



Division Director Board Report

Middle School

Division Director Board Report - January 31, 2019

From the Director's Desk

Dr. E. Ward-Jackson

The first semester of the academic year has come to a close, and we have accomplished a lot! By way of appreciation, I would like to use this space to acknowledge our Middle School Senior Leaders, Coordinators, Teacher Leaders, Faculty and Staff for their initiative, connectedness, resilience, and commitment as we have successfully managed and balanced many competing priorities alongside a 20% increase in our student population, three major facility moves, and the temporary blending of the two divisions of our Academy while we share space. Our team has demonstrated extreme effort, intentionality, and professionalism in balancing these anticipated items, along with the demands of our Pittsburg expansion tasks, WASC expectations, and intensely rigid focus on teaching and learning amidst major change and transition. They have also stepped up, and in, to support me, each other, and our Wave Makers as we've managed the various maternity and paternity leaves of key leaders and lead teachers. I could not ask for a more committed, supportive, and aligned team.

This report will focus in on our student support services team, as well as parent and guardian engagement. Our Deans, Social Worker, and our Parent Coordinator have shared some insight, analysis, and next steps regarding how we continue to support our Wave Makers in the wrap around services that truly makes our school unique, while also working to enable and support our Wave Makers and families with the tools and engagement that will best set them up for indefinite success.

MWAMS Priority Areas

Key three priority areas of Making Waves Academy Middle School for AY 18-19:

1. Focus on Dynamic Data Driven Instruction
2. Focus on Cultivating 21st Century Teachers & Scholars
3. Focus on Implementing Restorative Practices

School wide Goals

Ongoing WASC Accreditation Work –

Goal #2 Support for All Learners

Develop vertically aligned programs between the Middle School and Upper School that differentiate along a continuum of learners and talents and allow for learning in areas beyond academic program, both in the classroom and the school as a whole.

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Dean of Students

Eric Mingo, Brandon Greene, Emilio Ortega

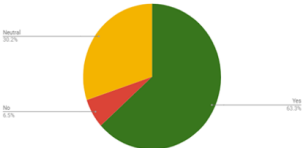
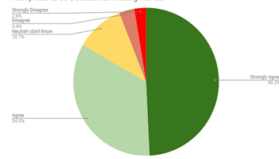
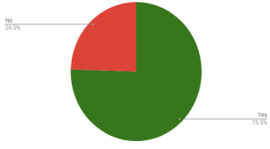
What?

Last August, the Deans set an ambitious goal as a Key Performance Indicator to achieve a 35% decrease in disciplinary referrals/EdClick entries during semester 1 of 2018, in comparison to the same time period last year, despite the considerable influx of students being served in this expansion year. In addition to tracking improvement levels with general referral numbers, the Deans are measuring their success and identifying areas for priority intervention based on student Culture and Climate survey results related to student perceptions of safety, support, and connectedness on campus.

Referral Trends

Break out by MONTH			
Month	2018-2019 Totals	2017-2018 Totals	%Difference
August	99	87	14%
September	288	203	42%
October	253	200	27%
November	115	145	-19%
December	45	161	-64%
January	106	167	-37%

Student Survey Results

<p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~60% of Wavemakers feel Deans keep them safe and make themselves available when they need support. (Figure 1) Wave Makers are most worried about self-harm, harm between students and getting good grades. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Do you feel that the Deans help keep MWA safe?</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Figure 1</p>	<p>Connectedness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~83% of Wave Makers are proud of MWA. (Figure 3) ~70% of Wave Makers would recommend MWA to their friends and family. 	<p style="text-align: center;">I am proud to be a student at Making Waves.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Figure 3</p>
<p>Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of Wave Makers know of a safe person they can talk with if they feel unsafe or have problems. (Figure 2) Over 60% of Wave Makers feel they are supported in resolving issues and/or making things right when conflict has occurred (Restorative Practices). 	<p style="text-align: center;">If you don't feel safe or have problems, do you know of a safe MWA staff/teacher you can talk with?</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Figure 2</p>		

So What?

