1,120 Chrome books and 200 hot spots.

They are really pleased with how they support the families and working on providing an equitable education for their students. They have a waiting list at 10 different grades and they need to grow their middle and high school to be able to educate all their elementary students. They plan to be able to add services to 250 more students over the next 5 years.

Ms. Pointer-Mace said about 5 years ago there were problems with detention rates and she commends the school on how the school has really turned those numbers around.

Mr. Ingram encouraged them to have teachers apply early for licensure and make sure their applications are complete and he asked if older students mentor younger students.

Mr. McHenry said their 9th and 10th grade classes are the largest they have been because of the support they have provided those students. Mr. Schalmo said they have had older students TA in the younger grades and since it was hard for many students to stay after school, they made clubs part of the school day and one of those clubs was a buddy program. High school students also volunteer, such as at their drive-thru harvest fest this weekend. The school noted it has started a paraprofessional-to-teacher pipeline after Mr. Ingram encouraged them to look into the "para" program for its former students who are 18 and would like to continue to mentor, then move them eventually to becoming teachers.

Ms. Hill moved, seconded by Ms. Pointer-Mace, to continue regular academic monitoring and reporting. There were no objections.

5. [190975](#)

Communication relating to the 2019-21 activities of Escuela Verde.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Ms. Janice Erath said this is the 8th year as a city charter and is located at 36th and

*Pierce. The school serves 9th through 12th grades with 111 students enrolled in March 2020. 75.7% are Latinx and 11.7% are white and 8% are African American. 88.2% are eligible for free or reduced lunch, 26.1% are special education and 45% are bilingual. The school has an 87.3% retention rate and a return rate of 82.1%. The school met all of its contract requirements and 73.3% of the parents responded to the survey, which was the highest of all the schools. 98.6% of parents would recommend the school and the same percent rated the school as "excellent" or "good". Nine of the 16 board members were interviewed and they rated the schools as "excellent" or "good" and the number one recommendation was to increase financial resources and to get more administrative support for the school. The school increased in its retention rate, but decreased in student return rate and had a slight drop in attendance. It has 18 graduates who were offered \$346,000 in scholarship money and the score card was 87% for those items that could be calculated. CRC recommended that the school continue regular annual academic monitoring and reporting, and the school be awarded an early extension of its 5-year contract so the school can obtain a loan for a new building.*

*Joey Zocher - Executive Director for Transcenter for Youth*

*Cynthia Gonzalez - advisor to advisors*

*Vicki Cheryl - Special Education Advisor*

*Larissa Bogle-Boesiger - Advisor*

*Nicki -*

*Ms. Zocher said they intend to pay off the building in 5 years. Ms. Bogle-Boesiger said they have done a great job engaging and keeping in contact with students and every student has a computer and hot spot, if needed. They are working on social and emotional support for their students.*

*Ms. Gonzalez said they are requiring all students to take writing courses and they have incorporated a writing component in all the classes and an evaluation process and they had the first staff turnover for the first time in 9 years. They have hired 5 advisors who fit in with their vision and then COVID hit, which actually assisted in uniting the team.*

*Ms. Gonzalez held a two-month onboarding in June heavily focused on EV culture and there are weekly meetings with new staff. They hold weekly meetings to support the mental health of their advisors. Students also reviewed their advisors. Nicki said they have been collecting data on their students, which will be reviewed this week as the students have no classes during fall break. They have found so far that students who were in attendance weren't completing as much school work as they thought they were and they are going to dig down into that data. During the parent/teacher conference parents were saying that they were getting too much communication. They do provide hot lunches Monday through Friday and work on supporting their students. Advisors contact their students through a variety of means and focus on positive enforcement and maintain contact with the parents so they are aware of what is going on. The students now seem to understand how technology works and the school e-mails out a weekly newsletter in English and Spanish. 95% of parent/teacher conferences have been completed and those that weren't are being rescheduled for next week. The third Friday count was 119 and there is a waiting list. If the school loses contact with a student then a paraprofessional contacts the family. They have been working on professional development since June and they continue to attend conferences and also present. Nicki said many of their students feel challenges, not solely medical challenges. The school is concerned about what the data that they are collecting is actually telling them and wonder how the students will do in spring, if it is in person, with their taking the ACT. They do mental-health check-ins and also 30 minutes of games and did their spirit week virtually this year. They also do Google Classroom that offers mental health support for both students and families. The students know the school cares deeply about them, from the feedback the students have given.*

*Ms. Pointer-Mace asked if the student drive has decreased during this time. Ms. Bogle-Boesiger said that they will offer a virtual program on project creation as well as providing more structured learning.*

*Mr. Ingram asked how they have managed to integrate the traditional DPI standards with their educational module. Ms. Zocher said the school is also locating free, online resources that students can access and then use in a meaningful project that they want to work on. They do know that some of their students aren't working as hard as they should be and the school staff feels bad that internships aren't really available. Ms. Pointer-Mace encouraged staff to encourage students to volunteer.*

*EV staff has a "Fun Friday" staff meeting and use that as a way to get to know each other. They also have a Sunshine Committee and celebrate advisors.*

*Eric Arriola - student - 9th grader*

*Some of the six students who didn't go on to college did appear for Spirit Week who had entered the work force. Mr. Ingram encouraged this school to encourage former students to become "paras" as well.*

*Ms. Pointer-Mace moved, seconded by Ms. Hill, to continue regular annual academic monitoring and reporting and the school be awarded an early extension for its 5-year contract. There were no objections.*

*Meeting adjourned: 7:55 P.M.*

*Linda M. Elmer*

*Staff Assistant*