



Board Report

Culture and Climate Committee

Dear Board Members,

We are excited to present the Culture and Climate Committee's first report for your review ahead of the upcoming May Board meeting. This report outlines our efforts this school year to enhance MWA's culture and climate and our plans for the future.

As you review the report, please consider one or more of the following essential questions:

1. Are there additional areas of focus or initiatives you believe should be prioritized for 2024-2025?
2. What other upcoming actions have you observed that will positively influence the culture and climate at MWA? Is there anything else we should be paying attention to that we might not know about yet?
3. How can the Board encourage active participation and feedback from staff, students, and parents in shaping MWA's culture and climate?

Thank you for your continued support.

- Josie Beyer, Kendra Brown, Breonna Edison, Colyn Flynn, Ben Calvert, Lawanda Muhammad, and Sonja Jackson

Committee Focus and Mission

The primary focus of the Culture and Climate Committee this school year has been to comprehensively assess the current culture and climate at MWA and identify areas for improvement. Our dedicated team, comprised of committed staff and faculty members, collaborated with a unified mission to enhance workplace conditions and cultivate a positive, inclusive environment for all members of the MWA community. Our efforts have been guided by the overarching goal of aligning with Dr. Jackson's vision for the school, reinforcing MWA's commitment to excellence, equity, and community.

Key Initiatives and Milestones (What)

Committee Orientation: Our journey began with an initial meeting in November, where all committee members affirmed their commitment to our mission statement. Since then, we have embarked on a journey of strategic initiatives and ongoing evaluation to fulfill our objectives this school year ([Appendix A](#)).

Assessment of Survey Data: Utilizing data from the 2022-2023 staff satisfaction survey, we identified key areas for improvement, including communication, sustainability, belonging, and students. Recognizing the need for alignment with Dr. Jackson's leadership, we conducted a mid-year survey in 2023-2024, which reaffirmed these focus areas and highlighted the importance of student experience/support ([Appendix B](#)).

Partnership and Community Engagement: Collaboration with Principal Jackson and Board members Margaret and Layla have been instrumental in our efforts. We presented our findings and plans for engagement during open sessions, fostering transparency and seeking valuable insights from MWA employees ([Appendix C](#)).

Acknowledgment of Progress: We are pleased to report a number of accomplishments, including improvements in morning huddle efficiency, the elimination of Saturday workdays for the upcoming year, and the integration of culture and climate updates into Board agendas. These initiatives reflect our commitment to continuous improvement.

Committee's Focus (So What/Now What)

As we proceed, the committee is ready to collaborate closely with Dr. Jackson to translate the feedback gathered during open sessions into actionable strategies that align seamlessly with the overarching goals of MWA ([Appendix C](#)). We recognize that the success of our initiatives hinges upon their synergy with the school's broader vision for culture and climate enhancement, encapsulated within each pillar of our framework. By harnessing the collective wisdom of our community and channeling it into targeted, goal-oriented actions, we aim to catalyze transformative change that permeates every facet of the MWA experience.

- **Low Lift/End-Of-Year Initiatives:**

- **To support Belonging:** Implement a phased approach to the Belonging initiative by launching a Teacher of the Year award and inviting nominations from the community to recognize exceptional colleagues. The committee will be asking for support from school leadership to help identify staff and faculty to celebrate, in hopes of meeting the identified need of sharing genuine recognition from leaders.
- **To support Communication:** Share feedback gathered during the open session with Dr. Jackson, as it requires more insights from the school leader than the committee.

