



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Superintendent’s Report – October 2023

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



MPS Jazz Ensemble Performs at State Capitol

On September 21, the melodic voices of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Vocal Jazz Ensemble resonated within the State Capitol Rotunda during the annual State of Education address. It was an honor for the ensemble to be invited by State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly to the occasion.

The ensemble’s singers skillfully rendered the National Anthem and “Everything Must Change” by jazz artist Benard Ighner. With 13 talented members, the ensemble’s harmonious voices brought these important and relevant compositions to life, leaving a lasting impact on the attendees.

Ensemble members conveyed their gratitude to Dr. Underly for extending the invitation to perform at this prestigious event. Their hope was evident: that the officials present would be moved to prioritize arts education within MPS, recognizing its invaluable role in students’ development and well-rounded education.

Following the State of Education address, the ensemble students were welcomed to a reception at the Governor's Mansion, where they had the opportunity to engage with various officials, creating meaningful connections and reinforcing the significance of arts in education.

MPS Skilled Trades and Technical Career Fair



On October 4, Milwaukee Public Schools hosted its annual Skilled Trades and Technical Career Fair at the new Milwaukee Tools office, located at 551 North Fifth Street. Hundreds of Milwaukee Public Schools students, primarily juniors and seniors, gathered for this engaging event, providing them with an opportunity to explore a wide spectrum of career paths. These paths span from construction and manufacturing to healthcare and information technology. Nearly 50 employers engaged with students from 25 MPS high schools, introducing them

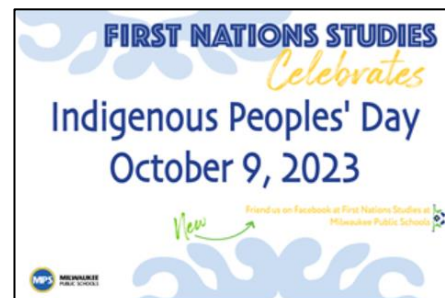
to potential apprenticeships and various other career prospects.

The MPS Department of Facilities and Maintenance was one of the employer partners taking part in the career fair and offering apprenticeships to students. The department offers students the chance to work in diverse trades shops, covering carpentry, electrical work, automotive, locksmithing, masonry and bricklaying, painting, steam fitting, grounds maintenance, plumbing, insulating, construction, and design.

The MPS apprenticeship program operates in a manner similar to other youth apprenticeship programs. In each discipline or field, student apprentices collaborate with experienced mentors to gain essential work experience. MPS ensures that student apprentices acquire the necessary certifications to work on projects funded by the city or MPS. This widens the horizons for employment opportunities for our student apprentices, providing them with valuable skills and a promising future.

MPS Acknowledges and Celebrates Indigenous Peoples' Day

Indigenous Peoples' Day, observed on October 9, is a significant occasion on which MPS aligns with the City of Milwaukee, the State of Wisconsin, and numerous individuals and organizations across the nation to celebrate the vibrant cultures and cherished values of Indigenous peoples. Traditionally a day designated for the observance of Columbus Day, MPS teachers, staff, families, and students actively engage in a range of activities, lessons, and



commemorations to deepen their understanding of the rich histories, enduring values, diverse cultures, and remarkable achievements of Native American Nations.

[Learn about the First Nations cultures.](#)

MPS's New Green Schoolyards

On October 11, Riley Dual Language Montessori School hosted a celebration to mark the unveiling of five new environmentally friendly, or “green,” schoolyards within Milwaukee Public Schools.

These playgrounds have undergone a remarkable transformation, shedding vast stretches of pavement to make room for lush green spaces. This redevelopment not only enhances opportunities for student learning and play but also plays a crucial role in managing stormwater runoff, preventing it from overwhelming Milwaukee’s sewer system and contaminating Lake Michigan. These projects collectively have the capacity to capture more than 760,000 gallons of water every time it rains.

The redevelopment initiative is a collaborative effort of Milwaukee Public Schools and several esteemed partners that include the City of Milwaukee, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, and the nonprofit environmental organization Reflo. Additional support has come from various partners and funders, including the Milwaukee Public Schools Foundation, to contribute to the successful realization of this project.

The schools most recently benefiting from these revitalized playground areas are Riley Dual Language Montessori School, Frederick J. Gaenslen School, Milwaukee German Immersion School, and Alexander Mitchell Integrated Arts School.

The celebration was a festive affair, featuring speakers, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and a jubilant atmosphere. To add a special touch to the event, students from Riley contributed to the festivities by writing their own lyrics and singing them to the tune of “La Bamba” to celebrate the rejuvenated playground and its positive impact on their educational journey.

Black Lives Matter at School T-Shirt Contest

The 2023–24 Black Lives Matter at School T-shirt contest has officially kicked off, and students from every corner of Milwaukee Public Schools are responding with enthusiasm. These young minds have poured their creative energy into crafting unique T-shirt designs that not only pay homage to the vital Black Lives Matter movement but also depict the significant role that Black Lives Matter plays in the very fabric of Milwaukee Public Schools.



In a powerful demonstration of unity, creativity, and social awareness, these students use their artistic talents to convey an important message. Their designs serve as a medium through which they express their support and commitment to equality and justice.

The anticipation is building as we look forward to announcing the winning designer this November. The chosen artist will not only gain well-deserved recognition but also will receive a \$100 gift card, four T-shirts featuring their winning design, and the privilege of having their creation featured on Milwaukee Public Schools' official Black Lives Matter at School T-shirts. This opportunity extends far beyond just an award—it is an avenue for the winning designer to make a lasting impact by spreading the message of unity and inclusion throughout the community.

MPS Winter Sports Registration Now Open

It may be hard to believe, but the time has come to gear up for winter sports: boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' wrestling, and boys' swimming.

Registration has officially begun for the winter 2023–24 season of MPS high school athletics, and it will continue to be open until November 27, 2023.

At the heart of Milwaukee Public Schools athletics lies a belief in the transformative power of sports. We embrace the idea that student participation in sports leads to personal growth through valuable team experiences and hands-on guidance. Additionally, it fosters healthy competition, nurtures leadership skills, and promotes a sense of community pride. We are thrilled to be part of this journey with our students and their development.

To register for a winter sport, go to the [Milwaukee City Conference online registration platform](#) and [contact your school athletic director](#) with any questions.

[Free physicals are also available](#) at multiple locations for all student-athletes.