



MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Superintendent's Report – September

The Superintendent's Report is designed to provide the Milwaukee Board of School Directors and the MPS community with an update on current activities underway to support the district goals of academic achievement; student, family and community engagement; and effective and efficient operations as they are aligned to the district's eight strategic objectives:



Close the GAP



Re-envision Partnerships



Educate the Whole Child



Strengthen Communication Systems & Outreach Strategies



Redefine the MPS Experience



Develop Our Workforce



Rethink High Schools



Improve Organizational Processes

Day One for Traditional Calendar Schools

The first day of school for our Traditional Calendar Schools was September 5! Governor Scott Walker, DPI Superintendent Tony Evers, State Senator David Craig, Alderman Mark Borkowski, Directors Paula Phillips and Terry Falk, and other community partners join my team and me as we celebrated Day One at Whitman Elementary School. Students were greeted by Bango, mascot for the Milwaukee Bucks, and by members of We Six, a jazz ensemble from the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music. MPS has declared the 2017–18 school year as the Year of the Arts.



Meetings from late August through mid-September follow

I attended the **United Way** partnership meeting. We are constantly brainstorming how we can raise more dollars, engage more people, and drive more impact for the community fund which supports our community schools. I also met with Jayne Thoma from United Way. We continue to work on identifying ways to increase volunteer engagement.





I participated in the ribbon-cutting celebration for the brand new multi-sport court at **Browning Elementary**. The collective impact demonstrated by the corporate sector—specifically the Milwaukee Bucks and Johnson Controls, was amazing and commendable. Their investment in this community is proof to our young people that they are special, they are worth investing in and we believe they have the ability to be successful – both inside and outside of the classroom.

I participated in the **88Nine** No Empty Backpacks event at Lancaster Elementary.

I attended a meeting with Rock Ventures at **Bradley Tech High School**. I was MPS proud to showcase Bradley Tech, given the commitment from local educational institutions in the success of the school and position it has as a national best practice model in technology and trade education.

I co-hosted a meet and greet for **Dr. Mahalia Hines** (President, Common Ground Foundation). Their mission is to empower high school students from under-served communities to become future leaders.



The program's focus is on character development, social impact, healthy living, technology, financial literacy, creative arts, and global leadership.

My Senior Team and I held our weekly meeting at **Milwaukee French Immersion**, in support of **the Kohl's Corporate – Backpack Giveaway**. We are appreciative of Kohl's for the gifts of backpacks filled with all the tools and school supplies needed for a successful school year. The incredible generosity of Kohl's to ensure that each student start their educational journey off strong was truly commendable.



I attended the **Ascension Mobile Dental Clinic** launch at **River Trail Elementary School**. This event is vital to the students we serve at MPS. In our community, more than 60,000 children live in poverty and lack access to basic dental care. These children are at high risk for tooth decay, infection, and dental pain that keeps them out of school and negatively impacts their quality of life. Tragically enough, dental pain is a leading cause of students missing school in America - with children missing more than 51 million hours of education each year. With many of our students being economically disadvantaged, it is invigorating to participate in such a worthwhile initiative.

KOHL'S



I attended and presented at the **Kiwanis Club** meeting. What a great opportunity to enlighten the community on the incredible strides we are making as a district! Many were interested in learning about our Collective Impact Strategy for Improvement: It Takes a Village, Collective Impact in MPS, and other topics including: Leading Through Equity, Mindfulness Over Matter, Department of Black & Latino Male Achievement (BLMA), Year of the Arts (YOTA), Universal Driver Education, Culinary Arts, and Empowering Families. The audience was engaging and it was rewarding to experience their passion for MPS.

The **Salvation Army**, in collaboration with WISN, held their annual backpack drive at Benjamin Franklin Elementary. For five years, we have had the privilege of receiving generous backpack and school supply donations from the Salvation Army and WISN.



I was at **James Madison High School** for the announcement of the Sprint \$1 Million Project. Nearly 3,000 MPS high school students will receive a free wireless device and internet service, thanks to the \$1 million project. Sprint will provide 2,800 devices each year for five years. Devices will be distributed to students through our high school library media centers.

Events/Programs/Announcements

District scores improve on ACT exam

Milwaukee Public Schools 2017 graduates recorded higher ACT test scores than their predecessors according to results released Thursday, September 7, 2017. Over the past five years, the district has seen scores climb in English, mathematics, reading and science. The ACT is a nationwide test of proficiency in English, mathematics, reading, and science designed to measure the skills needed for success in first-year college coursework.

Five-year trends show continued progress for those who graduated in 2013 compared to 2017 graduates. For example, the composite reading score climbed from an average of 15.9 in 2013 to 16.7 in 2017. Average ACT scores in science improved from 16.4 to 17.2 over five years. The district's composite score increased from 15.8 to 16.5. The state composite score fell from 22.1 to 20.5 in the same time frame, but it must be noted that the number of students taking the ACT increased dramatically when ACT became the state accountability test.