- **Tentative Goals for 2024-2025:**

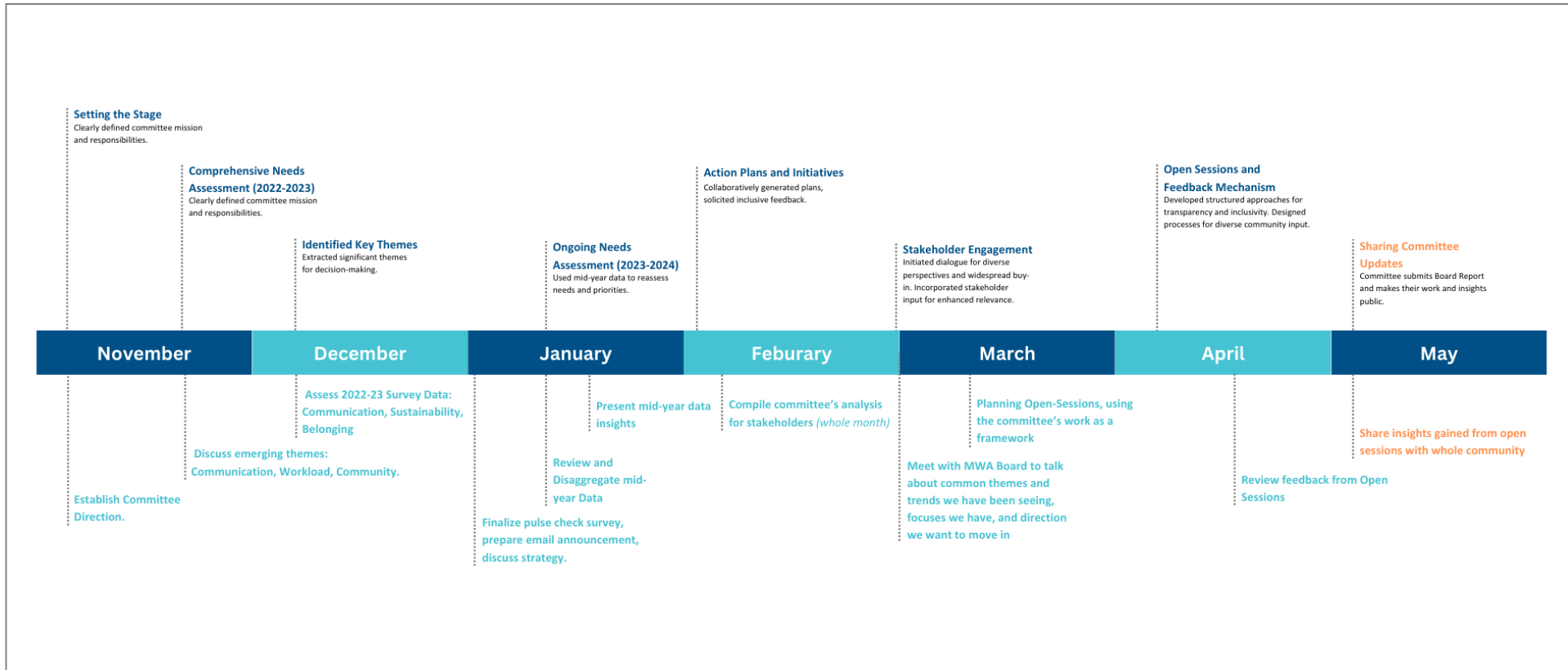
- **Committee Expansion to Include Middle School Representation**
 - Increase in the number of MS staff members serving on the committee.
- **To support Communication:**
 - Enhanced Communication Channels: Increase the effectiveness of communication channels utilized (e.g., Google Calendar, PD agendas, newsletters, etc.)
- **To support Belonging:**
 - Establish formal staff recognition channels to recognize staff members for outstanding achievements, excellence, and service
 - Consistent appreciation circles at the end of PD sessions
 - Teacher of the Month/Year
 - Student vs. Staff after-school sports events (volleyball, basketball, etc.) for MS and US
- **To support Sustainability:**
 - Increase in the number of parent volunteers.
- **To support Students: TBD**

**These goals are currently under development and may be subject to change.*

The Culture and Climate Committee is committed to driving positive change at MWA and ensuring that our school remains a supportive and inclusive environment for all. We look forward to the opportunity to continue our work in the coming year and welcome any feedback or suggestions from the Board.

APPENDIX

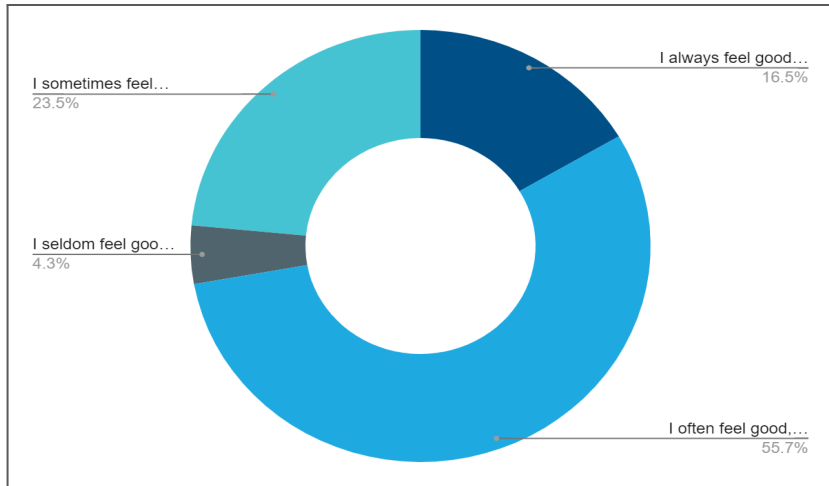
Appendix A: Culture and Climate Timeline (What)



