

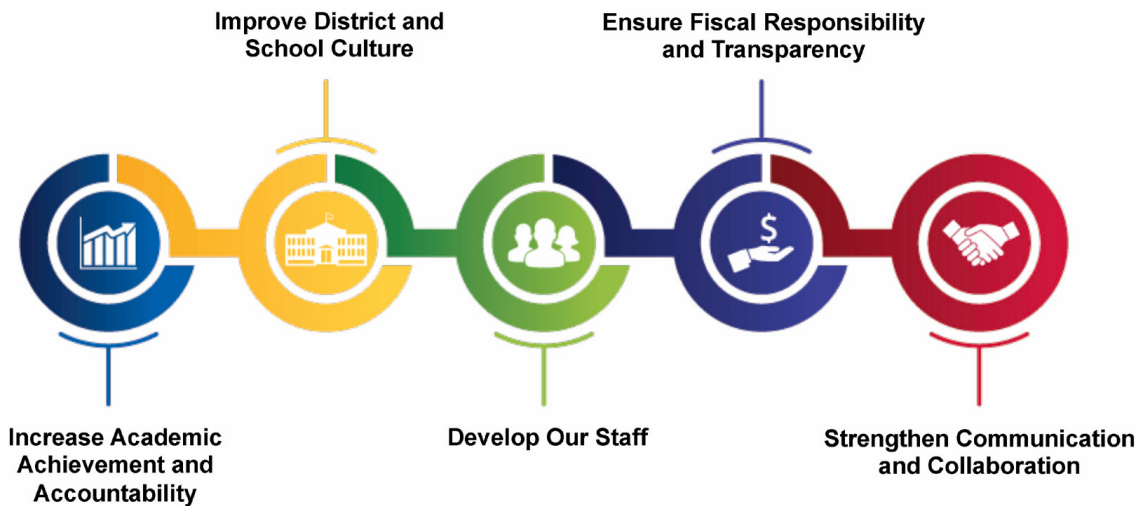


**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Superintendent’s Report – September 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.



Community Kicks Off School Year at Run Back to School Race

Excitement was truly in the air as Superintendent of Schools Dr. Keith Posley kicked off the festivities at Wick Playfield for the 14th annual Run Back to School race. On Saturday, Aug. 28, hundreds of runners, volunteers, community leaders, staffers, and students safely gathered for the 5K run/1.5-mile walk through Washington Park to celebrate the start of the 2021-22 school year.

The 2021-22 MPS academic year began on August 16 for those schools on the early start calendar; schools on the traditional calendar opened on September 2.

After shifting to a series of virtual challenges in 2020, the Run Back to School returned in person this summer to its traditional spot on the final Saturday of August. The positive energy was palpable throughout the entire morning, as the greater MPS community joined together in the spirit of school unity.



MPS alumni, teachers, administrators, parents, students, and southeastern Wisconsinites all attended the run to support MPS' growth within the city. Proceeds from the event are used to support youth recreation, wellness, and sports programs throughout the district.

Schools with at least 25 registrants received a \$500 mini-grant for the wellness programs at their school. This year, eight schools hit the 25-person mark, including MacDowell Montessori, Milwaukee German Immersion, Fernwood Montessori, South Division High School, Hamilton High School, Milwaukee School of Excellence, Zablocki School, and IDEAL School. The School Social Workers group and the MPS Office of Human Resources also turned out for the Run Back to School with over 25 participants.



MacDowell Montessori put together the largest school-based team, and therefore received a \$1,000 grant for youth recreation and wellness programs. In the past, schools have used the grant money to purchase new youth sports uniforms, gym and sports equipment, sports registration fees, the rental of the Wacky Wheels Skate Van, and more.

Several prominent community leaders joined the district's families and staff at the race this year, including Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes and Mayor Tom Barrett. Barnes is a proud graduate of Marshall High School.

The Run Back to School also included music, awards for the top finishers in each age group, and carnival games for kids. MPS also provided a COVID-19 vaccine clinic on site for all age-eligible community members.

MPS Elementary Schools Welcome Students Back



The neighborhood around Rogers Street Academy was filled with excitement on September 2 as families and buses dropped off children for the first day of the new school year. Red carpets were ready and students on the traditional calendar walked into school surrounded by cheering MPS staff, dignitaries, school partners, and more.

Children were excited to return to school, see their teachers and friends, and get ready for hands-on learning. Students arrived wearing masks and carrying supplies, looking forward to getting back into classrooms as MPS returns to full-time in-person learning for the 2021–22 school year. MPS early start schools across the city, including all high schools, middle schools, and connected elementary schools, were back in session on August 16.

