

Resolution 2021R-021

By Director Woodward

1. WHEREAS, The vision of the Milwaukee Public Schools is to provide an equitable educational environment that is child-centered, supports achievement, and respects and embraces diversity where schools meet the needs of all and where relevant, rigorous, and successful instructional programs will be recognized and replicated to ensure that maximum educational opportunities are provided to enable all students to reach their highest potential; and
2. WHEREAS, As part of its mission, MPS is a diverse district that welcomes all students and prepares them for success in higher education, post-educational opportunities, work, and citizenship; and
3. WHEREAS, Milwaukee Public Schools serves a diverse population, with approximately 89% of students identifying as students of color; and
4. WHEREAS, The Milwaukee Public Schools has embraced the immersion philosophy, which is to enable pupils learn in an environment that recognizes language, history, tradition, and cultural richness; and
5. WHEREAS, The effectiveness of immersion programs is currently being demonstrated through the Milwaukee Chinese, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, Immersion schools; and
6. WHEREAS, An African immersion program is essential in teaching African-American students their culture and heritage as a part their emotional, social, developmental, and academic needs; and
7. WHEREAS, At the November 2016 work session, hosted by Panasonic, on district turnaround efforts to improve student achievement, Director Woodward advocated for the establishment of an African immersion option for MPS students in Board District #4 that gives students knowledge of their heritage and history; and
8. WHEREAS, After a meeting with administrative staff, community members, alumni of Andrew S. Douglas Middle School, and a presentation of the 53206 Initiative, Douglas was selected to be the site, however, there is still no school officially designated as an African immersion school level; now, therefore, be it
9. RESOLVED, That the Board officially designate Andrew S. Douglas Middle School as an African immersion school with the primary language of Spanish; and, be it
10. FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board direct the Administration to report back a plan for full implementation of an African Immersion school.

January 28, 2021