



# 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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**Wednesday, November 17, 2021**

**5:00 PM**

**Virtual**

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#### **1. Roll call.**

*Meeting convened: 5:18 P.M.*

*Members present: Kevin Ingram, Joyce Mallory, Ruben Burgos and Sam Coleman*

*Members excused: Desiree Pointer-Mace, Raynetta Hill and Aycha Sawa*

#### **2. Review and approval of the minutes of the September 22nd meeting.**

*Mr. Burgos moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, for approval of the minutes. There were no objections.*

*This is Ms. Gramling's last meeting as she is retiring.*

#### **3. [210570](#) Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Central City Cyberschool.**

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Ms. Susan Gramling said this school serves K4-11th grade, is in the Parklawn housing development and this is its 27th year of operation. At the end of last year, there were 415 students, with the bulk being elementary students and 98.8% are African American. The school met or substantially met all of its contracted requirements; one instructional staff did not hold a current license or permit. The score card results should be not compared to previous years as last year was primarily virtual. For elementary, 59.9% and high school was 53.8% of the possible points. In summary, Evident Change is recommending annual monitoring.*

*Jessica Whitaker -Executive Director - they did have a counselor in place to assist students and family members once education became in-person again and they also developed a wellness team, which did home visits and also supported teachers in contacting parents and acting as an additional liaison. About 70% of students were in-person and 30% participated virtually; they also developed their teachers more last year as they had more time with their staff so that was a benefit. They did not offer summer school, but added school days and extended the school term.*

*Leon Williams - supporting social learning and behavior support was very important. Some of their students returned in April and the rest in fall. They meet weekly to talk about how to best support their students and families.*

4. [210567](#)

Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Ms. Janice Erath said this school serves 9-12th grade students and all students were eligible for the free or reduced lunch. 90.2% of the students re-enrolled to the following school year and they had 56 graduates last year, generating \$4 million in scholarship offers. The school met or significantly met all of its contract requirements, except two instructional staff were not licensed or certified - one was a PE teacher and one was a school counselor. They received 75.4% of the 85 possible points on the score card. Last year 100% of the teachers stayed the entire school year last year. The overall recommendation is for annual monitoring and reporting for the next school year with special attention being given to complete all the standardized tests and local assessments for this upcoming year.*

*Judith Parker - Principal - the school did weekly updates for parents to tell them what was going on and they also had both in-person and virtual teaching simultaneously. They have a mentoring system and made every member of their staff into a mentor with 10 students assigned to each staff member. They held virtual IEP meetings and staff got training in de-escalation and inclusion as well as other services.*

*Kasey Herd - Director of School Culture - each mentor checked in daily with the students and weekly with the parents. They also had weekly morning meetings with every grade level, which kept the students together, even while meeting virtually. Some students are still attending virtually. They also have one counselor at each grade level. They did have summer school and focused on the skills that students were lacking. They also have strong after-school programs in place as well as during the lunch hour; with gender-based support as well.*

*Philip Smith - Assistant Principal - they offered intensive, professional development to teachers and provided over 300 hours of professional development tailored to the needs of virtual instruction. They also provided time for teachers to plan and track attendance and achievement. They also provided weekly coaching to teachers, based upon the challenges they were facing due to virtual teaching. They maintained daily and weekly rituals to maintain the social connections, such as maintaining morning circle*

*and shout-out circle, where staff supports each other. The students were impacted by the pandemic, but it also added on to the historical inequity they were already facing. They extended their classes by an additional 25 minutes to make sure students are at the level they should be at, particularly in regards to math and reading. Ms. Herd noted that the school still supports its alumni.*

5. [210571](#) Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Darrel Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence.

**Sponsors:** THE CHAIR

*Ms. Susan Gramling said this school offers K4-8th grade and is in its 19th year of operation with 214 students and 85% of the students are African American. 92.5% of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch and the school met all of its contract provisions. It scored 73.1%. The teacher return rate was 84.8%. The overall recommendation is that the CSRC continue annual monitoring as well as renewal of the school's 5-year contract renewal.*

*Lois Fletcher - their school focused on wellness, much as their colleagues did. They wanted to make sure staff, students and families were well. They wanted to ensure that everyone was staying connected and ensuring that everyone was doing okay. They did home visits for both the students and the teachers. They had a technology specialist to assist teachers and there was a lot of training and coaching involved with the technology. The parents also received training on technology on how they could both support and check on their children. They still continued their restorative practices to give their students a voice and an outlet. They also added more programs for self-expression, such as art and movement activities. They wanted to have a holistic approach that wasn't overwhelming. They know that they will have some second graders learning their ABCs, but they want to support the teachers in the children's learning and action plans, which will cover two years, rather than one year.*

6. [210572](#) Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Downtown Montessori Academy.

**Sponsors:** THE CHAIR

*Ms. Susan Gramling said this school has K3-8th grade and is in its 23rd year of operation as a city-chartered school and is operating in Bayview. It had 383 students with 67.8% being white, 1.45% Latinx and 10% African American being the largest racial groups. The school met or substantially met all contractual requirements; there was one literacy teacher that wasn't certified. It earned 73.7% on its score card with a student return rate of 91.8% from the preceding year. The teacher retention rate was 100% for the school year. The recommendation is to continue the annual monitoring. 17.7% of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch.*

*Virginia Flynn - they did things similar to what everyone else has done. One hard thing, with being a Montessori school, is that learning is hands-on and individual. Teachers made videos of their lessons, which parents could access at any time. They put social/emotional learning first last year and it is continuing this year. Teachers met with students weekly and gathered the kids together for a small-group class time. Montessori students are used to hands-on, so it was a difficult year. They had a restorative circle just for teachers this year to support them and had staff meet in small groups at each level. The goal still is to meet students individually to guide them in social and educational needs.*

