

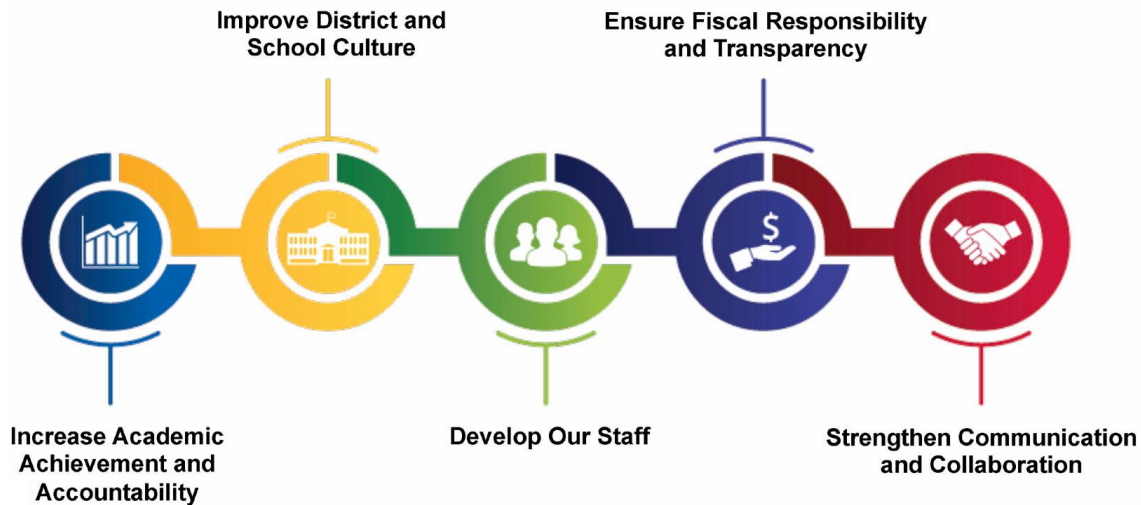


**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Superintendent's Report – May 2022

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



STEM Fair

On May 5, 2022, the district held the fifteenth annual MPS STEM Fair. This year we were able to see the efforts of nearly 400 students at 37 schools in the form of 207 science, engineering design, and research projects. As in other years, the majority of participants came from grades 3–8, but this year we had increased participation from high school students. In addition to the school participation, the district also welcomed over 100 volunteers from outside MPS to judge projects, support logistics, and provide activities for students to engage in throughout the event. Parents and families walked around proudly as they were wowed by our students' projects.

GE Healthcare had the strongest presence as the executive sponsor for the event, and it added a prize category for future leaders in STEM. The winners of the GE Leaders Award each received an iPad from GE Healthcare. Students and volunteers alike have already expressed their desire to enter or support the 2023 STEM Fair. Congratulations to the STEM Fair participants for showcasing their talents and to the winners of the 2022 STEM Fair.

Herbie Hancock Peer-to-Peer Education Program

The Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz selected Milwaukee Public Schools as one of only three districts nationwide to take part in a peer-to-peer jazz education program in May 2022. Five guest artists visited the district May 9–13 to share experiences. Workshops took place at Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Ronald Reagan High School, Milwaukee School of Languages, Golda Meir School, and Rufus King High School, where guest artists interacted with 3,000 students.

Besides playing jazz at a level far beyond their years, visiting students talked with their Wisconsin peers about what jazz is, why it is important to America, and the important values that jazz represents: teamwork, freedom with responsibility, unity with ethnic diversity, hard work and goal accomplishment, and the importance of finding a passion early in life, being persistent, and believing in yourself.

MPS is grateful to have been chosen by the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz for this impressive program. On behalf of our students, thank you!

49th Biennial Music Festival



On May 4 and 5, 2022, over 3,500 MPS students from more than 70 schools across the district assembled at the UWM Panther Arena and filled it with music! Children in grades 1–12 performed in orchestras, bands, and choirs as proud parents and visitors took in their beautiful music.

Four thousand attendees were treated to performances by honors band and drumline; modern band; world drums; overture band, choir, and orchestra; festival band, choir, and orchestra; and combined bands, choirs, and orchestras performing “The Star-Spangled Banner” and “Hymn to Freedom.”

The festival has been held every other year since 1924, with this year marking the forty-ninth biennial celebration. Over the years, thousands of students have experienced the thrill of performing live and gaining the confidence that comes with displaying their musical talents in front of a live audience.

This year featured a special appearance by MPS Superintendent Dr. Keith P. Posley as guest conductor of the festival band, leading students in a lively performance of “On, Wisconsin!”

