

Report of the Board's Delegate to the Title I District Advisory Council (DAC)

February 22, 2018

Submitted by Director Paula Phillips

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chairman McAdoo called the meeting of the District Advisory Council to order at 6:00 p.m. on January 4, 2018.

Chairperson.....	Larry McAdoo.....	Present
Vice Chairperson.....	Maria Ortiz.....	Present
Recording Secretary.....	Jenni Hofschulte.....	Present
Communications Secretary.....	Demetria Anderson.....	Present
Parliamentarian.....	Terry Longo.....	Present
Sergeant at Arms.....	Tracey Dent.....	Present
Member at Large.....	Valeria Lambrecht.....	Present
Member at Large.....	Diana Veloz.....	Present
Member at Large.....	<i>vacant</i>	n/a

POSITIVE NOTES

Academy of Accelerated Learning hosted its holiday program, with 1,300 attendance, at Hamilton HS.

Longfellow participated in Journey House's tree-lighting ceremony in November. In December, Santa visited. There were lots of crafts and fun.

Frances Starms held a Donuts with Dad event, which was attended by 70 dads.

Holmes partnered with the Urban League to update technology in the building.

Hamilton's PTO hosted a holiday potluck, which was very well attended.

Pierce screened the anti-bullying video *No Amount of Tears* on Monday, January 8.

Obama SCTE is working with Employ Milwaukee to ensure work opportunities for its students.

Bay View's JV wrestling team hosted a SE WI tournament, which was very well attended.

Many MPS schools were represented in the Cathedral Square's Holiday Tree Lot.

500 students from across the city attended the Candy Cane Concert.

NEW BUSINESS

Children's Savings Account

Kevin Curley introduced to the assembled members the information sheet which had been emailed prior to the meeting.

The purpose of the program is to hold funds for children toward post-secondary education and training. A \$1.6 million investment from the City of Milwaukee created the initial start-up. Every enrolled K5 child in Milwaukee will be part of a community account — \$25 will be deposited for every child at K5, and it will grow with the children. The City's fund will be communal and not individual for each child. Upon

graduation, students can withdraw their earnings from the communal fund. Families will have to open separate accounts if they wish to have individual savings accounts.

This is a 529 plan is a tax-advantaged savings plan which is designed to encourage saving for future college costs. 529 plans, legally known as “qualified tuition plans,” are sponsored by states, state agencies, or educational institutions and are authorized by Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code.

EdVest, a program run by the State of Wisconsin, has been a key planner. The City is developing the business plan and is looking for funders and partners, as well as suggestions for potential incentives.

The following questions on information item were addressed by Carol N. Maria from FDIC:

Q: What happens to the money, should people leave the district?

A: They can keep what they have earned during their residency.

Q: Is a child automatically enrolled without parental consent?

A: Children will be automatically enrolled — consent will be built into the enrollment within MPS. A formal opt-out will be provided. They will be enrolled under their assigned numbers, not their social security numbers.

Q: How does the withdrawal occur?

A: Student will make an independent decision upon acceptance at a post secondary institution.

Q: Will this money interfere with financial aid?

A: It should not impact upon financial-aid eligibility.

Q: What role does EdVest play?

A: EdVest is a program of the State of WI. The community account will be invested in a publicly traded security at the State of WI level.

Q: Who will the plan administrator be?

A: Tomorrow’s Scholars website has this information.

Q: What is the expected investment return?

A: The small amount of money will be invested, so there is no crystal ball on how the investments will perform. It would be ideal for children to earn incentives of up to \$500.00 in their accounts. (See incentives).

Q: What happens to the money in special circumstances such as leaving the district?

A: If a child leaves residency, the money will pause at the amount earned. If a child does not go to post-secondary school, the money will stay in the communal fund.

Q: Will students who enroll through open enrollment get accounts?

A: Yes, If they are enrolled in MPS schools.

Q: Can families buy in at later grades?

A: Although K5 has been selected, there has been discussion of making a buy-in available at the later grades.

Q: Will the program roll out next year?

A: It will be a five-year roll out plan to catch all charter, choice, and public school students.

