



*Learn. Graduate. Give Back.*

# **Programmatic Principles**

## **DRAFT**

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# Introduction

The Programmatic Principles sets out the vision for Making Waves Academy's (MWA) instructional and programmatic approach. It serves as a sort of "digest" of the most critical pieces of MWA's programmatic approach to creating a results-oriented, effective, safe, and inclusive learning environment for our students ("Wave-Makers") and our staff.

The Programmatic Principles supports the following:

- MWA leaders
- new staff to MWA
- existing and returning staff to MWA
- charter renewal petition elements

Elements of the Programmatic Principles include:

- 1) Mission, vision, and values
- 2) Wave-Maker affirmation
- 3) Core day instructional approach
- 4) Approach to intervention
- 5) Approach to Advisory, SEL, and Community Building time
- 6) Approach to parent engagement and communication
- 7) Approach to college and career development
- 8) Frameworks for instruction, professional norms, and mission/values-alignment
- 9) Areas for innovation exploration
- 10) Metrics for measuring progress and growth
- 11) Books, Articles, & Resources (sources that inform the programmatic principles)

# Mission, Vision, Values

## Mission

Making Waves commits to rigorously and holistically preparing students to gain acceptance to and graduate from college to ultimately become valuable contributors to the workforce and their communities.

## Vision

- Address the disparity in educational opportunity that exists between suburban and urban youths.
- 70% of our students will earn an appropriately challenging post-secondary degree, graduating with minimal college debt.

## Values

### **Community**

*We combine our intellect and critical thinking to support each other and make healthy choices for ourselves and positive changes in our community.*

### **Resilience**

*We are agents of change, who, through hard work and perseverance, have the power to define ourselves and to control our destiny.*

### **Respect**

*We believe each person is valuable and we demonstrate respect by following our community norms.*

### **Responsibility**

*We have integrity; we are accountable for our decisions and actions and their impact on self and community.*

### **Scholarship**

*We are life-long learners who aspire to and achieve academic excellence.*

# Wave-Maker Affirmation (Proposed Revision)

I AM A WAVE-MAKER!

I am an agent of change. I can control my destiny if I set my mind to it.

I am determined to be an intelligent, organized, and disciplined person.

I will not let anything get in the way of my success.

I AM A WAVE-MAKER!

I am willing to get an education.

I will meet and exceed expectations of Making Waves Academy.

I am determined to pursue my college and career dreams.

I AM A WAVE-MAKER!

I look at life with a positive attitude. I believe love and support are priceless.

I will help people less fortunate than me.

I will be a positive presence in the community.

I will increase the peace.

I AM A WAVE-MAKER!

I am a valuable person. I will believe in myself.

I will prepare myself and take advantage of opportunities to achieve my goals.

I am creative and will recycle my success.

I AM A WAVE-MAKER!

I am a powerful person. I am strong, smart, generous, and caring.

Success is achieved through hard work and perseverance. I am willing.

I AM A WAVE-MAKER!

# Mission-Aligned Metrics and Culture

## High-Level Mission-Aligned Metrics (“Evergreen”)

- Cumulative Grade Point Averages (GPAs)
- State tests scores
- English Language Reclassification Rates
- High school graduation rates
- College admissions rates

## Features of Mission Aligned Culture

- **Growth mindset** (vs. fixed mindset) and efficacy approach
  - *“We can get smarter with affective effort”*
  - *“Progress not perfection”*
  - *“Failure to plan is planning to fail”*
  - *“We perform the way we practice.”*
- **College and career readiness** for ALL students/families and the support and validation for multiple post-secondary pathways (early career and education)
- Opportunities to reinforce MWA values and mission in our systems and practices
- Opportunities to practice skills for college, career, and life
- Students are engaged and doing the bulk of the “heavy lifting” in the **learning process** - asking questions, grappling with content, and doing multiple drafts of their work

# Core-Day Instructional Approach

The foundation for MWA core-day instruction should be comprised of the following:

- **Relationship Development** - Positive and appropriate relationships are foundational in effective schools.
- **Classroom Practices** - Classroom practices are a reflection of what the school values most - e.g. safe and inclusive learning environment, student learning, restorative practices, social-emotional learning, and high expectations for student achievement.
- **Common Core Standards** – Common Core Standards-based curricular instruction, at grade, level utilizing a menu of proven best practices.
- **Prioritized Pace** – An effective scope and sequence pace makes the curriculum “guaranteed and viable”, thus supporting a pathway that helps students meet and exceed learning objectives and goals.
- **Assessments** – Classroom-based formative assessments that both align with elements of summative assessments and provide the student and teacher with useful information about learning progress.
- **Data and Evidence** - Data provides indicators of student learning progress and opportunities for reflection on implemented practices and instruction. Evidence helps teachers and students see demonstrated proof that progress towards learning objectives and mastery is occurring, as well as where more learning or mastery is needed in order to meet learning objectives.
- **Differentiation & Intervention** - Differentiation is one of the more efficient ways to address the continuum of learning needs within a classroom or cohort of students. Differentiation is an approach that supports intervention in providing differentiated strategies and supports for learning that can help students meet grade-level standards and curricular learning objectives.
- **Bell-to-Bell Instruction** - Great schools utilize this approach in seeking to optimize for learning during every minute of the day, but particularly within the instructional period.
- **Homework** - Daily homework is assigned and accounted for. In a given week, 1-2 assignments can be graded for accuracy and 1-2 can be graded for effort. All homework should be reviewed with students with in-classroom feedback or written feedback so that students know where they are with learning the material. Classwork is separate from homework. Homework helps build habits of organization and study habits for college.
- **Technology** - Technology tools are utilized and integrated into classroom instruction for use by students and faculty. This allows students to practice its use in preparation for college/career and can allow faculty to work smarter not harder in terms of time, effort, and accessibility of curricular materials and best practices.

- **Grades/Grading** - Students receive grades for assignments that adhere to the grading policies found in the Student-Parent/Guardian Handbook. The components of the gradebook should also adhere to expectations set by the Principal that have a mix of formative and summative assessments over the course of the semester. Ideally, students should have between 3-5 pieces of feedback per week - e.g. exit slips, homework, quizzes, and summative assessments. This helps students know where they are in learning the material. Graded assignments and feedback should be turned around as soon as possible within reason so students have the opportunity to see where they are off track before larger summative assessments are taken (e.g. homework within 24 hours, quizzes within 48 hours, and summative assessments within 72 hours or 3 school days). Gradebooks are kept up to date weekly so that students and their parents know how they are doing throughout the semester.
- **Equity-Based Grading Practices** - “Zeros” are eliminated for most formative assessments and a 50% “floor” is established as the lowest grade you can receive for missing assignments and work. This practice acknowledges the grade of “F” received for assignments while avoiding making overall grades so mathematically difficult to overcome to pass courses. Through an equity lens, this provides the wide range of our “non-selective” students an opportunity to pass their courses while still maintaining high expectations for student learning and mastery of the material.

## Relationship Development

- Building relationships with students and families is critical.
- Through *appropriate and professional relationships* with students and families we build trust.
- As the foundation of trust is established students and families are more open to partnering and learning how we can best educate and serve our students.
- Some of our students and parents have had negative experiences in schools and with people who work in schools. These experiences can interfere with our intent in communicating or trying to support our students and their families.
- Student and adult experiences in schools that were based in *inequity, systemic racism, homophobia, and sexism* can make it challenging for students and families to trust us.
- Being intentional and consistent in treating students and families with Respect and doing things to foster a sense of community can help our students/families feel seen and heard.
- Students/Parents will not be as interested in how much you know or can teach them until they know how much you care (but not with “ruinous empathy”).



## Classroom Practices

The practices and systems that are implemented in the classroom are the bedrock foundation for all schools. It is where the majority of instruction and student learning takes place. ***The school then becomes a larger reflection of the practices happening across all classrooms at the school.***

To this end, it is important that Wave-Makers feel safe and secure in our classrooms and on our campus. This can be achieved in the following ways to support predictability, safety, support:

- ***REPs (Routines, Expectations, and Procedures)*** - These help students know and understand what is expected of them at all times on campus and in different settings and circumstances. By knowing what is expected of them, they feel more secure, particularly if the REPs are carried and implemented consistently.
- ***Tight and Aligned Practices*** - The tighter, the more aligned, and the more consistent these practices are across the school, the stronger the school is. These practices include instructional practices, student management practices, classroom entrance and exit practices, and classroom communication practices.

