



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Superintendent's Report – February 2024

The Superintendent's Report is designed to provide the Milwaukee Board of School Directors and the MPS community with an update on current activities under way 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.



MPS Celebrates Black History Month

The spirit of Black History Month is thriving within the MPS community. Students and educators throughout the district have been effectively planning, preparing, and engaging in a myriad of activities, projects, and performances. The primary focus is to pay homage to the invaluable contributions of Black Americans who have not only played a crucial role in building our nation but also have contributed significantly to enhancing everyday lives and advocating for peace and equality.



The commitment to honoring the diverse narratives and achievements of Black Americans is evident in the various initiatives undertaken by both staff and students. Schools within the district have orchestrated programs that provide a platform for presentations highlighting the historical contributions of Black Americans. In a cornerstone of our Black History Month, celebrations,

speeches, posters, essays, and performances continue to be powerful ways that students express their appreciation for the rich history and enduring legacies of Black Americans.

We take immense pride in the collective effort that our schools are making to bring Black History Month to life. The celebrations honor the past and foster a deep understanding of the ongoing efforts for equity and justice, ensuring that the legacy of Black Americans is acknowledged and celebrated throughout MPS.

MPS's "Black Lives Matter at School" Week of Action



The Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action took place the week of February 5 and marked a compelling commencement to the celebration of Black History Month. This meaningful week, organized by the Black Lives Matter committee, featured a series of events aimed at promoting community engagement, amplifying student voice, and encouraging creative expressions of unity. Schools embraced a variety of activities and resources that assisted teachers with embedded lesson plans. This innovative approach created a deeper understanding and provided students with significant learning opportunities.

The after-school events were a particularly enlightening aspect of the Week of Action, where community leaders engaged with students, offering diverse perspectives to broaden awareness. These interactions were the preamble to thought-provoking discussions and inspired students to participate in creating positive change within their communities.

A special highlight of the week's events was the announcement of the Black Lives Matter logo contest student winner for the 2023–24 school year. D'Zariah Walker was congratulated by the Black Lives Matter committee for an exceptional design (pictured above). This recognition underscores the commitment of individuals such as the student logo winner to creatively contribute to the movement, highlighting the power of collective expression.

Celebrating 50 Years of Montessori

On February 10, MPS held an event to celebrate 50 years of Montessori education within the district. The event was attended by 1,700 current and prospective families, alumni, staff, board members, state representatives, and the Association Montessori International. Attendees enjoyed student performances, engaged with student demonstrations, mingled with staff from neighboring Montessori schools, and more. MPS has been a leader in delivering Montessori to the Milwaukee community for 50 years. Starting with four classrooms and growing to the now eight schools across the city, including a comprehensive K3–grade 12 school, MPS makes it possible for children to have a complete Montessori experience. Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate this important milestone!



National School Counseling Week



During National School Counseling Week, observed February 5–9, 2024, we celebrated the invaluable contributions of school counselors in guiding students toward success in their academic endeavors. Sponsored by the American School Counselor Association, this week emphasizes the theme “School Counselors: Standards-Based, Student-Focused,” which highlights the profound impact that these professionals have on students’ achievements in their future aspirations.

The overarching goal of school counselors is to foster success by recognizing and addressing the unique needs of each child. Throughout the school year, counselors engage with students, encouraging them to explore their abilities and supporting their personal growth and development. This is achieved through collaboration with the student, educators, and parents to understand the student’s strengths, interests, and talents.

MPS recognizes and appreciates that the tireless efforts of school counselors and their dedication, commitment, and influence on the lives of students are commendable. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all school counselors for their daily efforts in supporting student achievement in school and nurturing their overall well-being. Thank you, counselors, for your unwavering commitment to the success and growth of our students.

“We Are the Drum” February 23–March 3

We are getting ready for an electrifying performance! MPS’s talented singers, dancers, actors, and choreographers are gearing up for “We Are the Drum,” a high-energy musical revue set to captivate audiences from February 23 to March 3, 2024, at Milwaukee Marshall High School, 4141 North 64th Street, Milwaukee.



Students of all ages from several MPS schools will be performing in this year’s show. “We Are the Drum” is a community program offered by City at Peace in the Arts (CAPITA) Productions, a nonprofit organization with the mission of bridging cultural gaps, uniting Milwaukee-area youth, and offering a constructive outlet for creative expression.

Talented staff members and volunteers bring their energy to developing the talents of children who participate. A fee is not charged for children who take part in the show.

For more information, showtimes, and tickets, visit the [CAPITA Productions website](#) or visit the [Facebook page for CAPITA productions](#).

Youth Apprenticeships and Internships



We are pleased to announce that 56 students have engaged in youth apprenticeships while another 299 students have participated in internships during the first semester of the 2023–24 school year. These exceptional learning opportunities covered a wide range of fields, reflecting the varied interests and aspirations of our students.

The fields covered by these apprenticeships and internships were extensive, showing MPS’s commitment to providing a well-rounded and comprehensive learning experience for students. The fields that students supported during first semester were hospitality and tourism, health sciences, transportation, distribution and logistics, agriculture, food and nutrition resources, arts, audio visual technology and communications, manufacturing, information technology, education and training, finance, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), and law, public safety, corrections, and security.

The success of these initiatives underscores the importance of providing students with hands-on real-world experiences that align with their academic pursuits and career interests. The practical exposure gained through these apprenticeships and internships not only enhances their understanding of their chosen fields but also equips them with the skills and insights that will be instrumental in their future endeavors.

MPS Kindergarten Enrollment

MPS hosted its annual Kindergarten Enrollment Fair at South Division High School on February 3, where families learned about individual schools, met school administrators, and made their school selections.

This year’s kindergarten enrollment fair had a record number of attendees with more than three times the number of participants from last year. For families that were unable to visit the fair, there is still time to enroll. Families have until March 4 to go online and apply for the school(s) of their choice.



Head Start

Preschool is available through the federal Head Start program for families that meet income limits. Head Start prepares children for school and teaches important early skills.

Kindergarten

Three-year-old kindergarten: Programs are available at some schools. Children must turn three by September 1, 2024, to be eligible.

Four-year-old kindergarten: Programs are available at most schools across the district. Children must turn four by September 1, 2024, to be eligible.

Five-year-old kindergarten: Programs are available at most schools across the district. Children must turn five by September 1, 2024, to be eligible.

To apply for kindergarten enrollment, please complete the following steps:

1. Visit <https://mps.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/en/Schools/How-to-Apply/Kindergarten-Enrollment.htm>.
2. Go to the section titled **“To Complete Your Enrollment.”**
3. In the bullet point titled **“Online,”** select the link that describes you: “current” family or “new” family.
4. Current families will need their log-in information, and new families will need an email address.