DAC'S MONTHLY MEETING SPACE

Kevin Curley let the assembled members know that the Central Office auditorium is no longer available on Tuesday and Thursday nights by request of the Office of Board Governance in order to allow the Milwaukee Board of School Directors to use the space when needed.

Members were asked to use the evaluation sheet to indicate if moving to Wednesday night would work for them. If they chose to stay with Thursday nights, they were asked to indicate which schools would work best for them.

Comment from member: If parents are “so important” to the district, why are they displacing us?

Member at Large Valerie Lambrecht suggested that parents advocate to use the auditorium through a group letter and emails. Do we try to make them move on this? In response, many members expressed their desire to voice concerns to Board of Directors directly.

Comment from member: We will be scattered if we have to move along.

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION: DISTRICT PRIORITIES.

The members were broken down into four small groups for discussion of the information item on district priorities that was presented at the December meeting. The groups were asked to address the following discussion questions

- 1) Knowing that MPS is proposing these three steps for next year to help continue to improve academic performance, are there any supports you think families need? (Reminder, proposed steps include going to one calendar, increasing popular programs in different areas of the city, and decreasing the transportation walk zones.)
- 2) Do you feel that over the past few years, MPS has been making the right decisions to improve academic achievement in the district? Why or why not?
- 3) Do you make decisions differently when it is only about your school, versus when it is about the whole district? If yes, how so?
- 4) What other ideas do you have about changes or improvements MPS could make immediately or long-term to improve academic achievement?

Group 1

Group was facilitated by Marc Sanders and Carmen McBride. Question #1 was the only question discussed during the allotted discussion time.

Question 1

- Increase the number of special programs in schools — How will it affect school budgets and feeder schools?
- Safe schools for students and teachers are necessary
- Create programming that can engage the parents more from home, so they can afford to assist their children academically, vs. always suggesting tutoring.

- Parents will not have an issue with a neighborhood school if the school has great programming
- Possibilities of further walk distance — Parents without transportation will now need help with transportation for school events
- Segregation is current and a great concern. What are the policies around this issue?
- Make every school city-wide, vs. limit distance for transportation only
- Bus safety on larger buses (seatbelts) — Why aren't there any? (The response was that WI DOT exempts this law on large buses)
- Good idea to decrease walk zones and offer transportation to closer schools
- Heat factor with Early Start calendar/having younger siblings is a concern
- Will this (early start calendar) reduce the summer slide during the summer months?
- There are not enough breaks in between testing for students' attention span
- What are the data on recent academics with new calendar switch for high schools?
- How will they share the data for the upcoming one-calendar year, 2018-19?
- Need early decision making about this and any other major changes in the district
- Starting in mid-August for all grade levels is important for family plans.

Group 2

Group was facilitated by Carrie Vanden Wymelenberg, and Kevin Curley. Question 4 was not discussed in the allotted discussion time.

Question 1

- Families want information on why the district made the decision about the early start calendar — losing faith in the district's decisions
- Cooling during the hot summer months is a concern
- In regard to increasing popular programs, will there be integrated curricula for arts? Will there be money for extra teachers?
- How is money being spent to equalize access to popular programs, and how will the impact be measured?
- Parents are frustrated that their voice was not heard on "once calendar"
- Parents feel like they were "hoodwinked" and that the decision on one calendar is already made
- Parents want more transparency on decision process for "one calendar," and parents would like data to be emailed to them about why decisions were made
- Parents would like more public discussion on district decisions
- In regards to increasing popular programs, how will immersion schools be affected if there are more competing immersion programs?

Question 2

- MPS had a graduation rate increase
- It takes a lot to turn around a district
- It's unclear how MPS defines "success"
- Seems like things are not executed with fidelity at the school level
- Polled group on if District is making the right decisions to support student success
 - o Results were Yes= 1, No= 8, and 11 were unsure.
 - o One participant was unsure how successful the decisions were because schools are allowed flexibility at the school level.

Question 3

- As a parent, I think about my child's school first, but understand the need to put on my "citizen hat" for district decisions
- I think about how decisions will impact my school first
- We do need to think about equity district-wide
- We need transparency at the school and district levels in regard to decisions being made
- Better information needs to be given to parents

Group 3

Group 3 was facilitated by Chief Wendell Willis and Darryl Hall.