## Prioritized Pacing

- ***Backwards Planning*** - Setting clear priorities is evidence of planning backwards with the end-of-the-year assessments and learning goals in mind.
- ***Learning Goals Alignment*** - Setting a prioritized pace that aligns with curricular learning goals is evidence of alignment with learning goals for students and the larger goals for the school.
- ***Exposure, Practice, & Internalization*** - Adhering to the discipline and rigor of following a scope and sequence pace exposes students to curricular content and ideas and prioritizes opportunities for students to practice and internalize learning towards demonstrating mastery.

## Assessment

Great schools and effective instruction utilize different forms of assessment to inform instructional practices, lesson planning, and measuring student progress. At MWA a mix of a variety of assessments supports both the teacher knowing and the student knowing where they are in the learning/mastery process.

- ***Check for Understanding*** - This can come in the form of exit tickets, verbal checks for understanding, and mini quizzes, as examples. They are done in real time and give you a sense of what students are understanding in the lesson. When used consistently, they

are effective tools for providing teachers with real-time feedback that can inform real-time adjustments in instruction including, re-teaching parts of the lesson, adjusting the pace, or re-assessing lesson plan approach and effectiveness after the lesson.

- **Formative Assessments** - Well-designed formative assessments are aligned with learning objectives to be assessed in the summative assessment for that unit. They can be quick checks for understanding and self-reflection in the form of exit tickets or they can be in the form of quizzes with problems and question-types that mirror elements in the summative assessment. In other words, the formative assessments provide practice for students in preparing for summative assessments.
- **Summative Assessments** - Summative Assessments are an assessment of “mastery” of content and skills for a particular unit. As such, they are worth more in that all other assessments contribute to students demonstrating mastery of the defined material and learning objectives.
- **Interim Assessments** - These assessments are a form of formative assessments that mirror and prepare students for formalized state assessments in the form of criterion or norm-referenced assessments. They typically are utilized to help students and teachers know how a student is progressing on demonstrating mastery of discrete content such as state-wide curricular standards. The data from these assessments can help students and teachers know the areas they appear to be learning and mastering and which areas are showing room for growth. They can also help students and teachers assess growth in the learning process. At MWA, interim assessments have come in the form of MAP for math and STAR for reading/English Language Arts. These two assessments closely align with the CA Common Core Standards and are good practice and data to prepare our students for the SBAC tests CA administers annually.
- **State Assessments** - Students take a variety of state-mandated assessments to assess for mastery of state standards. These assessments are administered currently operate under the CAASPP umbrella of assessments - CA Assessment of Student Performance of Progress. For English and Math, students take an assessment called the SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) or “Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments” for grades 3rd-8th grades and 11th grade. For science, students take an assessment called the CAST (CA Science Test) in grades 5th, 8th, and one grade in high school before graduation. English Learners also take the ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessments for CA) to assess proficiency in English language proficiency. These assessments are based on a set of rigorous state standards assessing proficiency in the understanding and mastery of these standards.

# Approach to Intervention

The best intervention strategies are embedded and accessible within core-day instruction. While there could be some time set aside for “lab periods” or pull-out sessions with individual students or small groups, optimally, we want all support to occur within the core-day classroom. Various forms of differentiated instruction based on learning disability or language proficiency are effective instructional strategies that help all students learn. Please see below for examples of how this should look:

- ***Students with Disabilities (SPED)*** - Students with IEPs and 504s should have instruction that adheres to the strategies and goals outlined in their plans. Teachers should be supported and held accountable to implementing these strategies and helping students meet those goals using a variety of integrated whole-class strategies as well as some differentiated and accommodated assignments.
- ***English Learners*** - ELs require language rich classrooms with lots of tools and aids that will continue to help them decode English and reinforce the skills they are developing. Word walls, common language reading and writing strategies across all classrooms help students access both the material and the language skills they need for effective learning.
- ***Students from Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Households (SED)*** - SED students can have challenges accessing the curriculum as some of the language and background knowledge cannot be assumed to be known. We know that the language and vocabulary gap begins before students start in Kindergarten, with students from more affluent households knowing tens of thousands more words than SED students. Using a variety of written, oral, and reading strategies to help SED students broaden their vocabulary and comfort with academic and various forms of text help students strengthen them as overall learners. These same strategies help all students in the classroom.
- ***Visual, Written, and Kinesthetic Learners*** - Students learn through a variety of modalities, sometimes utilizing multiple modalities to learn something new. Therefore, it is important that lessons create specific areas within a lesson to engage with the material in multiple modalities.

In closing out this section on intervention, it is important to note that our curricular materials (both print and online versions) offer various ways to integrate these various forms of instructional strategies. It is not efficient to create many of these approaches individually, but to identify resources that already exist and utilize them with the support of the Principal, Assistant Principal, instructional coach, lead teacher, content lead, or a peer who implements specific strategies effectively.

# Approach to Homeroom/Advisory, Community Building Time, & SEL

Homeroom (5th-8th grade) and Advisory (9th-12th grade) are dedicated times in the schedule for Homeroom Teachers and Advisors to connect with, build community among, and directly support a cohort of students. In 5th-8th grade, their Homeroom Teacher is the key point of contact for students and parents as well as the lead liaison from the school in sharing information with families regarding student performance and student concerns. In the 9th-12th grade, the Advisor, ideally, stays with that group of students over the course of the remainder of their time at MWA. The Advisor works with students to make sure they are on track to graduate and helps students monitor their own progress in their classes. More specifically, Homeroom Teachers/Advisors perform the following responsibilities with their students:

## Homeroom Teachers (5th-8th grade)

- **Use of SEL Curriculum & Practices** - Homeroom Teachers use curriculum and practices that support social-emotional learning (SEL) such as Responsive Classroom. Responsive Classroom practices align with restorative practices such as restorative circles and help students develop various tools and strategies in communicating their feelings. Additional Restorative Practices are utilized to help address minor to mid-level conflicts among students and sometimes between staff and students. The Student Support Team supports teachers with learning and implementing these practices. Finally, the Homeroom Teacher weaves in and facilitates SEL-related lessons utilizing online curricular resources such as Nearpod.
- **General Community Building** - Homeroom is utilized to develop relationships between the Homeroom teacher and their students as well as students with one another. Students should learn MWA's mission, vision, values, and the Affirmation, starting in the 5th grade. Each year, Homeroom should continue to be utilized to reinforce, practice use of, and celebrate instances of the knowledge and application of the mission, vision, values, and Affirmation. Examples could include things like focusing on a value for the week or for the month to emphasize and identify student actions that are examples of them. Another example could be focusing on a different stanza of the Affirmation to memorize each month. The main idea is to make the mission, vision, values, and Affirmation integrated, active, and celebrated parts of the early Wave-Maker experience.
- **All School Meetings** - All School Meetings (ASMs) celebrate and bring attention to positive behaviors, action, and performances that align with MWA values. Achievement is celebrated in a public way, teachers, leaders, and peers share high-level topics to reflect on. 5th-8th graders practice being a good audience member and being together.