The morning celebration included welcome messages from Principal Ramon Cruz, Governor Tony Evers, Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes, State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly, County Executive David Crowley, Mayor Tom Barrett, Sheriff Earnell Lucas, Milwaukee Police Chief Jeffrey Norman, Milwaukee Board of School Directors President Bob Peterson, Superintendent Dr. Keith P. Posley, and MTEA President Amy Mizialko.

District speakers emphasized the importance of returning to classrooms for academic learning and mental wellness, and also outlined strategies to keep students and staff safe and healthy as the pandemic continues. The district has expanded COVID-19 mitigation measures that began in spring, which include maximizing ventilation, electronic HEPA filtration units throughout buildings, hand sanitizing stations, frequent hand washing, physical distancing, and wearing of masks by students and staff.

Our teams have worked very hard to ensure safety and to make sure students receive all the supports they need. We recognize how important this school year is and we are committed to ensuring all students have a chance to achieve.



Rogers Academy is one of 21 bilingual schools in MPS that teach students in both English and Spanish as part of the curriculum. MPS also offers four language immersion schools (French, German, Italian, and Spanish) and World Language courses in a number of languages across the district. To learn more about bilingual education in MPS, visit mpsmke.com/bilingual.

MPS Rolls out Vaccine Mandate for Staff and a \$100 Incentive for Students

During a special meeting on Thursday, September 9, 2021, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors approved a COVID-19 vaccination requirement for all staff. Religious and medical accommodations will be allowed, but exempt individuals will be required to take part in COVID-19 testing twice per week.

Employees are required to become fully vaccinated by November 1, 2021. New employees will be required to submit proof of full vaccination upon hire or be approved for a religious or medical accommodation.

To encourage students to become vaccinated, the Board also unanimously approved a \$100 incentive for MPS students age 12 and older. Those students who can provide proof of being fully vaccinated by November 1, 2021, are eligible for the incentive.

Superintendent Posley and district administrators have been working to provide the safest possible environment in schools for staff and students. Measures include electronic HEPA filtration units throughout buildings, face mask requirements, COVID-19 testing, physical distancing, increased hand washing, and more. The COVID-19 vaccine is one of the most effective strategies to mitigate the spread of the virus. We owe it to our students, teachers, staff, and community to take all possible steps to ensure safe schools.



Employees and families will receive more details from the district in the coming days, including how to request an accommodation, how to submit proof of vaccination, COVID-19 testing, noncompliance conditions, and more.

Mark of Distinction Recognizes Commitment to Highest Level of Service to the Community

Milwaukee Recreation recently joined the ranks of elite park and recreation agencies across the country by earning accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). This distinguished accomplishment was awarded on September 23, 2021 during the NRPA Annual Conference. Only 1.9 percent of park and recreation agencies in the country are accredited. Milwaukee Recreation is one of just three accredited agencies in the state of Wisconsin, and is the nation's only school district-run agency to have received CAPRA accreditation to date.

CAPRA accreditation is the only national accreditation for park and recreation agencies, and is a measure of an agency's overall quality of operation, management, and service to the community. This mark of distinction indicates that an agency has met rigorous standards related to the management and administration of lands, facilities, resources, programs, safety and services. Milwaukee Recreation's entire team remained committed to this effort from the beginning and worked extremely hard to gather data, provide information, and implement new strategies that ultimately allowed them to meet all the CAPRA standards necessary for accreditation. This work has established a roadmap for the department and will ensure its operations and services continue to meet a high level of quality for the Milwaukee community.

The process for accreditation involves a formal application, self-assessments, a site visit by a team of trained individuals (independent of Milwaukee Recreation) that results in a written report, and a hearing with the commission to grant accreditation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's visitations were held virtually. After a highly scrutinized review of Milwaukee Recreation's operations and programming, CAPRA accreditation was granted, as the department demonstrated compliance with **all** 154 recognized standards. Once accredited, agencies must submit an annual report and undergo a reaccreditation process in five years.

The Commission is comprised of representatives from NRPA, the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials, the International City/County Management Association, the Academy for Leisure Sciences, the Armed Forces Recreation Network and the Council of State Executive Directors.

Update on Transportation Services and Vaccinations

As part of this month's report, the Administration will provide an update at the September 30, 2021 meeting of the Milwaukee Board of School Directors on transportation services for the 2021-2022 school year and details regarding vaccinations.