Congratulations to the many students, teachers, directors, and staff who made this monumental event possible!

Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council

The Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council (SSAC) is a place for our young student leaders to have an unfettered voice with one another and the superintendent. On April 21, 2022, the SSAC held its last meeting of the school year. The goal for this meeting was to celebrate and recognize SSAC members for their dedicated work as student ambassadors for their schools.

During this final meeting, SSAC members were asked to provide Dr. Posley with key topics of interest for the SSAC members to consider for the 2022–23 school year. After much discussion and conversation, the SSAC members provided a host of ideas to be shared with the incoming SSAC members for the 2022–23 school year to help determine their focus as they carry the council forward.

The group from Ronald Reagan High School prepared a PowerPoint presentation on Hope Squad. Hope Squad is a national peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. The students applied for and received a grant to establish their Hope Squad this past year.

Districtwide Spelling Bee Finals

Milwaukee Public Schools students faced off on May 14 and 21, 2022, to find the best spellers in the district. Students spent months preparing for the challenge, learning how to spell such mind-bending words as “pseudonym,” “mnemonic,” and “queue.” Onlookers were impressed by the amazing talents of our students as they spelled word after word correctly.



Before participating in the spelling bee finals, students had to make it through round after round of the preliminaries and semifinals. As they competed fiercely against one another, causing a busy bee buzz around the district, the spelling bee participants persevered through each round before the last spellers standing were named the 2022 spelling bee champions. First-, second-, and third-place winners were announced on the MPS home page and have expressed their excitement for next year’s competition. Congratulations to this year’s winners!

Staff Appreciation

On May 6, 2022, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Alliance of Black School Educators held its twentieth annual Teacher of the Year gala, honoring 182 teachers from surrounding school districts. Of the 182 teachers honored, 112 of the honorees were from Milwaukee Public Schools. This event took place during Teacher Appreciation Week when teachers across the district were recognized for their continued commitment to the students of MPS.

Celebrations for Administrative Assistants Day, April 27, 2022, took place all over the district, recognizing assistants for the work they do to keep schools, departments, and offices running efficiently. Both their visible and behind-the-scenes work is very much appreciated.

Principals were celebrated on May 1, 2022, in honor of School Principals Day. We know that it takes everyone to run a school; our dedicated principals are front and center daily, ensuring that everything is in place to keep the schools moving forward.

We thank all our staff for the work they do daily with the spotlight being on principals, teachers, and administrative assistants this month. Thank you!

College Decision Days

As graduations drew near, MPS high school seniors shared their plans to attend college or technical school, enter military service, earn certificates, or embark on apprenticeships. To celebrate students' plans, 24 MPS high schools hosted College Decision Day events May 2–10, 2022.

Each school planned an individual ceremony, with some events in person and some virtual. Of the thousands of seniors who will graduate, every senior who declared their career plan was recognized to celebrate their hard work toward graduation and the journey to the career of their choice. Congratulations to all of our students!

Green Ribbon School Recognition

To mark Earth Day on April 22, 2022, the U.S. Department of Education announced a list of 27 schools across the country to receive recognition for efforts toward reducing environmental impact and improving the health of schools. Of the five Wisconsin schools to be honored, two were our very own: A. E. Burdick and Golda Meir.

These schools worked with Reflo, a nonprofit organization, to implement schoolyard redevelopment projects. These projects removed more than 36,000 square feet of impervious surface and added features—such as porous engineered wood chip surfacing, stormwater trees, native landscaping, bioswales, and above-ground and underground cisterns—to reduce stormwater runoff. Congratulations to the A. E. Burdick and Golda Meir school communities!

M³ College Connections Program

The M³ College Connections Program hosted a student/family information session on May 4, 2022, for students interested in participating in the Nursing Pathway at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC). The Nursing Pathway provides an opportunity for juniors to take courses at MATC, work toward completion of coursework, and pass state exams in nursing. Students have the potential to earn their state certification as a certified nursing assistant and their licensed practical nursing degree. The session featured Imunique Triplett, current Milwaukee Public Schools senior, who earned her technical diploma in practical nursing from MATC in December and will graduate from high school in May, who shared her individual experience in the program. Additionally, faculty and staff from both MATC and MPS went through the program sequence and expectations with the future participants and their families.

M³ Smart Start Program

M-Cubed Smart Start recruitment has taken place, and a virtual informational meeting was held on Thursday, May 12, 2022. The Smart Start program is designed to help students successfully transition from Milwaukee Public Schools to Milwaukee Area Technical College or the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. The M³ Smart Start program provides MPS graduates with multiple interventions over the summer and fall semesters to increase the likelihood of enrollment and success the first year.

