

Resolution 2021R-005

By Director Woodward

WHEREAS, In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) has the responsibility to provide an environment that addresses the safety concerns of our students, staff, and families; and

WHEREAS, In August of 2017, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors adopted Administrative Policy 1.06, Equity in MPS, which states, in part:

(a) The Milwaukee Board of School Directors is committed to the success of every student, regardless of race, ethnicity, family economics, mobility, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or initial proficiencies. The Board holds itself and all district and school-site decision makers, faculty, and support staff accountable for building a district-wide culture of equity.

and

WHEREAS, The principals, teachers, and staff of the schools in MPS's Central Region — which encompasses the 53205, 53206, 53208, 53210 ZIP Codes among others — are committed to providing quality educational opportunities to their students, who are some of the most vulnerable children not only in the city or state, but in the country; and

WHEREAS, Schools in the Central Region — specifically the schools in the 53206 ZIP Code, have historically been understaffed, and the vacancy rate in this region remains one of the highest in the school district; and

WHEREAS, The schools in the Central Region experience a high rate of staff absenteeism among teachers, which is detrimental to our day-to-day instruction and to the safety and wellbeing of our staff and students; and

WHEREAS, Substitute teachers historically have been reticent to accept positions in this Region, especially in the schools located in ZIP Codes 53205, 53206, 53208, and 53210; and

WHEREAS, If school buildings are to be reopened for either in-person or physically-distanced learning during the COVID-19 crisis, MPS must ensure that all schools have reduced student-to-adult ratios; and

WHEREAS, As the MPS community comes together to move forward in its efforts to support equity, the unique needs of the Central Region must be a major focus both during and after the COVID-19 crisis; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the MPS Office of Human Resources is hereby directed to give priority in filling vacancies to the schools in the Central Region; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That substitute teachers shall be assigned as “floaters” at specific schools in the Central Region — i.e., they shall be required to work at their assigned schools for a specified period of time to ensure that there are sufficient adults in each school to provide the required supervision; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the current paraprofessionals assigned to schools in the Central Region shall be offered 40-hour-per-week positions, which will allow them to be in the school buildings for more hours in order to reduce the student-to-adult ratios; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That Central Office staff be assigned specifically to assist in Central Region schools on a day-to-day basis; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That Central Region schools shall be given priority in developing partnerships which will ensure that these schools will have additional adults to support them; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That MPS shall give priority to filling vacancies in the Central Region and to providing extra staffing support to the specialist that works with the Central Region, including diverting Central Services staff from other responsibilities as needed to support this work; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That MPS shall offer develop incentives for teachers who select and commit to three-year assignments in the Central Region; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That MPS shall strive to ensure that 80% of the incentivized positions in the Central Region will be filled by teachers of color; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a portion of the funding allocated to strengthen MPSU (Milwaukee Public Schools University) shall be used to support paraprofessionals who are serving in the Central Region in getting certified as teachers; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Administration shall present its analysis of, and recommendations regarding, this Resolution at the Milwaukee Board of School Directors' regular meeting of July 2020.

June 25, 2020