



MWA CEO Report to the Making Waves Academy Board of Directors

May 2022

Spring

Since our last meeting in March, MWA continues to persist towards an eventual wrap-up of the 2021-22 school year in June. As stated previously, this school year has been one of the most intense, dynamic, and unpredictable school years in my thirty plus years of experience in education. We have had some successes, lots of growth and challenge, and lots of opportunities.

The spring offers some things to look forward to as we see the end of the school year is near. Some important milestones and events are coming up such as prom, graduations, promotions, and the change in the weather – warmer weather and more daylight. State testing has begun and finals are around the corner.

As I greet students in the morning during arrival at the middle school drop-off area and I wave and say “hi” to parents, I experience a variety of things. I see students coming to school looking forward to seeing their friends and students worrying about things young people their age worry about – *How do I look today? Do my friends really like me? Is lunchtime with my friends going to go better than it did yesterday? Will the teacher collect the homework I only partially completed last night? Does this person I like, like me, too?* Parents’ faces display a range of emotions – relief, hope, distraction, and concern about their child’s safety.

We have, what can feel like sometimes, two school cultures. In one, the majority of students are engaged, wear their uniforms to school, and are excited about being in a class with an engaging and caring teacher. In the other culture a small minority of students are persistently “acting out”, bullying other students, getting into fights, etc. Everyone is a bit tired, most of us are doing the best we can. The hope is that through some key shifts in leadership structure, some clear direction, and some commitment to some of the basics, we can make some progress.

Here are some personal observations and information relayed to me:

- There continue to be a consistent set of faculty and staff absences that appear to be mostly manageable as of right now. Examples of some of the more common reasons for absences include COVID infection and exposure, being sick (flu, cold, etc.), other health-related matters and procedures, and sick children at home needing child care.
- There has been a persistent set of fighting and bullying behavior occurring by a few students in two or three grade levels in the school.
- The senior class have earned and garnered a great range of college admissions results and post-secondary plan options. Options range from selective college admissions to military enlistments, gap years, and vocational training.
- Our 2022-23 budget is near completion and will be ready for the board to review at the June meeting.
- Staff recruitment is ongoing for the current year as well as for the 2022-23 school year.

My Continued Areas of Focus

- Budget 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
- Doing more frequent campus walk-throughs and being a more visible leadership presence

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>Goal #1 – <i>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.</i></p>	<p>For the past couple of months, the discussion with leadership has largely focused on structural elements such as the bell schedule, calendar, summer programming, and leadership shifts to address areas of challenge. I think this work will require more time to meet with new and returning leaders to come to agreement on areas of emphasis, assessment, and progress tracking.</p>	<p>JUNE</p>
<p>Goal #2 – <i>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.</i></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>NA</p>
<p>Goal #3 – <i>Assess MWA programs to assess resource allocation levels for the near and medium term to support long term financial sustainability.</i></p>	<p>The 2022-23 budget proposes to address the 3 areas that were most important to staff – 1) keeping the Temporary COLA Stipend, 2) bolstering campus supervision, and 3) continuing with our holistic support. With this in mind, we propose to keep the Temporary COLA Stipend and add a material cost of living adjustment to all salary/hourly compensation. The budget also proposes to add more campus supervisors and create leadership structures that allow for more direct oversight and responsibility for specific parts of the school. Finally, holistic support is maintained with some shifts down in spending in some areas to align with our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) approach to academics and intervention. In short, resources should be shifted to Tier 1 supports while maintaining Tier 3 supports but at a lower level. The thought here is</p>	<p>JUNE</p>

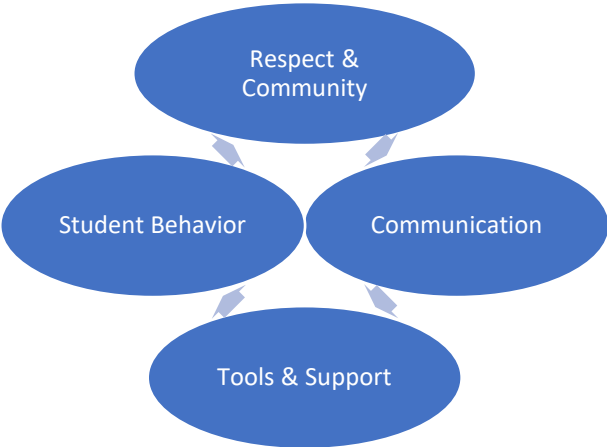
	to deliver more of the services in direct and indirect ways at the classroom level of service and support. In the big picture, this will reduce some of our costs in some areas while still maintaining critical programming, services, and staffing.	
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MWA Board Engagement with MWA Staff

A continued area of focus is 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. Please see the chart on the next page for various updates.

Progress Updates in Thematic Areas of Staff Engagement Board Report

Feedback Themes	Updates
<i>Respect & Community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The central office staff worked with a service provider to provide an opt-in opportunity to reflect on and debrief the school year. It was well attended and facilitated well. Central office staff were able to share experiences with one another and connect. • Representative feedback was sought in arriving at the final version of the daily bell schedule and 2022-23 school calendar.
<i>Communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining direct messaging to staff through email and Slack. • Meeting with small groups of staff and individuals to discuss pain points and experiences.
<i>Tools & Support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing SEL curriculum and online platforms • Arrived at agreement and support for getting perimeter fencing installed around the campus.
<i>Student Behavior</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did some direct messaging to students in Homeroom (MS) and Advisory (US). • Working with and supporting the Senior Dean and Deans more directly.



Strategic Plan Updates

Patrick and I have had a couple of meetings with community members and supporters of Making Waves to share and discuss some high-level strategies and tools that can be developed to enable the innovation and expansion components of the strategic plan. The work to better align college access and success work is ongoing but not as much progress is being made there. I am responsible for moving this particular component forward. I hope to make some progress on this before the end of the school year.