## Advisors (9th-12th grade)

- **Academic and Course Advising** - Advisors are assigned a cohort of students that they ideally follow from 9th-12th grade. As an Advisor, they make sure students sign up for and are enrolled in the required courses they need to earn their high school diploma from MWA. They sign off on course changes and petitions for courses the students want to take. They periodically review their advisees credit standing with them, supporting students to keep track of and mark their own periodic progress. They also review the grades of their advisees 2-5 times over the course of the semester to flag any concerns for students and parents. Concerns might include failing courses, a number of absences or tardies, or behavioral concerns.
- **Use of SEL Curriculum & Practices** - Advisors use curriculum and practices that support social-emotional learning (SEL) such as *Nearpod*. Nearpod has a variety of SEL-related domains that also help students learn about other life schools and college and career information. The Advisors also work with the College and Career Counseling Office (CCC) to implement lessons or activities aligned with college and career readiness.
- **General Community Building** - Advisory is utilized to develop relationships between the Advisor teacher and their students as well as students with one another. Advisory is also a time to reinforce, practice use of, and celebrate instances of the knowledge and application of the mission, vision, values, and Affirmation. Examples could include things like focusing on a value for the week or for the month to emphasize and identify student actions that are examples of them. Another example could be focusing on a different stanza of the Affirmation to memorize each month. The main idea is to make the mission, vision, values, and Affirmation integrated, active, and celebrated parts of the early Wave-Maker experience.
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# Approach to Parent Engagement & Communication

Parents/Guardians are an integral and important partner with us in working with and supporting our Wave-Makers. Keeping open, proactive, timely, consistent, and ongoing communication with our parents and guardians is critical. The Principal and school administration share a regular cadence of communication about events, updates, and incidents on campus. Materials and messages are translated into Spanish (and other languages as needed).

We assume best intentions in the belief that our parents/guardians want to and are willing to partner with us for the benefit of their student(s). We understand that parents/guardians are able to hold expectations of their student(s) in ways that benefit the student(s) and the MWA.

We understand that many of our parents/guardians have had negative experiences in school, resulting in some level of distrust with schools in general. As a result, it takes time to trust through relationship building. Relationship building starts with making sure Advisors, Homeroom teachers, classroom teachers, and administrators know what hopes, dreams, and expectations the parent/guardian has for their student(s).

We understand the following are core elements of parental/guardian expectations:

- Evidence that you care about their student(s)
- Evidence that you hold high expectations for their student(s)
- Evidence that you, as their teacher, will be the first point of contact from the school if their child is not meeting expectations

To this end, here are expectations for parent engagement:

- As a classroom teacher you are reaching out to parents/guardians regularly to:
  - Share any performance or behavior concerns directly with them
  - Share any highlights or positive behaviors, improvements, or achievements
- As a Homeroom Teacher/Advisor you are reaching out to parents/guardians to:
  - Communicate performance concerns at each of the 3 progress report times
  - Being a resource for who to contact and how to contact admin for parents with questions about IEPs, discipline, etc.
- As a Dean you are contacting the parent/guardian before the student has a chance to talk with the parent/guardian about an incident they were involved in. It is important we provide context for what occurred (as far as we know) and next steps.
- As a Principal/Assistant Principal you are engaging with parents directly in writing and in-person and ensuring staff adhere to expectations for parent/guardian engagement.
- If/when parents are communicating in ways that are not respectful, you are expected to set boundaries reminding them of the Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct.

# Approach to College and Career Development

MWA’s approach to college and career development and support is at the heart of what makes MWA different than many other public schools - charter and traditional. MWA’s focus on college and career preparation for all students is one of our strongest areas of impact and significant outcomes that surpass local, area, and national peers, particularly with the number of our graduates who go on to college when compared to public schools serving a similar demographic of students as well as those from high schools in affluent communities.

Critical components of our success (despite being a non-selective school) include:

- Graduation requirements aligned with CA college/university admissions requirements (“a-g” course requirements)
- Core courses and electives are UCOP-approved, signifying appropriate college preparatory rigor by the University of CA Office of the President.

Critical metrics for success include:

- High school graduation rates
- Cumulative GPAs of the senior class
- % of students taking AP courses
- % of students applying to community and four-year colleges
- % gaining admission to and committing to attend college
- 11th grade performance on state tests

## College and Career Counseling Pillars

The aim of the MWA College and Career Counseling *Pillars* is to create a structure that specifies principles and areas of discipline and focus while also allowing for some flexibility. When effective, this approach helps MWA maintain a clear direction and approach for supporting Wave-Makers on their college and career pathways. And, this approach also allows for the flexibility that may be necessary in continuing to adapt to the dynamic environment of college admissions and early college exploration.

