



# MWA CEO Report to the Making Waves Academy Board of Directors

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*January 2022*

## **Semester 2 Delayed Start**

Having a delay to the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester is not the way we wanted to begin the new semester, but it is indicative of the kind of year it has been for not just Making Waves Academy (MWA) but for all schools. Towards the middle of the winter break, as we began to hear more about the Omicron strain and its threat to surge all around the globe, I braced myself and began to think through what would be needed to continue to optimize for both safety and in-person learning.

We knew we had to do the following things in short order to support a safe return:

- Delay the scheduled January 3<sup>rd</sup> start to allow for testing of all students and staff to get a baseline for infection rates in returning from the long winter break.
- Make sure we had COVID testing in place with our service providers.
- Communicate with staff, families, and our board to share our plans and approach.
- Review the COVID testing data and ***assess staff availability and capacity.***
- Communicate with our charter authorizer.

I emailed the board regularly over the past four weeks sharing updates and information in closer to real time. I am open to answering any questions you may have during the meeting as well.

## **My Areas of Focus**

- More frequent and targeted communication among all MWA community groups
- Budget and master calendar planning for 2022-23
- Meeting with functional area leaders and staff to gain more insight into progress and challenges
- Support efforts to shore up campus safety and operations
- Develop and present a vision for MWA moving forward
- Lean into supporting MWA being an inclusive and safe environment for community members
- Working in various open learning spaces on campus to help provide more visible leadership presence
- Supporting Patrick and the Program Core Team (PCT) on moving the strategic plan work forward

## **Progress to Goals for 2021-22**

My goals and *Objectives & Key Results* (OKRs) have had to shift more than in any other year of my school leadership. Typically, I am able to maintain momentum and make progress on at least two or more major goals. I have had to pivot and amend my areas of focus on goals and timelines multiple times this year.

| Goal   | Updates   | Timing             |
|--|---|--------------------|
| <p><b>Goal #1</b> – Develop a core instructional approach that is consistent with the core identity of MWA’s past and provides forward-looking approaches that are responsive to more current and future teaching and learning challenges and opportunities.</p> | <p>This work has not begun in earnest as of yet. I will be convening meetings over the next two months to discuss this topic, seek input and ideas that can inform the DRAFT of an approach to review with the Curriculum Advisory Committee of the board.</p>  | <p><b>JUNE</b></p> |
| <p><b>Goal #2</b> – Apply some of the recommendations of the Cal Berkeley Board Fellows in the area of further capturing and systemizing program and teaching innovation through a consistent “test and learn” approach.</p>                                     | <p>Deprioritized with the exception of the college access scope and sequence work. I think there will be “test and learn” opportunities we can take advantage this year, and to be more fully realized it needs some connection to progress on Goal #1. Any innovation needs to be anchored in core practices and goals.</p>  | <p><b>NA</b></p>   |
| <p><b>Goal #3</b> – Assess MWA programs to assess resource allocation levels for the near and medium term to support long term financial sustainability.</p>   | <p>The survey data was helpful and will inform some shifts and direction in the budget development process for FY 2022-23. The participation rate among all staff in aggregate was about 94%. The rank order from the among the 8 categories are as follows – wit #1 ranked as the highest priority and #8 being the least prioritized:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Temporary COLA Stipend (\$12,000)</u></li> <li>2. <u>Campus supervision</u></li> <li>3. <u>Holistic support</u></li> <li>4. <i>Other benefits (e.g. COVID &amp; retention bonuses, tuition reimbursement, etc.)</i></li> <li>5. <i>Academic intervention</i></li> <li>6. <i>Clinical psychological services</i></li> <li>7. <i>Professional development</i></li> <li>8. <i>Transportation</i></li> </ol> | <p><b>JUNE</b></p> |

**MWA Board Engagement with MWA Staff**

I provided some updates to the board and the staff on progress within the last couple of weeks in response to the feedback from the board engagement with staff in the late fall. The accompanying slides share some high-level highlights and updates thus far.

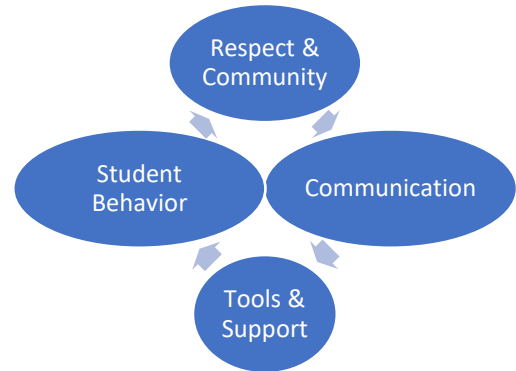
A current point of emphasis I have right now is around communication – attempting to communicate “early and often”, providing context and clarity as much as I can, and communicating across the range of our community members

I asked board members who participated in the engagement with staff work how they would like for me to report out on progress. The response was a combination of evidence of communication, data, and reflections. I have already sent out multiple emails to the full board and the staff this month. Moving forward, I will also share out progress in this chart (page 3) organized by the key feedback themes.

**Progress Updates in Thematic Areas of Staff Engagement Board Report**

| Feedback Themes                | Updates   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Respect &amp; Community</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging with a service provider to lead opt-in group meetings to process grief, loss, and experiences associated with operating school in COVID conditions as well as the loss felt in operating remotely last school year</li> <li>• Met w/ Mr. Siapno to request support in leading student community building</li> <li>• Plans to propose opt-in “Strawberry Talks” at the school</li> </ul> |
| <i>Communication</i>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased the number of direct messaging to staff through email and Slack</li> <li>• Providing more detail and context in some messaging</li> <li>• Attempting to communicate earlier and more proactively</li> <li>• Communicating with a variety of the span of community members</li> <li>• Proposing and recommending areas for staff input thru first 3 weeks of Jan.</li> </ul>            |
| <i>Tools &amp; Support</i>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved adding additional on-site substitute teachers</li> <li>• Introduced the use of a new arrival/dismissal tool (COO is vetting)</li> <li>• Discussed email integration approach with MD of IT (Cloud-based &amp; Outlook)</li> </ul>   |
| <i>Student Behavior</i>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved adding an additional dean and student support services assistant</li> <li>• Approved adding additional on-site substitute teachers</li> <li>• Approved moving forward with a revision of the campus supervisor position</li> <li>• Interviewed Senior Dean finalist candidate</li> </ul>  |

When debriefing my reflections with board members we discussed how these four themes are interconnected and responsive to one another as opposed to them being ordered by rank order priority over another. They exist in tandem with one another, and the more we are able to make progress against all of these thematic areas, the more the overall sense of responsiveness to the feedback will be experienced and felt.



**Strategic Plan Updates**

We have a retreat scheduled for early February with members of the MWA College and Career Counseling team, executive leaders from MWA and MWF, and members of the CAP team. The goal will be to make progress on the plans for implementation of the strategic plan initiatives and to continue to build relationship and collaboration among and across our MWA, MWF, and CAP teams.