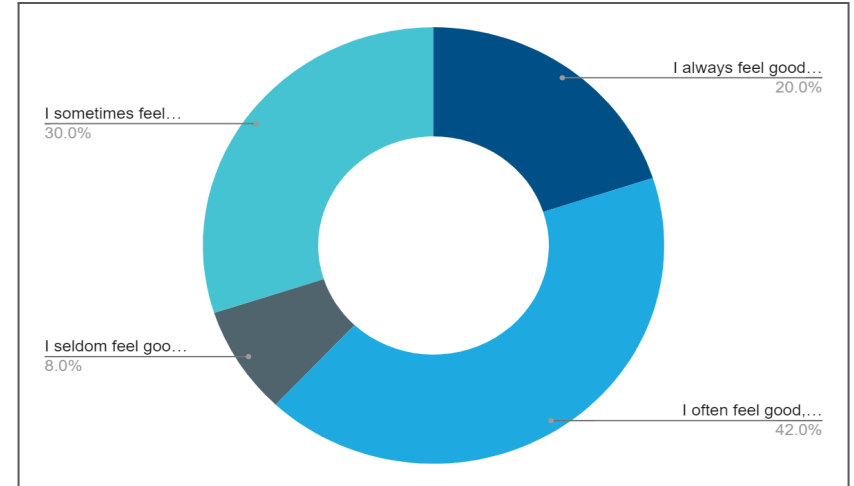
Appendix B: Survey Results (What - continued)

Overall, how do you feel as an employee of MWA?

2022-23 Staff Satisfaction



2023-24 Mid-Year Pulse



There is an increase in staff who seldom or sometimes feel good as an employee at MWA. This change seems to be felt most strongly by the decrease in the percentage of staff who often feel good as an employee of MWA. There is also a small increase in staff who always feel good as an employee of MWA.

a. Comparison highlight - Communication

2022-23 Satisfaction

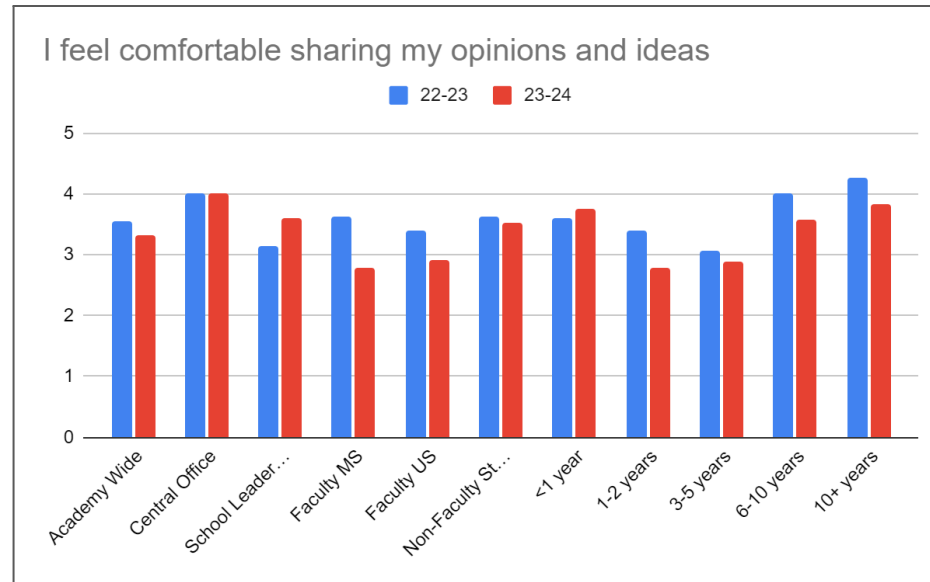
	MWA clearly explains how key decisions are made.	MWA effectively communicates important issues that affect me.	MWA actively seeks input from a diverse group of employees regarding decisions that affect staff.
Based on Division			
Academy Wide	2.905	3.131	3.035
Central Office	3.858	4.072	4
School Leadership/Admin	2.693	2.77	2.462
Faculty (MS/US)	2.655	2.964	2.928
Faculty MS	2.917	3.167	2.959
Faculty US	2.452	2.807	2.904
Non-Faculty Staff	3	3.152	3.031