College Preparation	Affirming	Differentiated	Practice	Exposure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For ALL students</li> <li>• College access education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student choice</li> <li>• Student Life Dreams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cum GPA</li> <li>• Interests</li> <li>• Career Exposure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criteria</li> <li>• Practice applying</li> <li>• Practice interviewing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College campus experiences</li> <li>• Career exposure</li> <li>• Alumni engagement</li> </ul>

### College Preparation for ALL

- While all Wave-Makers may not choose college as an initial post-secondary option, our approach, academically, is that all students will be prepared for college and be eligible to apply to a CA state college or university upon earning a high school diploma from MWA.
- College access education should be differentiated and begin as soon as students enter MWA starting in 5th grade. We are sharing the value proposition for attending MWA, what college access is all about, reiterating our college preparation for ALL students while also supporting student agency and choice if they choose to pursue another post-secondary pathway.

### **Affirming Student Agency & Choice**

- To avoid students feeling any sort of shame around celebrating their post-secondary choices, we simultaneously continue to send strong signals about being a college preparatory school and environment, we also create space to explore, discuss, and celebrate other viable post-secondary education and career options.
- It is important that students and families see us as a trusted and reliable supporter of students' pursuit of their own dreams for themselves.

### **Differentiated Approaches Reflective of Student Motivation**

- Differentiating some of our programming and support for students based on our tiered system of College Competitive (3.8 GPA or higher), College Ready (2.5-3.79 Cum. GPA), and College Eligible (1.8-2.49 Cum. GPA). A “one size fits all” approach usually aims to the middle where high and low performers sometimes do not get the attention and support they need. Better matching student motivation with opportunities.
- Making sure Wave-Makers have a variety of individualized leadership, college overnight, and interest-related experiences (e.g. STEM-focused summer programs).
- Seeking and keeping up-to-date records of student interest to create programmatic group opportunities through field trip experiences, college campus visits, and career exploration opportunities.

### **Practice for College and Life**

- Setting criteria for participation in all “opt-in”, “extension”, and “extra” opportunities provided by the CCC. Being exposed to criteria signals that the opportunity has some degree of “value” so they get acclimated to criteria in place for valuable opportunities they may want to pursue.
- Making sure students have practice in areas that align with hurdles, challenges, and gate-keeping mechanisms they will face outside of Making Waves - applications, interviews, and general first impressions (e.g. dress, manners, and thank you cards).
- All MWA field trips and exposure opportunities explicitly state and hold students accountable to criteria, deadlines, and submission of materials.

### **Exposure**



- Opportunities to learn about HSIs, HBCUs, high ECC schools, and varied size schools
- Opportunities to be exposed to various careers - during the school year and summers
- Opportunities to interact with a growing Wave-Maker alumni network to learn about college and career pathways and experiences

## Partnership with Making Waves Education Foundation

Given MWA's unique relationship with Making Waves Education Foundation (MWEF) and its college success program, it is critical that MWA and MWEF are intentional in the work of aligning, supporting, and educating Wave-Makers, their families, and MWA's staff. Areas of programmatic alignment with respect to college and early career success include:

- Parent/guardian education for MWA parents/guardians about college and early career pathway support for MWA Wave-Makers starting as early as the 5th-6th grades
- Student education on college and early career pathway options and support as early as 5th-6th grades
- Staff education on the role of MWEF and its college and early career success programming
- Opportunities to visit area, state, and potentially national colleges and universities
- Opportunities to visit area organizations, companies, and businesses as well as opportunities for internships at area organizations, companies, and businesses

# Frameworks for Instruction, Professional Norms, and Mission/Values-Alignment

Two key Systems/Tools/Practices support the work of instructional and professional norming connected to MWA's mission and values. One is the newly developed Instructional Playbook. And the other is a comprehensive staff and teacher evaluation process. Below are some of the more critical components of the *Instructional Playbook* - [MWA: Instructional Playbook](#). A part of the Playbook focuses on instruction specifically while the other half focuses on classroom culture. The following elements below are all taken from the Instructional Playbook.