The summer activities include a math program to improve placement test scores, connections to student employment at their intended institutions, and increased connections to help with paying for college. Smart Start students will start working with a success coach in July and meet monthly to address any needs during the fall semester. There will be multiple opportunities to strengthen peer connections and a career-focused field trip to Kohler Co., one of the pilot year funding partners. Currently, 128 MPS students have submitted the interest form to participate in the program.

Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra

On April 28, 2022, MPS received the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra’s Collaborative Spirit Award. This award is granted to an individual, foundation, nonprofit, corporation, or community leader who has demonstrated vision supported by action that illustrates extraordinary leadership, service, and commitment to create impactful collaborative partnerships for the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. These alliances will have resulted in stronger MYSO programming and/or community offerings that would otherwise not be possible without such a relationship.

With this award, we recognize our Central Services music department for its continued to commitment to the children of MPS.

MPS Language Festival

The MPS Language Festival held on May 7, 2022, offered information booths, live performances, and a special ceremony to honor 65 graduating seniors who received the Seal of Biliteracy. The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to high school seniors who successfully complete criteria related to English language proficiency and demonstrate a high level of proficiency in another language.

MPS started the Seal of Biliteracy program just three short years ago, with biliteracy being offered in three languages. Now MPS offers the Seal of Biliteracy in 14 languages!

- American Sign Language
- Arabic
- Burmese
- Chin
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Italian
- Karen
- Karenni
- Malay
- Rohingya
- Spanish
- Urdu

MPS Refugee and Immigrant Family Community Resource Fair

Also on May 7, 2022, nearly 100 participants joined the MPS Refugee and Immigrant Family Community Resource Fair. Families had the opportunity to connect to resources and community organizations in Milwaukee, including health care, child care, employment, food access, housing, legal support, language services, and education and literacy options.

This is the third year that MPS has offered the fair to provide resources to families. We look forward to serving more families as this annual event becomes more recognized by our refugee and immigrant families.

Wisconsin Association for Bilingual Education

Milwaukee Public Schools congratulated 14 MPS educators and 5 students who were honored during the annual convention of the Wisconsin Association for Bilingual Education (WIABE). Held annually, the convention brings together educators from across Wisconsin to promote bilingual education and advance the needs of individuals learning English.

This year, 23 educators received Educator of the Year awards, with 13 MPS teachers among this honored group. In addition, Yolanda Hernández-Garcia was presented with the Tony Báez Advocacy Award for 32 years of service with MPS and for actively promoting bilingual education.

WIABE also hosts annual student art and writing contests, with the winners recognized during the convention. Five MPS students received top honors for their exemplary work.

Congratulations to these awardees! You make us *MPS Proud!*

WIABE Educators of the Year

- Adam French, Allen-Field School
- Jeannette Ortiz, Rogers Street Academy
- Lucia V. Segovia Van Berkel, Lincoln Avenue School
- Holt Andrus, Hayes Bilingual School
- Paula Wall, Forest Home Avenue School
- Jean Guzman, Alexander Mitchell Integrated Arts School
- Marielle Rivera, Milwaukee School of Languages
- MariLou Rocha, ALBA
- Ericka Zihomara Ceyca-Chaidez, Riley Dual Language Montessori
- Julieta Saavedra-Rivera, Escuela Vieau
- Lara Vance, La Escuela Fratney
- Irma Borrero, South Division High School
- Anita Higgins, H. W. Longfellow School

Tony Báez Advocacy Award

- Yolanda Hernández-Garcia

WIABE Art Contest Winners

- Grades 3–5: Kimberly Ortiz, Escuela Vieau
- Grades 6–8: Janelis Roche, Hayes Bilingual School
- Grades 9–12: Chika Akhfadel Ariesta, Milwaukee School of Languages

WIABE Writing Contest Winners

- Grades 3–5: Juana Vanessa Santiago-Chel, Hayes Bilingual School
- Grades 9–12: Muhammad Kahanan, South Division High School

Roosevelt Middle School

Students at Roosevelt Middle School let their voices be heard. Sixth graders wrote letters to the mayor with their concerns about reckless driving and its impact in their respective communities.

Mayor Cavalier Johnson received the letters and acted, setting a meeting with the students and inviting Superintendent Dr. Keith Posley, Milwaukee Police Chief Jeffrey Norman, and Milwaukee Board of School Directors Bob Peterson and Jilly Gokalgandhi to join him.



Students were able to ask tough questions and get feedback from members of the panel. During the student interaction portion of the meeting, Police Chief Norman deputized the students to always be aware and speak up about issues. Mayor Johnson called the students “the most powerful people in the room.”