- The Deans have achieved an overall reduction in referrals of about 6% in S1 of 2018-2019 compared to the prior year. While there was a significant increase in referrals compared to the prior year in the first three months of the school year, as predicted, the bulk these of referrals (over 44% of all referrals) were from incoming 5th grade students. These inflated numbers are the result of the steep MWA enculturation curve where 5th grade students are held to the highest standard of conduct from the very first day they enter the Academy. Incoming students quickly learn MWA's routines, expectations and procedures, while clearly testing the boundaries of acceptable behavior in their new school environment in their first three months as Wave Makers.

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- By November of 2018, our referral numbers began to meet and exceed our goal of reducing referrals by 35% compared to the prior year, based on month-to-month comparisons, as students learned that they were being held consistently to high behavioral expectations, as Teachers developed confidence in implementing Restorative Practices as a school wide initiative, and as students began to turn to trusted adults for support when conflicts emerged and as harm occurred in the community.
- As a testament to the fact that our students are internalizing MWA's Restorative school culture and buying-in to our school wide expectations that are relationship-centered and rooted in connectedness, support and safety, it should be noted that in the month of December, a month often marked by a spike in referrals around the Holiday season, referral numbers showed historic improvements compared to previous years, and were down a tremendous 64%.
- Even with these impressive gains, areas for intervention emerged from our Culture and Climate survey results that will require further adaptation and intervention on the part of Leadership in the second semester. Most importantly, our MS Wave Makers highlighted that they are most worried about self-harm, harm between students and stress related to getting good grades.

Now What?

- In response to elevated student concerns about self-harm in the community and high levels of stress related to getting good grades, Mr. Greene will be leading the charge with the PMSC Implementation team to develop Social Emotional Learning offerings for teachers and students on the domain of coping mechanisms. This effort will focus on foundational elements of how to best cope with stress by developing the emotional vocabulary of students and enhancing their understanding of the neurophysiology of stress and its underpinnings.
- In response to student anxieties about harm between students, and to increase the percentage of students who feel that they are supported in resolving issues and making things right when conflict has occurred, the Deans will prioritize providing additional professional development offerings to teachers as requested and as referral trends of individual teachers indicate the need for further support and intervention.
- The Deans will partner with the MS Social Worker to identify future student and parent workshop offerings that address student trends (e.g. stress management, social media safety and awareness, Notice, Talk, Act protocol for students, etc.).
- Continue to market Restorative Practices to all stakeholders as a value add framework that improves school climate and culture, increases student safety, and maximizes the impact of instructional minutes on student deportment and academic performance.

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Middle School Social Worker

Danilo Garcia, Middle School Social Worker

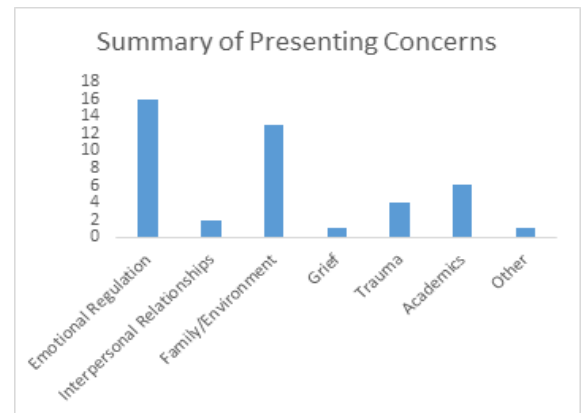
What?

- In collaboration with MSSL and Parent/Guardian Engagement Coordinator, two parent workshops were conducted prior to the winter break, focusing on stress management, coping skills, and resources, with an average attendance of 27 parent/guardians.
- Monthly grade-level referral and consultation meetings have initiated as of January 2019 with the intention of supporting teaching staff, streamlining referrals, and aligning with stakeholders.
- Standing clinical care meetings with our contracted psychological services provider have been reformatted to enhance efficiency and inclusiveness of stakeholder feedback.

So What?