## Instructional Focus

Wave-Makers will experience welcoming, safe, engaging classroom routines which provide multiple points of entry to learning, including daily opportunities to read, write, listen, speak, and reset. Students will develop social-emotional skills across all disciplines and develop the communication and critical thinking skills that support college and career exploration.

## Purpose

The Instructional Playbook has been developed to ensure all teachers have a guide to understanding the school's expectations for instruction in all classrooms. It also serves as a support and identifies the school instructional priorities. This guide is aligned with the teacher evaluation rubric.

## Critical Components of Educational Equity

**Access**—Access refers to physical and institutional access to learning facilities, resources, and standards-aligned curricular programs to ensure every student is provided an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of the educational process.

**Instruction**—Instruction involves the use of instructional materials portraying positive and relevant images and varying perspectives of diverse groups as well as a solid commitment to an equitable approach to teaching and learning through:

### **Selected Strategies**

- ***Learning and Teaching Styles*** - A teacher's goal should be to explore various teaching styles to meet the needs of individual students and to further the learning of the class as a whole.
- ***Hands on Learning*** - Incorporate hands-on learning, a method that appeals to almost all students.
- ***Confronting Bias and Stereotypes in the Classroom*** - Teachers cannot control all of the messages students receive, but they can confront bias and stereotyping in their schools and classrooms.
- ***Fostering Respect for Diversity*** - Teachers in multicultural classrooms can take advantage of the diversity of their students to enrich their learning experiences.

**Materials**—Such as textbooks, audiovisual aids, and supplemental lessons should be screened to minimize – if not eliminate – bias in terms of content, graphics, pictures and language.

**Assessment** —Ensuring equity and excellence in school settings requires the use of assessments that account for variances in student learning styles and cultural backgrounds which are effectively aligned with school curricula, instruction, and performance targets.

**Beliefs**—Beliefs not only mold a school's educational environment but can also directly impact students' lives. Biased or prejudiced attitudes may be unintentional but can nevertheless result in discriminatory behavior that hinders student performance.

**Engagement**—Engagement is perhaps the most significant influence on self-esteem and motivation and can have a profound effect on a student's enthusiasm and ability to learn. Interactions are shaped by attitudes that often mask a tendency to relate to students differently depending on race, gender, ethnicity, ability, or other factors.

**Language**—Bias in language is a subtle but powerful influence in creating or reinforcing prejudicial attitudes and perspectives.

## Areas for Innovation Exploration

### Approach to Innovation at MWA

Expanding opportunities for our students to gain valuable exposure, experience, and knowledge of college and career options is important. Dynamic changes in the world such as an increasing adoption of artificial intelligence, shifts in the higher education model, and ongoing shifts in the world of work will continue to play out in the coming decades. As we have seen, some of these changes occur relatively quickly. In order to continue to have Wave-Makers have the necessary

skills, habits, and knowledge necessary to compete in college and early career, MWA will need to continue to anticipate and adapt its approaches, programs, and opportunities that will best prepare Wave-Makers to meet and gain admission to whatever the contemporary admissions or barriers to entry will be.

In the spring of 2021, two Haas School of Business (Cal Berkeley) students worked with us on exploring innovation at MWA. After doing some initial research on other schools and organizations, looking at innovation best practices, and talking with a variety of community member groups, they laid out the following strategies and principles that should guide MWA's approach to innovation.

### **Vision for Innovation at MWA**

*Promote and cultivate mission-aligned innovation to unlock the full potential of MWA to serve its Wave-Makers, teachers, staff, and community.*

- Achieve MWA **strategic goals** and address **persistent challenges** for the organization
- Promote **continuous improvement** to strengthen mission impact
- Foster **creative problem-solving** among MWA teachers and staff
- Deliver the **best possible experience** for Wave-Makers, teachers, staff, and the community

### **Key Innovation Principles**

The following principles were derived from a discussion with the MWA Board and leadership during a March 11, 2021 Board Meeting.

