



Making Waves Academy CEO Report

DECEMBER 2019

Mission Connection



The picture above is of our upper school students holding an All School Meeting (ASM) earlier this fall to help kick off the new school year on our phenomenal new and improved campus. The photo above also represents one of our core values, *Community*. The theme of community is something that will be important for us over the next 24 months as we ride the waves of a changing landscape. These changes will require us to both stabilize, protect, and support our existing staff and culture as well as be both dynamic and practical in our approach to addressing the existing and coming challenges.

Legislative, political, and cultural forces have contributed to the creation of an environment that is both “threatening” and sometimes publicly “hostile” to the work we do and the students and families we serve. Specifically, the passage of AB1505, will have a material effect on how MWA is able to fulfill its mission moving forward. Academic results will no longer be enough of a hedge to protect against potential threats to the community moving forward.

As we make adjustments to the new realities of the charter and public school landscape, we also have to begin to “right size” our resource allocation approach to better align with not only our resources but also the level of impact we want to have and in what areas. Our goal remains – ***college and career readiness for all students.***

Focus Areas for 2019-20 - Updates

1. A recommitment to “teaching and learning” – 1) a focus on math instruction, 2) successful launch of our “NEW” SPED program, and 3) black student achievement.
 - a. Math – Launched a “task force” to collect data and share analysis
 - b. SPED – New SPED program is up and running; 1-2 key staffing vacancies but a solid start thus far
 - c. Black/African American Student Achievement – is being tracked and MWA leaders are engaging with other Richmond charters to celebrate and discuss black student achievement

2. A commitment to stakeholder engagement and observation of practices throughout the year.
 - a. Board Member Listening Sessions – held in the US in the fall, plans for a winter one in the MS
 - b. Board President/CEO Open Sessions – Alicia and I have held two open sessions with parents
 - c. MWA CEO Open Session – I held an open session in November

The open sessions have revealed new and persistent pain points along with operational areas of challenge. Thus far, the cadence appears to be right and good information and insight is being gleaned.

3. Preparation for the WASC accreditation visit.
 - a. The initial DRAFT of the Self-Study report is nearly complete.
 - b. A meeting and on-site visit by our designated WASC Visiting Committee Chair occurred in Nov.
 - c. The full 3-day visit will occur in early March

A lot has occurred since the start of the new fiscal year, July 1st. Given these dynamic changes, my new #4 is now helping the organization strategically think through how to adapt to the new landscape while maintaining quality, impact, and culture.

Organization

The decision to not build the MWA Pittsburg school facility (September MWF Board Meeting) and the decision to “close” MWA Pittsburg (OCT MWA Board meeting) have been in response to the passage of AB 1505, the high cost of construction, and the shift in attitude towards charter schools. Given this shift, I felt we needed to begin the process of assessing and se-setting the expectations for resource allocation at MWA to acknowledge these new realities (please see memo shared with the MWA Board and MW Finance Committee). Retaining our talent, attracting new talent, and developing existing talent should continue to be a critical area of focus.

Final Thoughts

It could seem as if circumstances are conspiring against us in this moment. However, it is also a time strengthen and protect our community. We are easily within the top 5% of all public schools in the Bay Area serving our demographic (Innovate Public Schools Award). As our focus turns away from growth we now begin a process of focusing on quality and further strengthening outcomes.

