



**MILWAUKEE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



## Superintendent’s Report – November 2021

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 strategic objectives and the Five Priorities for Success.



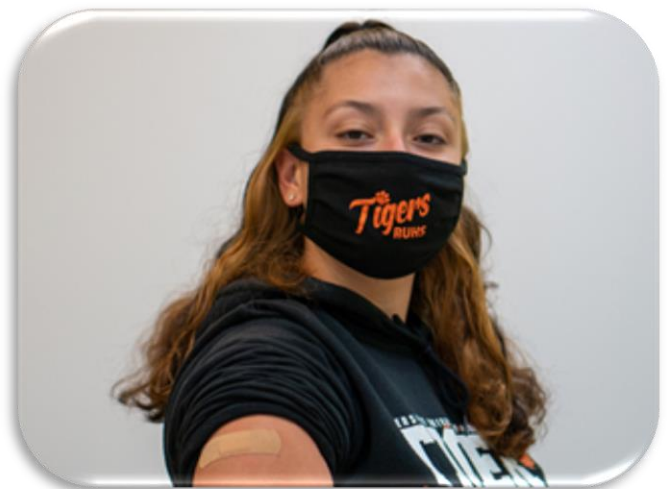
## COVID-19 vaccine approved and available for children ages 5 to 11

As of November 2, 2021, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) recommends the pediatric COVID-19 vaccine for children 5-11 years of age. Getting vaccinated protects students from COVID-19 and protects families, friends, and our schools and communities.

Milwaukee Public Schools will continue to put forth the effort to make the vaccine convenient and accessible to families and is partnering with the Milwaukee Health Department to offer the COVID-19 vaccine at 12 school sites throughout the city.

Appointments are not needed. See the complete schedule of clinics' dates, times, and locations by [downloading the flyer](#).

A signed consent form is needed for children to receive the vaccine.



[Download the vaccine consent form in English.](#)

[Download the vaccine consent form in Spanish.](#)

To view a list of all school vaccine clinics across the city, visit the [Milwaukee Health Department COVID-19 webpage](#).

For more information about vaccines, visit the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

### **MPS opens HVAC lab at Obama High School**

Students at MPS Barack Obama School of Career and Technical Education now have access to training and college credits to prepare for careers in the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) field. Generous support from Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) and Johnson Controls, through the MPS Foundation, have contributed to the construction of a new HVAC lab. The HVAC field, along with other skilled trades, is a high-demand area for jobs, offering excellent salaries and career growth.

MPS and MATC have partnered to develop a curriculum to train students for HVAC industry certification and become eligible for high-paying jobs upon graduation. The program includes dual enrollment at MATC, allowing students to earn free college credits. Students who successfully complete the program can earn up to 16 credits—a full semester at MATC.

A generous equipment donation from Johnson Controls will allow students to train using the latest high-tech tools and modern equipment for in-demand jobs. Johnson Controls is investing \$15 million at community colleges over five years to expand college associate degree and certificate programs in HVAC, fire and security, and digital building automation systems across the United States.

The Johnson Controls investment includes the hiring of a success coach dedicated to both Obama High School and traditional MATC students training in HVAC. Students will receive real-world experience, internship opportunities, and professional connections.

MPS is grateful to partners MATC and Johnson Controls for their investment in helping to prepare students for successful careers after graduation.

Barack Obama School of Career and Technical Education is located at 5075 N. Sherman Blvd. in Milwaukee.



### **MPS students—begin career training in high school!**

MPS youth apprentices are getting on-the-job training while still in high school! Students in the program attend school half the day and spend the rest of their day in a paid job. Training prepares

them for high-paying, in-demand jobs in growing fields. Some students in the program continue their employment full time after high school.

Who is eligible? High school juniors and seniors can participate; sophomores and juniors attended the information session on November 17, 2021, to learn more. Most employers prefer that students have at least a 2.0 GPA and have a 90% attendance rate (some exceptions may be possible).

