

MINUTES

# Math & Science Academy Merger Committee

Thursday, Jan. 12, 2023 at 4:15 p.m.  
Room 101 B

1. Call to Order: 4:15 p.m. (Maggie Burggraaff)
2. Roll Call of Members:

**Maggie Burggraaff, ~~Caroline Maddux~~, David Johnston, Diane Thiegis, Heather Krisko, Janice Erickson, Jamie Brodd, Jennifer Heydt-Nelson, Justin Gehring, Kate Hinton, ~~Kristin Walters~~, Lavanya Kanukurthy, Leigh Ann Ahmad, Noah Yehalashet, ~~Stephanie Luedtke~~, Steve Hoemann, Randy Vetch, ~~Surender Maddela~~, ~~Teresa Ward~~, Wendell Sletten, Mary Yapp**

3. New Business -
  - a. (30 min) Discussion and consolidation of WHY Questions for WLA  
The committee worked on determining which questions were best fit for different groups to answer: See key for questions dissemination.
  - b. (30 min) Discussion and consolidation of HOW Questions for WLA  
The committee worked on determining which questions were best fit for different groups to answer: See key for questions dissemination.
  - c. (10 min) Determine which parent member is available and interested in joining myself, MSA administration, and Dan Ellingson to attend the joint meeting with WLA on 1/18/23 at 4:30 p.m. at MSA.  
Parent members were encouraged to reach out to M. Burggraaff if they are interested in attending.
1. Next Meeting (TBD by MSA BOD)
  - a. Questions will be sent to WLA.
  - b. WLA will send MSA questions.
  - c. MSA's Merger Committee will meet to review/prepare WLA's questions.
2. Adjournment  
5:30 p.m.

Please add your questions for WLA that focus on:  
**HOW** WLA envisions the unfolding of a possible merger with MSA.

MSA Admin Responsibilities

WLA Admin Responsibilities

Policy

Future Item

BOD Issue

Climate

1. According to the MDE, the merged school must continue under the identity of one of the merging schools and retain the district number for that school. Does WLA envision WLA or MSA being the identity to which the merged school is retained?
  - a. Legacy Funding
2. How does WLA plan to reach out to parents for feedback and to determine if your families are in support of having schools in two different districts? How has your community reacted to the news of this merger and are they in support of your endeavors? How has WLA leadership reached out to their community asking how they feel about the merger?
3. What is WLA's timeline for a decision? If the answer is yes, what are the next steps?
4. What are your non-negotiables? What are your priorities?
  - a. Board and Administration
5. How can we best partner around the areas (ie., Middle School) in which we overlap?
6. How do you think we can engage creative collaboration in making difficult decisions?
7. How is WLA going to ensure the elementary students are ready for the challenging curriculum of MSA?
8. What do you envision a merger to look like? Thinking fiscally.
  - a. How will the merger be audited to ensure best practice?
9. How would we go about developing a merger plan?
10. How do you see the costs of a merger being absorbed into each school's separate school's budgets: separate legal counsel, separate financial firms, etc during the discovery and exploration phase of this venture?
11. How do you see straddling 2 different school districts and school calendars impacting this decision?
12. How do you see the merger process proceeding and on what timeline?
13. How do you envision the combination of the 2 board structures and on what timeline?
14. How will students get to school based on the fact that the current sites are in different districts? What would be the additional cost and time?
15. How will academic standards be determined? + Specifically for math and science rigor?

16. How has WLA met their enrollment targets for the past five years? Do you have a waiting list for attendance?
17. How does a merger benefit both our visions to make a best school experience for all of our students?
18. How does WLA as community view the importance of (or not?) of "math and science" focus of MSA?
19. Are you open to the campus arrangement proposal by MSA
  - a. Facilities
20. When it comes to the process - is there anyone on your staff dedicated to communication? Anyone experienced in change management?
21. What are your thoughts on curriculum for overlapping grades?
22. How does a merger impact your plans for Pre-K?
23. How might the schools address shuttles between schools and their impact on school start times?
24. How will both school's decision makers share key financial, enrollment, bussing, and curriculum information for thorough due diligence?
25. How would we determine which authorizer to use?
26. How would the boards be merged?
27. How would merging affect facilities?
28. How would the identity of each school be affected?
29. How would different departments function together? IE English, Science, Special Education for example... Or would elementary and 6-12 function separately?
30. Would enrollment numbers ensure the job security of all teachers at WLA/MSA currently employed?
31. How would different departments; English, science, special education for example, work together? Or would elementary and 6-12 function separately?

**Please add your questions for WLA that focus on:  
WHY WLA is interested in a merger with MSA.**

MSA Admin Responsibilities

WLA Admin Responsibilities

Policy

Future Item

BOD Issue

Climate

1. What first sparked your interest in a merger? What has changed since you first considered it?" Have you considered merging with anyone else?
2. What questions do you have of us?
3. Why is a merger beneficial to WLA at this time?
  - a. Do you feel we have shared vision?
  - b. Is there a benefit Financially?
  - c. Will this k-12 approach improve academic performance?

- d. What potential drawbacks?
4. Why is WLA willing to entertain the idea of switching buildings?
  5. Why do you feel a merger with MSA is in the best interest of your families? Your teachers? Your community culture? The MSA community? MSA teachers? MSA students?
  6. Do you meet your goals for high school expansion by merging?
  7. Why do you think MSA wants to merge with WLA?
  8. What is your current retention rate of students? Do you think this merger will increase or decrease that rate and why?
  9. What benefits to a merger do you see as most meaningful? Do you see this as a win win?
  10. Do you see alignment in the mission, Vision, values of our two organizations?
  11. Why are you proposing a move from your brand new campus? What other factors are driving this willingness?