Question 1

- Parents need more awareness around calendar changes
- Parents need voices heard. There needs to be many methods to gain feedback and a follow-up loop
- Need information earlier
- Parent Coordinators providing information to families
- Need clarification on surveys that are sent to families
- What are the plans for hot weather days when MPS goes to early start calendar?

Question 2

- There is too much teaching to the test instead of finding out how each student learns
- Not every district solution/decision is right for every school in the district
- Promote better, and more often, what supports MPS provides. Parents have no idea what MPS does and why
- Some schools have had budget cuts, and nothing has been better because of some decisions like moving testing to the morning
- Focus on kids and not on personnel. Budget cuts vs. raises for staff

- There are too many curricular changes that are costly and don't work
- For teachers there are constraints that are limiting student performance, and there is a lack of teacher time with students
- Special Education practices hurt the district. For example placement of Spec. Ed students into rooms where they may be a hindrance to the classroom.

Question 3

- The primary focus for parents is their children's schools. That's where their investment is.
- The district is not an entity for interaction, and thus there is less affinity for it
- Parents also have animosity when things and decisions do not work for their schools

Question 4

- More tutoring is needed
 - o More of it at school sites
 - o With parents and students together
 - o Replicate what is working
- More access to art, music, specials and libraries.

Group 4

Group 4 was facilitated by Ruth Maegli and Sarah Gordon.

Question 1

- Humboldt Park let go of a teacher, and split classrooms are very difficult.
- High School of the Arts — Uniforms don't allow expression
- Pierce — Safety in classrooms impacts student achievement
- Some kids disturbing entire classrooms
- STEM programming
- Schools are doing in-school suspension
- Troubled students need more-military-style schools, other forms of curriculum so they are out of classrooms and not impeding the learning of others
- Too much focus on standardized testing on computers — especially difficult for ESL students
- Improvements are happening, but behavior is not being controlled — address the root issues of behavior, trauma, homelessness, poverty
- Vincent HS — hard to learn in class, kids not reading at level, don't have their records transferred. Kids need a vision and dream
- Start changing MPS with the times. Life-skills classes are needed, not passing students who can't read.

Question 2

- Take the savings account money and use it for more counselors for kids.
- Underlying issues like trauma and poverty need to be addressed before savings.
- MPS needs to be working harder on the uniform policy-for solidarity/no opt-out
- Too much red tape for schools wanting to bring in volunteers.
- Signs of life in MPS — the changes are being felt, but parents don't trust the change.

Question 3

- Humboldt Park's parents don't like the one-calendar idea, want more language opportunities
- High School of the Art — had to go to early calendar, and it's too hot
- Teachers need tools to teach. Have areas with AC, fix what is broken, and ask teachers what they need
- Red tape in getting supplies to students — pool of supplies is reduced if schools raise funds for supplies
- Need to move as a global entity
- Let schools fix what they need individually — schools have other issues they may want to focus on
- Long summer is easier to deal with long summers off — child care is hard if it's while daycares are handling school kids still from other schools.
- Can't focus on just my own child — all children need to be taught. But when it comes to funding, yes, I think of my children's school first.
- At Vincent, the focus is on my kids' own school, but if there are good ideas, they can spread from one school to the next if we share info on job training, education etc..
- Parents with very young kids have different concerns than do high-school parents
- Depends on the question — funding and supplies, we think of our own kids. Answer is always school-specific when it comes to funds.
- In making decisions, we always think of our own school first because it is our reference point.

Question 4

- Figure out how to help kids with behavioral issues, out of classrooms so that other students can be taught.
- Many issues to deal with before academic issues: behavior, trauma, etc.
- MPS needs to recognize safety issues in schools — bullying programs, too much red tape, not enough action.
- Kids aren't being taught, e.g., 19-year-olds with no credits, makes no sense. Issues vary from high school to middle school

- Give all students IEPs to suit all learning styles,
- Search for school districts similar to ours that are succeeding and learn what they are doing and do it

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