Career areas include:

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, AV Technology, and Communications
- Engineering
- Finance
- Health Sciences
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics



### **Milwaukee Public Schools and Verizon Partner to Create Learning Lab for Students**

Milwaukee Public Schools is proud to announce our Verizon Innovative Learning Lab at O.W. Holmes School made possible through a partnership with Verizon, Heart of America, and the J. Orin Edson Entrepreneurship + Innovation Institute at Arizona State University. The lab is currently being utilized by students at the school, giving students and teachers access to emerging technology such as Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR/VR), Coding, 3D Printing & Artificial Intelligence (AI).

As part of Verizon's commitment to digital inclusion under Citizen Verizon, the company's responsible business plan for economic, environmental, and social advancement, Verizon Innovative Learning, working through its nonprofit partners, provides free technology, free internet access, and hands-on learning experiences to help under-resourced students receive the education they deserve and help prepare them for today's digital economy.

"This partnership with MPS and Verizon aligns with the district's priorities for success, which include improving academic achievement, improving district and school culture, and strengthening collaboration," MPS Superintendent Dr. Keith P. Posley said. "It continues our emphasis on the STEM fields while preparing our students for future success. We are grateful to Verizon for this lab which will help give our young people the tools they need to compete in today's job market."

Powered by a next-gen, technology-infused curriculum that aims to fundamentally change the way teachers teach and students learn, Verizon Innovative Learning gives students the opportunity to do more. In partnership with non-profit partner Heart of America, who leads the transformation of the state-of-the-art space in collaboration with the schools and district teams, and the J. Orin Edson Entrepreneurship + Innovation Institute at Arizona State University, who provides an immersive

curriculum and training for the teachers, the space enables hands-on experience for students with emerging technologies.

## Celebrate Native American Heritage Month



In honor of [Native American Heritage Month](#), we celebrate the accomplishments, cultures, histories, and perseverance of Native nations. The following are some ways to celebrate Native American peoples during November and at all times of year.

### **Start your day, meeting, or gathering with a Land Acknowledgement.**

If you are in Milwaukee, use the Milwaukee Public Schools Land Acknowledgement.

*We acknowledge that Milwaukee lies on traditional Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho-Chunk homeland along the southwest shores of Lake Michigan, part of North America's largest system of freshwater lakes. On this site, the*

*Milwaukee, Menominee, and Kinnickinnic rivers meet, and the people of Wisconsin's Menominee, Ojibwe, Ho-Chunk, Oneida, and Mohican sovereign nations remain present to this day.*

See the [First Nations Studies](#) page for more information about Land Acknowledgements.

### **Honor Native American Veterans.**

Native Americans have consistently enlisted in the Armed Forces at higher rates per capita than any other racial group. The [National Museum of the American Indian](#) has information about how Native Americans have served in all major wars in our country's history, paired with anecdotes and photographs from veterans. [The Library of Congress](#) has recorded audio and video interviews with Native American veterans about their experiences serving in the U.S. military.

### **Read books by Native American authors.**

The [American Indian Library Association](#) publishes recommended books by Native American authors every two years. Additionally, the [American Indians in Children's Literature](#) blog by Dr. Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese publish their recommended lists annually, and their site contains detailed reviews of books about Native Americans, checking for accuracy and authenticity.

### **Learn about First Nations of Wisconsin.**

Wisconsin is home to 11 federally recognized tribes and one tribe seeking federal recognition. Watch the [Tribal Histories](#) series by PBS Wisconsin to hear tribal storytellers sharing the culture and oral traditions that have shaped their communities across generations. View articles, maps, and videos with stories about culture and language from Native communities around the central Great Lakes on [The Ways](#).

For additional information and resource recommendations, contact First Nations Studies in MPS by emailing [997@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:997@milwaukee.k12.wi.us) or by calling 414-902-7312.

## Milwaukee Public Schools Recognizes School Board Director Marva Herndon

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) joins the Wisconsin Music Educators Association (WMEA) in recognizing Milwaukee Board of School Directors member Marva Herndon as the recipient of the 2021 WMEA Distinguished School Board Member award. Each year, the WMEA recognizes a school board member who is an advocate for the importance of music as part of a well-rounded education.