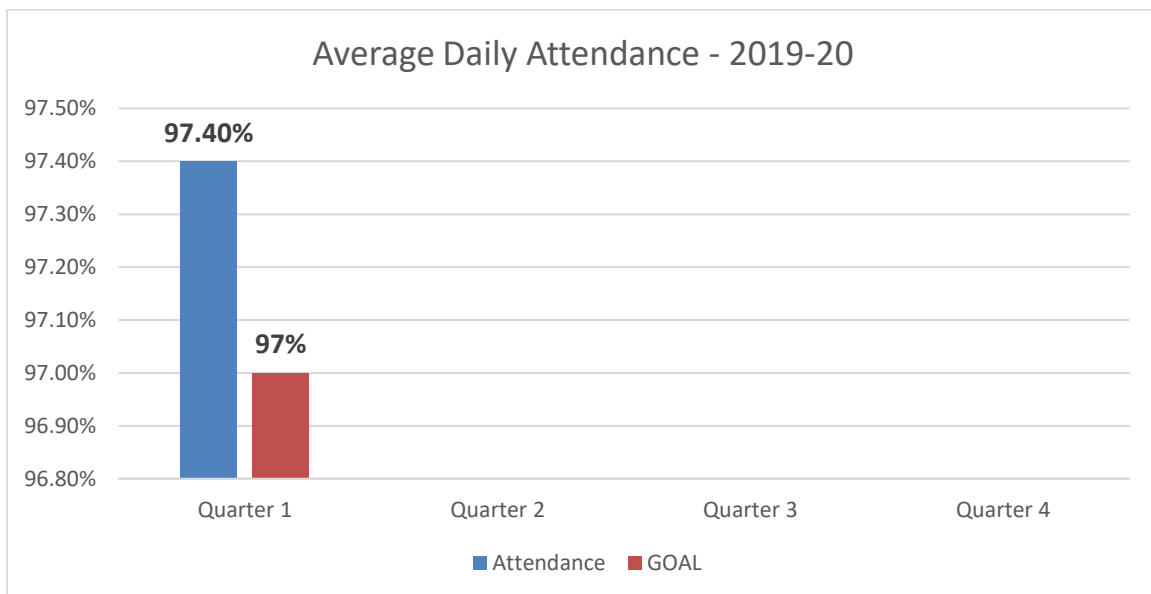
High Level Dashboard Data

Quarter 1 (August-October)

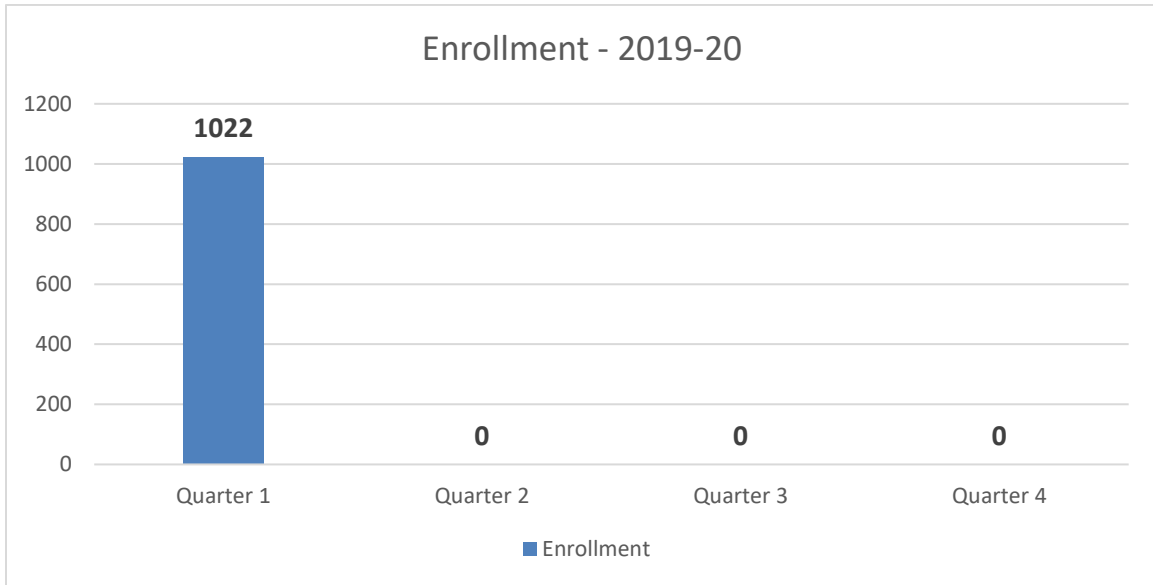
Average Daily Attendance (as of October 21, 2019)

Overall, we have had a strong start to the year for **Average Daily Attendance (ADA)**. MWA staff are active in addressing attendance issues. Below are additional elements to consider for attendance:

- **ADA** is the driver of revenue for public schools (rather than enrollment).
 - For instance, if we have 1,000 students and we have a 97% ADA, we receive funding for 970 students not 1,000 students.
- To this end, we anchor our ADA goals high to capture as much of the revenue as we can.
- In most years we are land at around 96%.
 - Schools serving our demographic can be at anywhere between 90%-94%.
- We make our budget projections based on 95% ADA.
 - This conservative approach means we typically capture more public revenue than projected.



Enrollment (5th-12th grades)



Lottery Applications for 2020-21 (Data as of November 1, 2019)

- **729 TOTAL applications**
- 248 applications for 5th grade (for 168 spots)
- 5 children of employee applications (0.6%)
- 64 sibling applications (9.1%)
- 610 TOTAL FREE/Reduced Meals eligibility applications (83.6%)
- 397 MWA only applications (54.4%)
 - versus other charter schools that have access to on the online application platform

