



**MILWAUKEE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



## Superintendent's Report – February

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**

Meetings from late January through mid-February follow.

I did a video shoot for the Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership. The Community Schools model is implemented across the country and demonstrates that shared leadership combined with community partnerships focused on equity can improve educational outcomes. The 2015–16 academic year, was our first full year of implementing the Milwaukee Community Schools Partnership. Currently there are six schools in the partnership.

We had the official launch of **M<sup>3</sup>** – the partnership of MPS, MATC and UW–Milwaukee that was formed to improve educational outcomes for our students. It provided an excellent opportunity to share more information about the initiative with our stakeholders and celebrate our many successes thus far. Over 200 people were in attendance at this event, which was held at the MATC campus.



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I attended the fourth State Superintendent's Equity in ESSA Stakeholder Council meeting in Madison. The spring 2017 meetings are built around two subgroups. Half of the council members will focus on accountability and the other half on school improvement.

I met with David Kuta and Ryan Amundson from Potawatomi. Potawatomi's Heart of Canal Street program will potentially be partnering with MPS to receive a \$100,000 gift for the 2017 campaign, specifically focused on the possibility of providing after school-reading support to those students who are behind in their reading proficiency.

I also met with Jeff Roman, community advocate, and two executives supporting the national campaign – Dr. Robert Simmons, III of the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, and Eric Grims, Strategies to Advance Racial Equity for Boys and Men of Color. We discussed the launching of the MPS division of Black and Latino Male Achievement.

We held a press conference and viewing of the movie, *Hidden Figures* at the Majestic Theater in Waukesha. A concerted effort by the MPS Foundation, MPS staff, and community groups has raised over \$107,000 to send almost 11,000 MPS students in sixth and seventh grade to view the movie. This is a great learning opportunity for our students and I am touched that the community and MPS staff stepped up to make it a reality for our students.



A group of MPS administrators, high school principals and I traveled to Rhinelander to tour the FAB LABs in Three Lakes, Eagle River, and Florence, Wisconsin with Rep. Swearingen, Rep. Felzkowski (Czaja) and Rep. Mursau. We are opening our first Fab Lab at **Washington High School** as of this writing!



Tonya Adair, Janel Hawkins, and I met with principals of the 42 schools that have a *fails to meet expectations* rating on the DPI state report card. We shared our strategic plans, which include the importance of providing differentiated support that is data driven. All of our decisions will be based around data and researched-based practices.

In partnership with Running Rebels, we held a Violence Free Zone (VFZ) quarterly “check-in” meeting. Violence Free Zone is the national model of a youth violence reduction and high-risk student-mentoring program. The goal is to reduce violence and disruptions in schools and prepare students for learning.

I met with City Year at the Milwaukee College Prep North Campus. Our discussion focused on the importance of their role during these uncertain times.

Chief Tonya Adair and I attended the Turnaround Arts Conference in Washington, DC. It provided an important opportunity for the program teams to learn more about the Turnaround Arts Center’s tools and resources available and share insights/strategies to move the program forward.

At the request of the Governor’s Office, President Sain and I attended the State Budget Address at the Capitol.

I met with Greg Wesley, Senior Executive of the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW). He shared information on the three summer programs and internships at MCW for high school students.

I convened a meeting with the “53206 Steering Team.” The Steering Team’s goal is to develop a long-term plan that will support the community and shape the future of education in the 53206 zip code.

Members of my senior team and I met with Bill Berezowitz and Kelly Skindzelewski of GE Healthcare. We are developing a community message that tells the story of the vast impact the GE Grant has had on Milwaukee Public Schools. The grant began as math professional development for teachers and is now transitioning to a College and Career Readiness focus.

## Awards/Recognition/Announcements

MPS, the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts, and McDonald’s Restaurants of Southeastern Wisconsin recognized **Kristine Gerke Komes**, an English as a Second Language teacher at **Riley Elementary**, for her outstanding involvement in the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.



The Milwaukee Bucks Foundation has awarded a \$100,000 grant to Schools That Can Milwaukee (STCM), a nonprofit organization working to improve local schools, especially those in high poverty neighborhoods. The grant will be distributed over the next two years, with funds benefiting STCM programs, many of which directly benefit Milwaukee Public Schools. Schools That Can Milwaukee develops school leaders at high-poverty schools with on-the-job coaching, monthly professional development, and leadership training programs. Citywide, STCM impacts about 17,000 students through support of more than 200 educators at 43 MPS, independent charter, and private Choice schools. During the 2016–17 school year, educators from 19 MPS schools are receiving development and coaching from STCM.