2023-24 Mid-Year Pulse

	MWA clearly explains how and why key decisions are made and effectively communicates important issues that affect me.	MWA provides sufficient notice and time to process information related to key decisions and important issues that affect me.	MWA actively seeks input from a diverse group of employees regarding decisions that affect staff.
Based on Division			
Academy Wide	2.983	2.832	2.965
Central Office	3.895	3.527	3.737
School Leadership/Admin	3	2.924	3.385
Faculty (MS/US)	2.453	2.265	2.491
Faculty MS	2.685	2.369	2.632
Faculty US	2.324	2.206	2.412
Non-Faculty Staff	3.358	3.393	3.143

Leadership feels like communication has improved, but this has not translated to the rest of the school when comparing the 22-23 survey to the 23-24 survey results.

b. Comparison highlight - sharing opinions and ideas



Staff felt less comfortable sharing their opinions and ideas across all tenure groups aside from <1 year and all departments except leadership and central office in the more recent survey as compared to the survey from last year.

c. Key Quotes:

- i. **“The students here are some of the best I have worked with.** It is often voiced that students at MWA are overall respectful, kind, and on task. I wish this was recognized as a strength by MWA leaders. Or more so--I wish MWA leaders recognized the effort that teachers here put into building relationships with students and creating this school culture. It didn't happen by accident and we need to recognize teachers and staff for what they do...The student versus staff basketball game earlier in the school year was a joyful and positive moment on campus. Students were excited to support their classmates and teachers and it was great to see the school build community together.” - School Staff (Non-Faculty): All other non-instructional on-campus positions.
- ii. “Morale has tanked this year and it is causing a lot of people to quit, plan on quitting, or considering quitting. A lot of staff feel micromanaged and are not able to do their best due to the lack of autonomy. **Low morale** affects all aspects of a school including students’

- learning. This needs to be addressed asap. **The culture of the school has lost its community, joy, love, and respect towards staff.**" - School Staff (Non-Faculty): All other non-instructional on-campus positions
- iii. "Leadership is quick to point out what other folks do wrong but in my [many] years here it has been rare the times that they accept responsibility for their mistakes, which have been many. Part of being a good leader is accepting ownership and learning from our failures. This mentality trickles down to the staff and students and creates a **hostile work environment** where folks spend more time blaming each other than trying to find solutions together. Overall, this organization is run more like a corporation than a school. We have always had terrible morale even before the pandemic." - School Leadership/Admin: All on-campus leadership positions that report directly to the Principal and/or supervise other employees.
- iv. "I don't want to meet new staff members anymore because I don't want to invest in relationships that won't last here because of turnover or that I have to make excuses for MWA in hope that this person will be able to suffer and stay through the year." - School Staff (Faculty primarily teaching 9th-12th grade)
- v. "Teachers and students (human beings) **do not feel valued** at MWA, only data, and the decisions made in order to improve data are made unilaterally by a small group of leaders who clearly have no idea what they're doing because they have little to no teaching experience." - School Staff (Faculty primarily teaching 9th-12th grade)
- vi. "I have noticed that the school appears to operate with a structure more reminiscent of a business than a traditional educational institution. While efficiency and effectiveness are essential, I believe that nurturing a more community-oriented and student-focused approach could greatly benefit both the institution and its student." - School Staff (Faculty primarily teaching 9th-12th grade)
- vii. Something to be improved is "Faculty & staff morale, focus too much on organizational framework and there is not an emphasis of theoretical framework that helps unite or builds trust amongst faculty and staff." - School Leadership/Admin: All on-campus leadership positions that report directly to the Principal and/or supervise other employees.
- viii. I think there could be better acknowledgement by leadership around specific things staff are doing well. It feels like often when leadership is talking directly to teachers (e.g. in weekly PDs or PDs at the beginning of the year) the focus is on how we are not doing enough. This feels especially intense this year with all of the focus on the upcoming charter renewal. It just feels like a lot of negativity coming from the top down about how we aren't doing enough and our test scores aren't high enough and too many kids are failing and/or not at grade level. Teachers are internalizing all of this negativity and it can sometimes get pushed on to the students. Just like many of the students know that they are not at grade level, many of the teachers realize there is more work to be done but constantly reminding us of that, especially without any praise, is really discouraging. **Data is important but students are not their test scores and teachers are not their students' test scores.** We are all doing a lot of great things that isn't being reflected in one or two select data points. - School Staff (Faculty primarily teaching 9th-12th grade)

d. Highlights - Additional Student Focus (Experience/Support)

Current Support Structure - Upper School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Limited office hours on Tuesdays or Wednesdays create challenges for students needing support in multiple subjects. More interventions are needed.
Teacher Bandwidth Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Overwhelming office hours strain teacher bandwidth, hindering additional academic support for tasks like makeup tests and quizzes.
Parent Feedback (From LCAP Advisory Group)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Suggestions for simplifying the volunteer process to encourage more involvement.● Support for the after-school program and suggestions to focus on children who need the greatest academic support

Survey Quote Related to Students:

“I think we can be better about offering (academic) support for students. I would love to see an implementation of targeted and consistent availability of tutoring for all grades.”

