



Board Report

Chief Operating Officer

Elizabeth Martinez

Chief Operating Officer

Over the course of the semester I have continued to make progress on my big goals. Of most significance, ***I led a comprehensive review of our total compensation model and began working with the school on our Differentiated Assistance designation.*** This report will provide summaries of the two initiatives mentioned previously as well as a full report on our application season which has concluded.

Total Compensation Review

Historically, our funding has consisted of state funding and philanthropy; the amount of philanthropy funds we receive is unlike any other public school in this region. We recently learned that one of our biggest annual gifts is transitioning over the next 5 years becoming smaller over time until it is phased completely out. This gift represents about 10%-15% of the philanthropy we have historically received to meet our budget.

Additionally, we learned that the state's budget revenue projections for next fiscal year (at this time) will only include a 0.76% cost of living adjustment increase - a stark difference from last year's 8.22%. These two factors confirmed that prioritizing our financial viability is the right thing to do. ***In alignment with this priority, I led a review of our total compensation offerings and our overall employee count within the context of MWA's organizational priorities and goals for next year. The review optimized for:***

- prioritizing competitive base salaries and no-cost health benefits for employees
- offering benefits (outside of base salary) that are directly aligned to MWA's strategic goals and that have a measurable return on investment
- and reducing overall budgeted expenses.

The shifts identified through the review process will happen in two phases over two school years. At this time, I am prepared to share with you the adjustment that will take place in Phase 1 (2024-2025).

- *Reduction of full-time employee count (FTEs) by 10-12%*
 - *Faculty positions were not considered during this process*
 - *A list of the positions to be eliminated was shared with all staff*
- *Eliminating referral and sign-on bonuses (recruitment tools)*
- *Eliminating software or other technology tools that are not being utilized or that we no longer need*

We are still finalizing the adjustments for Phase 2 (2025-2026); I will share more information about that at a later time. Employees whose position will be eliminated as a result of this effort have been notified. ***The positions to be eliminated were selected because they have either been vacant for an extended period of time or the position no longer aligns with the overall goals of the organization. Positions will be eliminated in both the Central Office and the School. Most positions will be eliminated at the end of the school year (June 30, 2024) but there are a few that were eliminated sooner.***

Differentiated Assistance

Based on our 2022-2023 data on the [California Dashboard](#), we were identified as a school needing Differentiated Assistance in two areas:

1. Suspension rates for Students with Disabilities
 - a. Students with disabilities were suspended at a higher rate than general education students
2. Academic Performance (ELA/Math) for Students with Disabilities
 - a. Students with disabilities performed lower on state assessments than general education students

Differentiated Assistance (DA) focuses on building our capacity to develop and implement actions and services responsible to the needs of our identified groups. We are being provided DA by the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE). We were assigned to this county office as a way to eliminate conflicts of interest with our charter authorizer, the Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE). **SCCOE will be supporting MWA in the following ways:**

1. Assisting the charter school to **identify its strengths and weaknesses in regard to the state priorities...** included in the California School Dashboard...and other relevant local data, and to identify effective, evidence-based programs or practices that address any areas of weakness.
2. **Working collaboratively** with the charter school to secure assistance from an academic, programmatic, or fiscal expert or team of experts to identify and implement effective programs and practices that are designed to improve performance in any areas of weakness identified by the charter school...
3. **Obtaining from the charter school timely documentation** demonstrating that it has completed the DA activities, or substantially similar activities, or has selected another service provider to work with the charter school to complete the required activities, and ongoing communication with the chartering authority to assess the charter school's progress in improving pupil outcomes.

The first part of this work involved the MWA team taking a deep dive into the data and identifying root causes for the difference in the data. The MWA DA team consists of:

- Chief Operating Officer
- MWA Principal
- Director of Special Education
- Assistant Principal of Student Support
- Compliance and Data Systems Administrator
- Social Worker

At this time, the school-based team members are conducting Empathy Interviews with a small group of students and faculty to validate and/or inform changes to the identified root causes. The team will now move into the Action Planning phase to inform the practices for the 2024-2025 school year.

COO Big Milestones

Evaluate team structures and re-align their work to operate with more clarity, precision, and autonomy.	Finalize charter renewal strategy in anticipation of the renewal process (fall 2024).	Identify big operational shifts that will go into effect July 1, 2025 with the new charter term.
In Progress/On-Time Working with Directors to restructure functions that need more direct supervision and/or involvement from the school vs. Central Office.	In Progress/On-Time In the final stages of revisions to the charter petition and planning to discuss with MWA Board.	In Progress/On-Time Documenting shifts in the charter revisions, these changes would take effect in the new charter term (July 1, 2025).