#### ***Innovate in service of the mission***

Any innovation being pursued should be in line with and contribute to the mission of MWA

#### ***Balance autonomy with direction***

Autonomy is critical to provide space for innovation but should be balanced with guardrails, guidance, and efforts to build core competencies

#### ***Embrace select opportunities for MWA to be cutting edge***

MWA has achieved and can continue to achieve breakthrough innovation in certain key functions

#### ***Recognize innovation as an enabler rather than as an identity***

Innovation should serve as an enabler to continue serving MWA's core mission: educating its Wave-Makers

As a result, the following areas are ones to explore over the next decade or so:

- **“X-Lab”** - Creating more opportunities for students to engage and work with new technologies. Some could come in the form of courses that combine traditional courses (such as science and math) with “Maker-Space” adapted courses. Additional experiences could include robotics teams and site-based science fairs using applied technology. Equipment needed would be items such as 3-D printers for use on campus.
- **Regional Independent Study Consortium** - This approach allows differentiated learning pathways for students by expanding opportunities to take classes MWA is not able to offer for a variety of reasonable reasons. This could allow students to continue to pursue learning and their areas of interest with teachers and students from other schools. A secondary benefit is expanding the opportunities for students to take classes with students from other places with both similar and different backgrounds. An example might be forming a consortium among area charter high schools to offer upperclassman advanced courses in science, math, or history. The course could combine Zoom and in-person classes as a way to offer classes one school might not be able to offer to three students by themselves but could draw up to 15 students from 5 schools.
- **Work Internships** - Identifying interested partners that would host internships with Wave-Makers during the summer between their junior and senior year. These would be offered at sites both locally in the Richmond area as well as the greater Bay Area.
- **College and Career Counseling Consortium** - Working with charter and traditional public high schools to set ambitious goals for college admissions, college matriculation, and career placement. Schools in the consortium would pool various resources and expertise to offer a range of education and support services for students in Richmond looking for college and career pathway opportunities.
- **Coding** - Developing some summer “coding camps” to offer to MWA and area students. Students in the camps would work towards earning specific certifications and fulfill project exercise requirements as a verification of their attainment of skills.
- **Community Service** - Given Wave-Makers’ desire to “recycle their success”, could we offer semester-long opportunities for internships, apprenticeships, and other structured opportunities for learning outside of the classroom setting? What organizations, companies, and businesses would be interested in hosting Wave-Makers wanting to “give back” to their community?

# Metrics for Measuring Progress and Growth

Metrics for overall success of MWA student success are:

Success Area/Indicator	Success Metric	Success Metric Goal
Instructional efficacy & parental partnership	High school graduation rates	95% or higher
College-going culture and academic program	College admissions	80% or higher: - 70% or more to 4-year schools - 10% or higher to community colleges
College access knowledge for parents/guardians (higher likelihood of graduating in 4-6 years)	% of students matriculating to colleges with ECCs of 80% or higher	30% or higher (30% or more of MWA seniors attending high ECC schools)
Family partnership and optimizing public revenue	Average Daily Attendance (ADA)	95% or higher
Healthy demand	Full enrollment and wait list size	- Desired enrollment for each grade - A wait list that comprises at least 20% of the grade level capacity
Staff culture & hiring practices	Staff and faculty retention rates	75% or higher
Allocation of resources	Budgets & Audits	- Not exceeding the budget - No more than a 5% or so difference between 2nd interim and final budget rev/expenses - Clean audits with no material findings

# Books, Articles, and Resources that Inform Our Approach

There are a number of books, articles, and other resources that have principally informed our programmatic approach. Below is a list of them for reference.

1. The original Making Waves Academy Charter petition
  - a. Mission (revised in 2013 but taken from the original)
  - b. Vision (revised in 2013)
  - c. Values (revised in 2013 but taken from the original 12 values)
  - d. Wave-Maker Affirmation (taken from the original MWEF one; proposed revision)
2. The *Wave-Maker Success Framework* (<https://making-waves.org/wave-maker-framework/>)
3. The Motivation Breakthrough: 6 Secrets to Turning On the Tuned Out Child by Richard Lavoie
4. Teach Like a Champion by Doug Lemov
5. The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle
6. College Knowledge: What it Really Takes for Students to Succeed and What We Can Do to Get Them Ready by David T. Conley