**Milwaukee Marshall High School** received a \$25,000 State Farm Neighborhood Assist grant. Funds from this grant will be used to create an engineering makerspace at Marshall. The makerspace, outfitted with new 3D printers and scanners, will allow students to connect and promote science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) education to the greater school and local community. State Farm Neighborhood Assist is a crowd-sourced philanthropic program that empowers communities to identify issues in their neighborhoods.



The affiliated nonprofits of the top 40 causes will each receive a \$25,000 grant to create and execute a plan to address the cause. The top 40 causes represented 25 states from around the country.



Three seniors from North Division High School, **Tiarra M. Bean**, **Teyonda A. Hamier**, and **Adrienne S. Jordan**, have been honored by the Milwaukee Club of Frontiers International for academic excellence and dedication to drumline and drum major performance. The seniors received their awards at a luncheon held to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., co-hosted by St. Matthew C.M.E. Church. This is the fourth year Milwaukee Frontiers has presented the award. The honor was developed to build a relationship between Milwaukee Frontiers and **North Division High School**. Students who apply for the award are

evaluated for their academic record and their dedication to drumline and serving as drum major. Frontiers International, Inc. provides service to communities through more than thirty local clubs. A number of clubs focus on mentoring youth, providing scholarships, or workforce development.

More than 1,000 Milwaukee area fifth-grade students took to the dance floor for the Danceworks Winter Mad Hot Tap Competition held at the BMO Harris Bradley Center. Milwaukee Public Schools swept the competition, with six of the district's 31 participating schools placing first, second, or third in the Latin Tap, Funky Tap and Swing Tap competitions.

- **Milwaukee French Immersion:** Overall winner; First Place, Latin Tap; First Place Funky Tap; First Place Swing Tap
- **Academia de Lenguajes y Bellas Artes:** Second Place, Latin Tap
- **Benjamin Franklin Elementary:** Second Place, Swing Tap
- **Byron Kilbourn:** Third Place, Latin Tap; Third Place, Funky Tap
- **Hartford University School:** Third Place, Swing Tap
- **Wisconsin Conservatory for Lifelong Learning:** Second Place, Funky Tap



Modeled after the successful New York City schools program featured in the hit documentary *Mad Hot Ballroom*, the Danceworks Mad Hot program promotes students' social and emotional development while increasing their respect for themselves and others, as well as their physical activity, through dance.



The 2016–17 school year is the first year that the program is being offered for the full school year, with students participating in tap in the fall and ballroom in the spring. Since the program's inception in 2006, more than 21,000 city youth have been positively impacted by the program. Students in the *Mad Hot Ballroom* program receive more than 20 hours of instruction from Danceworks teachers.



## Events/Programs

The **3rd Annual City Review**, a high school basketball competition featuring the top boys and girls teams in the district, was held at the BMO Harris Bradley Center. Student athletes from eight MPS high school basketball teams competed on the same court used by professional and collegiate players. Over 3,000 fans were in attendance. It was a great success and we are still hearing positive feedback about this fun event showcasing our student athletes and their schools. There were six cheer teams participating as well as the Vincent Drumline. The event, now in its third year, comes as the district continues to increase athletic opportunities for students.



As part of the district's strategic plan, *Eight Big Ideas: Rethink High Schools*, the Department of College and Career Readiness is establishing in-school **College and Career Centers**. The first in-school College and Career Center opened on December 19, 2016, at Barack Obama School of Career and Technical Education. College

and Career Centers will support students and their families in developing academic and career plans and accessing postsecondary opportunities.



MPS, along with partners including the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Police Department, Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission, Milwaukee Bucks and Running Rebels, and City of Milwaukee Office of Violence Prevention announced the launch of a Midnight Basketball League at Bradley Technology and Trade High School. The **Midnight Basketball League** is part of the new **MPS C.A.R.E.S. (Community and Recreation Engaging Students)**

initiative, which was announced in October 2016. Young men 17 to 25 years old who live in Milwaukee may participate in the 10-week league. MPS will host three 10-week Midnight Leagues at Bradley Tech. The first league will start March 1, 2017; each league will serve 80 to 100 young men. MPS has worked with partners in planning the league as a way to engage and support young men and connect them to community resources in Milwaukee.



The Milwaukee Bucks have played an integral role in the formation of the Midnight Basketball League and will continue to lend support as the league tips off in the coming weeks. Bucks forward John Henson was on hand at the announcement and spoke with MPS students and Midnight League supporters about the importance of working hand-in-hand with local police and other organizations to build stronger, safer communities.