*Amy Goodenough - Assistant - she had nothing else to add.*

7. [210568](#) Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Escuela Verde.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Ms. Janice Ereth said this is the school's 9th year and it is located on the near south side and serves 9th-12th graders. It has 118 students with 79.7% being Latinx, 10.2% white and 7.6% African American. Their student retention rate is 96.6% and return rate is 92.5%. 22% of their students have special education needs and 55.1% of their students are bilingual and 100% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. They met all of their contract requirements. The teacher retention rate was 100%, but only 44.4% of their teachers returned. A number of their teachers left due to life circumstances - pursuing education or moving and these exits were prepared for. The score card was 67.1% and they obtained 57 out of the possible 85 points. The recommendation is for regular, annual monitoring and reporting.*

*Nicki - they are a teacher-led, project-based school and are a year-round school. They provided all students with Chrome books and hot spots, if needed. Each advisor has 20 students and they connected with each students once a week on an individual basis. They did some fun things in order to connect with each other, such as an online cooking class. In the 4th quarter they did have some students return in-person, those needing the most support for any reason. They opened a cafe this year that serves the community and provides real-world job training and life skills. They hired a social worker this year and began working with a therapist, as well as have a mental-health team provided by the TransCenter for Youth. They are also working on an updated list of mental health services in the community. They have gone to museums, rock climbing and work on getting their students out and about as well as follow restorative justice practices. For staff, they have a daily check-in and also do many celebrations (birthday, end-of-quarter, etc.)*

8. [210569](#) Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Milwaukee Academy of Science.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Ms. Janice Ereth said this is the 13th year as a city charter and is located on the near west side and serves K4-12th grade. They had 1,206 students with 98.8% being African American and 100% are eligible for free or reduced lunch. They had 36 graduates last year we generated \$3 million in scholarship offers. Student return and retention rates were both high and the school met or significantly met all contract requirements, although one teacher wasn't licensed. The overall score card rate is 69.3 and recommendation is for annual monitoring, with particular emphasis on the elementary level as they are not performing as well as the high school.*

*Anthony McHenry - the school was virtual through April and they put considerable effort and resources for social and emotional support and supported students and families as much as possible. 100% of their seniors graduated and 100% were accepted into secondary education. They implemented a continuous improvement instructional framework, which is data driven. They did operate a summer school program and provided bussing, which they had never done before. They have an increasing homeless population and have additional staff to support those young people and also utilize three counseling services.*

*Chris Schwab - the priority of the school is to support those students who are struggling the most. They have changed some of their curriculum and software programs to identify students' individual needs. They are using the increase in federal funding to reduce the student to teacher ratio and are investing heavily in training for and supporting their leaders. It is hoped the increased training leads to supporting*

*individual students better. The lower scores at the elementary schools were primarily due to the virtual nature of learning as the education component translated less well virtually than in person and those students needed more parental support than older students. They are investing more in the training programs for their youngest scholars.*

9. [210573](#)

Communication relating to the 2021-23 activities of Milwaukee Math and Science Academy.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Ms. Susan Gramling said the school supports K4-8th grade and the school moved from E. Burleigh St. to a facility in Sherman Park (Sherman Blvd and Center St). This was the 10th year as a city-charter school and it served 196 students, with 98.5% being African American and 99.5% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The school met or substantially met all contractual requirements, except one teacher was not certified by DPI. The school earned 62.5 points and student retention and return rates were high. Teacher return rate was 94.1% and teacher retention rate was 100%. The overall recommendation is based upon the school being on probation for the past couple of years. The school did present its report in Feb 2021 and Evident Changes recommends continuing the probationary status with the hopes that standardized testing will be done this coming year. There is also the expectation that a mid-year report will be provided by the school in Feb. 2022.*

*Alper Akyurek - the school had to move as it was the last year on its lease. It was a challenging year and he is proud of his staff. They got the keys to the building in March and had students attending in-person in April. That was a huge accomplishment by their staff. Most of the students and parents chose to return in person. Students and staff are required to wear masks and they continue to follow the COVID-19 plan submitted to the Health Dept. They also test their students and staff weekly by a lab, as well as training some staff to be able to perform COVID-19 testing.*

*Crystal Bielmeier - Success For All is a program they are offering K4-8th grades to improve reading scores, including phonics for older students, if needed. Once students reach 1st grade, they are grouped by reading level, rather than by grade level so they get instruction in the strategies they need. That has been successful; she wishes they had more teachers to divide out students even more. The foundation skills with the younger students were an issue as they struggled virtually. Students are working as part of a team or with another student; no-one is working alone and there is no indication of which team member will be called upon. They also are working on social learning - how to get along, how to be in a classroom, which Success for All also focuses on. Each teacher is assigned to a committee to work on an issue (community culture, parent/family involvement, etc.*

*Mr. Ingram commended the schools on their teacher retention rates. Ms. Mallory also commended the schools' staff for all the work that was done on behalf of some of Milwaukee's most vulnerable young people.*

*Mr. Burgos moved to continue annual monitoring, seconded by Ms. Mallory, for annual monitoring of the first 6 schools on the agenda.*

*Ms. Mallory moved to recommended Darryl L Hines 5-year contract renewal, seconded by Mr. Burgos. There were no objections.*

*Ms. Mallory moved to Milwaukee Academy of Math and Science be extended for the next school year with the expectation that a mid-year report will be submitted in*

*February, seconded by Mr. Burgos. There were no objections.*

*Adjourned: 7:14 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>.*