- DOS, Parent/Guardian, and Teaching staff comprise the top three referral sources, highlighting the importance of continuous collaboration with said stakeholders.
- Of the 36 referrals received during November and December 2018, the top presenting concerns were:

- Emotional Regulation
 - Feeling stressed, sad, depressed, anxious, or lonely
- Family/Environment
 - Absent parent(s), family conflict, economic instability



- Social-emotional supports (e.g. safety/risk assessments, individual counseling, group counseling, and case management) are currently provided to 61 students, or 10.9% of the student body. In addition, there are 8 confirmed students, or 1.4%, actively receiving external services such as individual, group or family therapy.
- Although student/self-referrals remained consistent, a recent Culture and Climate Survey, indicated only approximately 75% of wavemakers report that they can identify a supporting adult if they feel unsafe or have problems.

Now What?

The Social Worker office will continue to mobilize in an effort to identify and address student needs and implementation of services.

- Collaborate with DOS, staff and parent/guardians to target 25% of students reporting lack of supporting adult to speak with.
- Continue to educate staff and other stakeholders about the social-emotional referral process, and expectations.
- Assess and monitor for trends across divisions specifically for opportunities of alignment with Upper School Social Worker and Student Support Services personnel.

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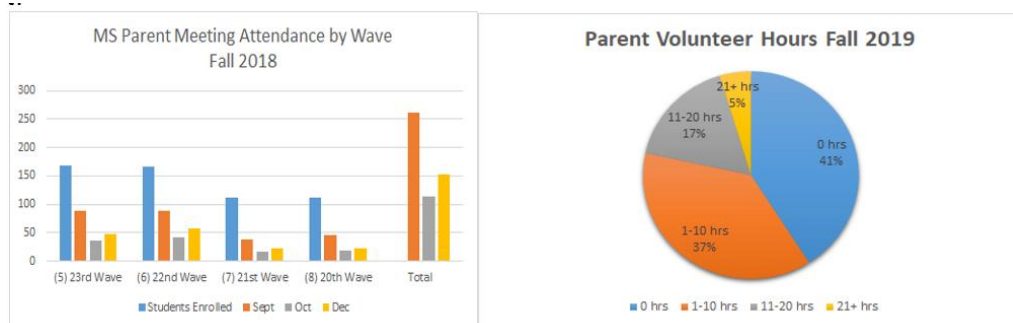
Parent and Guardian Engagement

Eva Yabar

What?

- **Successes:**
 - Parents/Guardians of the 5th and 6th grade students had the strongest attendance.
 - Nearly half of families were represented during Back to School Day, and over a quarter of families attend parent meetings, on average.
 - The majority of parents have completed at least one parent volunteer hour.
 - By surveying the needs of parents and collaborating with the Data and Assessment team, we planned and facilitated PowerSchool workshops to support parents in monitoring their students' academic progress.
 - Parents and Guardians were quickly and easily mobilized to address needs as they arise
- **Challenges:**
 - We have not yet disaggregated the data to track the attendance numbers of our newest 6th grade families, as well as the attendance of parents who represent our target group such as English Language Learners, Black/African American Students and SPED students.
 - Increase opportunities for engaging parent workshops to address the topics of English, Technology, Social Emotional Tips, and community building activities for parents.

So What?



High levels of Parent/Guardian involvement are directly correlated to academic progress and healthy social emotional growth. MWA parents are on track to accomplishing their goal of completing 20 hours for this academic year. As we continue to track parent volunteer hours, we have identified that our current system does not yet allow us to easily disaggregate the data to determine which students are represented.

Parents and Guardians were quickly and easily mobilized to address needs as they arise, including participating in the Contra Costa County Office of Education Board meeting to advocate for the expansion of MWA, volunteering to support in the traffic loop as the loop changed during construction, and in providing support on move days by decorating classrooms, arranging classrooms and otherwise helping the community.

Now What?

Parent/Guardian Volunteers

We will continue to create opportunities for authentic and meaningful parent engagement throughout the rest of the academic year so that parents can complete their hours in ways that are beneficial to their children's growth. The election of Parent Wave Representatives will support this effort.

We will identify a more effective method of tracking parent attendance. We will then disaggregate the data to track the attendance numbers of our newest 6th grade families and parents who represent our critical learner subgroups, as a means of identifying how to make our opportunities for parent engagement more relevant.