Appendix C: Culture and Climate Open Session Participant Feedback

Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Stakeholder Inclusion and Consistency:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Example: Several participants emphasized the need to consistently use communication tools like Google Calendar, suggesting that irregular updates and fragmented information hindered team collaboration and awareness.b. Example: Participants recommended ensuring that key stakeholders are included in communications about initiatives and activities to avoid anyone feeling left out, citing instances where decisions were made without input from relevant parties, leading to misunderstandings.2. Trust and Respect Building:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Example: Participants highlighted that effective communication builds trust among team members, sharing experiences where open dialogue and transparent information sharing fosters a sense of cohesion and shared purpose.b. Example: Encouragement of positive interactions such as greetings and acknowledgments was noted as a way to strengthen relationships within the community, with participants sharing instances where simple gestures of recognition improved morale and camaraderie.3. Information Sharing and Proactivity:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Example: Multiple participants requested clear timelines and proactive communication, citing instances where last-minute announcements and unclear expectations caused stress and confusion among staff.b. Example: Suggestions for utilizing platforms like ParentSquare and Slack for regular updates were mentioned to enhance communication efficiency, with participants highlighting successful implementations of these tools in other organizations for streamlined information dissemination.4. Transparency and Inclusivity:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Example: Transparent communication was emphasized by participants for fostering respect and awareness, with participants sharing instances where transparent communication about decisions, even if unpopular, increased trust and understanding among stakeholders.b. Example: Calls for involving staff in decision-making processes were highlighted to promote inclusivity, with participants sharing experiences where inclusive decision-making led to better outcomes and increased buy-in from all parties involved.
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<p>Sustainability for Staff</p>	<p>1. Recognition and Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Example: Suggestions for staff appreciation events and student-led initiatives were made to foster a sense of belonging within the community. Participants shared successful experiences of recognition programs that boosted morale and encouraged collaboration. b. Example: Recognition of achievements and positive contributions was desired, as mentioned by several participants, who emphasized the need for regular acknowledgment of staff efforts to maintain motivation and commitment. <p>2. Feedback and Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Example: Participants expressed the need for clearer accountability structures and follow-through on feedback, sharing instances where lack of follow-up on suggestions and concerns eroded trust and hindered progress. b. Example: Suggestions for professional development and collaboration were made to facilitate ongoing improvement in communication practices, with participants highlighting the value of continuous learning and sharing of best practices among staff members.
<p>Belonging</p>	<p>1. Community Building and Engagement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Example: The importance of fostering a sense of belonging through community activities was emphasized, with participants sharing successful experiences of community-building events that strengthened bonds and fostered a supportive environment. b. Example: Suggestions for inclusive events and celebrations were made to create a welcoming environment for all community members, with participants sharing ideas for activities that promote inclusivity and celebrate diversity. <p>2. Inclusivity and Respect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Example: The need for promoting respect and inclusivity among students and staff was highlighted, with participants sharing strategies for fostering respectful interactions and creating a culture of acceptance and understanding. b. Example: To create a supportive environment, suggestions for recognizing diversity and promoting respectful interactions were mentioned, with participants emphasizing the importance of valuing and celebrating differences to create a culture of inclusivity and belonging.

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Ownership and Voice:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Example: Participants highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for student input and leadership, sharing successful experiences of student-led initiatives that empowered individuals and contributed to a positive school culture.b. Example: Suggestions were made for creating inclusive learning environments and promoting student accountability, with participants sharing strategies for giving students a voice in decision-making processes and fostering a sense of responsibility for their education.2. Cultural Events and Inclusivity:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Example: Participants suggested hosting more cultural events and promoting inclusivity, sharing successful experiences of multicultural celebrations that promoted understanding and appreciation of diverse backgrounds.b. Example: To enhance student engagement, calls were made to treat music and art as serious subjects with demanding curricula. Participants emphasized the importance of valuing all forms of expression and providing opportunities for creative exploration.
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