The percentage of students who met college readiness benchmarks increased from year to year as well as over the five-year period in English, reading and science. In the important writing component of the ACT exam, average writing scores for white and Hispanic students were higher than the state average for those same ethnic groups. MPS students who are white earned an average score of 6.6 compared to 6.3 for white students across the state. MPS Hispanic students outpaced their statewide peers with scores of 5.9 compared to 5.7.

Bucks and Johnson Controls Open \$150,000 Multi-sport Complex at Browning Elementary

The Milwaukee Bucks and Johnson Controls recently held a grand opening ceremony for a \$150,000 multi-sport complex on the campus of Browning Elementary School and Silver Spring Neighborhood Center in Milwaukee's Westlawn neighborhood. The project was initially announced in May and construction had been ongoing in the months since the announcement. Browning Elementary School students had their first chance to play in the new space, which includes six basketball courts, one futsal court, a soccer field, and additional recreation space, all contained within a 200-meter track. The complex, which has Bucks and Johnson Controls branding, has been configured to allow flexibility for multiple sports such as volleyball and tennis, and will be well lit to provide a safe space for recreation during evening hours.

Community generosity provides students with the tools to succeed

MPS partner Radio Milwaukee, with the support of The Milwaukee Business Journal, recently finished its second annual "No Empty Backpacks" school supply drive. The effort encouraged hundreds of people and businesses from across the community to purchase and donate needed school supplies for low-income students. Special deliveries were made to six MPS schools: **Carson, Hi Mount, Lancaster, Mitchell, Victory** and **Thurston Woods**. In all, the drive collected 37,389 items including 350 backpacks plus supplies such as pens, notebooks, protractors, glue, highlighters, markers, calculators, folders, flash drives, pencils and paper. Students at Lancaster School received their backpacks at a special assembly that included a musical performance by eclectic Milwaukee hip-hop collective New Age Narcissism.

Awards/Recognition

MPS Alumni Weekend

The Run Back to School and the MPS Foundation Inaugural Alumni Weekend were great successes! We had a great turnout and beautiful weather for the 10th Annual Run Back to School. Between volunteers and participants, we had over 1,000 people participate in the run to support the health and well-being of our youth, and there were nearly 350 people in attendance for the first-ever Alumni Awards Dinner held at the Italian Community Center – it was a sellout!

Nine individuals were honored at the inaugural Alumni Awards Dinner in the following seven categories:



- Start, Stay, Succeed Champion Award: **Michael Harris**, principal, and **Nathaniel Deans**, teacher, Riverside University High School (Riverside High School Alumni)
- Outstanding Alumni Award: **Patricia Contreras**, Director-Global Community Relations and Contributions, Rockwell Automation (Milwaukee Tech High School Alumna)
- Young Alumni Award: **Keith Stanley**, Executive Director, Near West Side Partners (Rufus King High School Alumnus)
- Service Award: **Jackie Herd-Barber**, Community Volunteer Extraordinaire (Custer High School Alumna)
- Corporate Partner Award: **William “Bill” Berezowitz**, Vice President and General Manager, GE Healthcare (Bay View High School Alumnus)
- Honorary Alumni Award: **Joe and Jennifer Bartolotta**, Bartolotta Restaurant Group
- Lifetime Achievement Award: **Allan “Bud” Selig**, Commissioner Emeritus, Major League Baseball (Washington High School Alumnus)

The event also served as a kick-off to the Foundation’s annual giving campaign, which raises funds to support high-quality programming for MPS students at all grade levels, provide resources for district projects and special educational events, and award more than \$60,000 in college scholarships to MPS graduates each year.

United Way held their Backpack Coalition giving school supplies to freshmen at JMAC, South Division, Bradley Tech, and to students at Browning, Hopkins-Lloyd, and Lincoln Avenue elementary schools. The students were so excited to receive the supplies and to see the generosity of our community.

United Way also held the Community Combined Giving Campaign Kickoff at the zoo. This year’s United Way team is full of energy and committed to a very successful campaign.

Heart & Stroke Walk

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the MPS family that participated in Sunday’s 2017 Heart & Stroke Walk at Veterans Park! MPS had a great showing with over 400 participants. Special thanks to the following schools for going the extra mile to support and encourage the participants along the walk route:

- **Bay View High School** – Drumline, cheerleaders & staff
- **Vincent High School** – Cheerleaders, staff & provided services through the Culinary Arts Program
- **James Madison Academic Campus** – Provided services through the Culinary Arts Program
- **Washington High School** – Cheerleaders, mascot & staff
- **Riverside University High School** – Cheerleaders, football team, & staff