Director Herndon has served on the Board of School Directors since 2019 as a representative of District #1. An MPS graduate of West Division (now Milwaukee High School of the Arts), she is well-known in the education community throughout Wisconsin for her research and fierce commitment to public education, challenging the policies that have defunded and cut services to public schools and demanding the public schools which all children deserve.

“We are delighted to honor Director Herndon for her work and advocacy for public education,” MPS Superintendent Dr. Keith P. Posley said. “She is a champion for public schools and recognizes the positive impact they have on our young people in Milwaukee, specifically through music education. Director Herndon is more than deserving of this recognition and the district applauds her continued support of Milwaukee Public Schools.”

This year’s award winners were highlighted as part of the 2021 Wisconsin State Music Conference at the President’s Welcome Reception from 7:00 - 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 27 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison, Wisconsin.



## Susan Richardson is honored at White House ceremony



Under blue skies on the South Lawn of the White House, President and First Lady Joe and Jill Biden honored a group of about 100 Teachers of the Year on October 18, 2021. MPS is proud to share that Susan Richardson, who teaches third grade at Milwaukee German Immersion School, was among the honorees who took part in the award ceremony.

Awardees were named in autumn 2020. The ceremony, normally held in spring, was pushed back to October due to COVID-19. Yet the delay did not dampen the thrill of traveling to Washington, D.C., to be honored for hard work and dedication. Richardson shared, “I am carrying with me our students in

Wisconsin, who continue to relentlessly show up every day through the pandemic. I carry with me the teachers in Wisconsin, who are tirelessly making miracles happen during a time that feels like the work never ends. I’m especially proud to be carrying with me the staff at Milwaukee German

Immersion School. Our whole MPS community is incredible, and I am honored to be representing our state and my district, which is full of passionate teachers.”

Richardson has taught at Milwaukee German Immersion School since 2013. A Wisconsin native, she was attracted to the immersion experience for her own children and for her career. Her teaching philosophy centers on triggering curiosity in her students; when students get excited by discussing questions, ideas, and theories, they eagerly seek answers and successfully learn content. Richardson is recognized for promoting equity in her instruction and building relationships with students to serve their individual needs.

MPS also congratulates Koren Jackson, a special education teacher at Transition High School who has taught in MPS since 1999. Koren was also selected as a Teacher of the Year in fall 2020.

Congratulations, Susan and Koren!

For more information about vaccines, visit the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

### **MPS celebrates School Psychology Week November 8–12, 2021**

National School Psychology Week is being celebrated November 8–12, 2021! Promoted by the National Association of School Psychologists since 2002, this annual observance celebrates the work of school psychologists in supporting student wellness, achievement, and personal growth.

MPS currently employs about 163 school psychologists, all of whom have a master’s degree or doctoral degree and are certified in school psychology. School psychologists have a wide range of roles and responsibilities as special education evaluation team members, violence prevention specialists, building-based psychologists, crisis team members, ropes and challenge supervisors, suicide prevention trainers, multi-tiered intervention specialists, and anti-racism educators. This team supports individual students, groups of students, staff, and families in evaluating and responding to current needs. They also engage proactively with students to promote confidence, reduce risk-taking, and help children and teens navigate daily challenges.

As the pandemic has evolved, the school psychology team has actively met to discuss the changing needs of students, respond to new challenges, and implement plans for outreach to children and families. School psychologists were an integral part in helping students and staff cope with virtual learning, social distancing, and school closures.

The theme of this year’s National School Psychology Week is “Let’s Get in GEAR (Grow, Engage, Advocate, Rise).” The theme offers a challenge to grow both personally and professionally; engage in best practices; advocate for children’s access to mental health and learning resources; and rise toward resilience and renewal despite the challenges of the past.

This week, we appreciate our school psychologists who have the skills to assist students and staff in growing and working together while shifting gears to meet the demands of school and life. School psychologists also help facilitate positive change by improving school culture, identifying systems-level change, and advocating for school and individual needs.

Thank you, school psychology team!

