

MONTHLY REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE MILWAUKEE BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

December 15, 2021

Submitted by President Peterson

In an effort to support the goals identified by MPS as essential to the accomplishment of the MPS Vision and Mission, the President's activities from December 2021 included the following:

Academic Achievement

- Met with Dr. Posley and Jennifer Mims-Howell regarding serving students with special needs.
- Met with Jennie Ekstein and Felicia Saffold regarding social studies curriculum on the Milwaukee Civil Rights Movement and the upcoming textbook adoptions.
- Met with Eduardo Galvan and Robert Harris to talk about MPSU and its bilingual cohorts
- Attended the PACE meeting
- Attended special Board Meeting
- Attended the SASI Committee Meeting
- Visited La Escuela Fratney's new three-year old kindergarten with Director Gokalgandhi and Superintendent Posley.
- Attended the December full board meeting

Effective and Efficient Operations

- Met with the Chief of Police and two of his staff, along with Dr. Posley and Marla Bronaugh
- Meet with Dr. Mann regarding numerous issues
- Spoke with school board members about different issues
- Met with Jim Nelsen about high school concerns

- There is also a lot of work underway with the Middle and High School Equity Work Group, which I participated in, including:
 - Attending the Middle and High School Equity Workgroup meeting
 - Attending two meetings of the Steering Committee meeting of the Middle and High School Equity Work group and helping with related follow-up work
 - Speaking with members of the Middle and High School Equity WorkGroup

Student, Family, and Community Engagement

- Met with Dr. Posley, along with Ben Ward and Amy Mizialko from the MTEA.
- Talked with two parents and one staff parents about concerns at their schools
- Wrote article for December issue of Shepherd Express, *MPS: Diversity Unmatched by Any District in Wisconsin*, which is attached to this report and found here: <https://shepherdexpress.com/news/issue-of-the-month/mps-diversity-unmatched-by-any-district-in-wisconsin/#/questions>
- Spoke with people regarding the January 28, 2022 mini conference on Metro School Integration
- Made phone calls and emails regarding January 28 mini conference
- Met with Dr. Posley, and Representatives of the MTEA and United Way regarding Community Schools
- Met with Superintendent Posley regarding building modifications and improvements
- Meeting with Stefan Lallinger and planning team from MPS and Century Foundation .
- Met with Reggie Jackson regarding Jan 28 conference

[BEST OF MKE](#) [NEWS](#) [FOOD & DRINK](#) [MUSIC](#) [CANNABIS](#)

[CULTURE](#) [FILM](#) [HEAR ME OUT](#) [LIFESTYLE](#) [NEIGHBORHOODS](#)

[SPORTS](#) [EVENTS](#) [PUZZLES](#) [PODCASTS](#) [STORE](#)

[SUPPORT THE SHEPHERD](#) [ADVERTISING INFO](#)

Milwaukee's Alternative News Source

[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Issue of the Month](#) /

MPS: Diversity Unmatched by Any District in Wisconsin

BY BOB PETERSON DEC. 08, 2021 1:37 P.M.

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Reddit](#)

[Email](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[More](#)

[RSS](#) [PRINT](#)



BEST OF MKE NEWS FOOD & DRINK MUSIC CANNABIS
CULTURE FILM HEAR ME OUT LIFESTYLE NEIGHBORHOODS
SPORTS EVENTS PUZZLES PODCASTS STORE
SUPPORT THE SHEPHERD ADVERTISING INFO

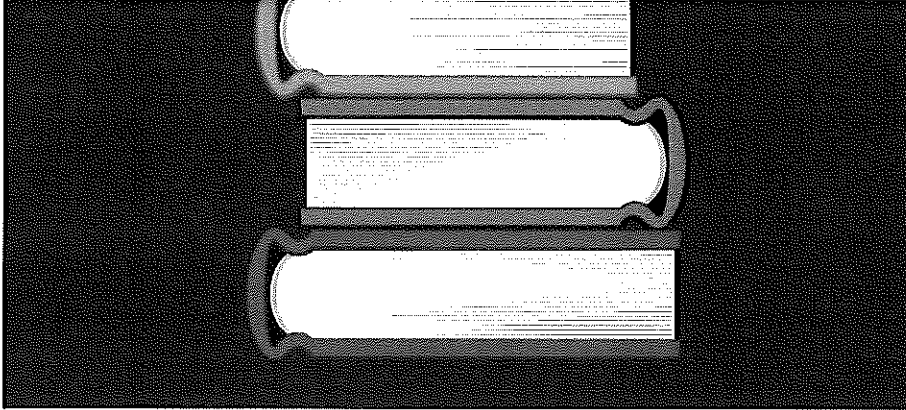


IMAGE BY MICHAEL BURMESCH

In mid-November, the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) received notice that 100 Afghani refugees were scheduled to arrive in Milwaukee, joining several Afghani families already enrolled in MPS.

The notice was not unusual. MPS has long been the educational home for recent immigrants and refugees. When they knock on the door, we welcome them in, no questions asked.

MPS has all the problems facing every large urban district in the country, and those must be addressed. But one of its unrecognized strengths is the significant number of students from other countries, bringing a rich diversity of culture and language.

By last count there were 85 distinct home languages spoken by MPS students. Eleven MPS schools have students speaking 15 or more languages.



BEST OF MKE NEWS FOOD & DRINK MUSIC CANNABIS
 CULTURE FILM HEAR ME OUT LIFESTYLE NEIGHBORHOODS
 SPORTS EVENTS PUZZLES PODCASTS STORE
 SUPPORT THE SHEPHERD ADVERTISING INFO

number of immigrants from Central America.

I witnessed this diversity first-hand at a pre-pandemic South Division High School graduation. As the ceremony began, students walked onto the dais where I was sitting and welcomed people in 11 different languages.

The recent immigrants add to what was already an impressive multiracial, multilingual student body at MPS, from our African American, Latinx, Native American and Hmong students, to our white students. It's hard to explain how proud this makes me feel.

Unrecognized Treasures

The diversity of our students is just one of the unrecognized treasures of MPS. Other little-known strengths include:

- Our Spanish, French, German, and Italian immersion programs. In addition, 21 schools offer bilingual (Spanish/English) programming.
- Our Montessori Schools. MPS has eight Montessori schools, more than any other public school district in the country. The most recent addition is the Riley Dual Language (Spanish/English) Montessori school.
- Since 2015, MPS has established 14 “community schools” which include wrap-around health and social services and work with more than a dozen



BEST OF MKE NEWS FOOD & DRINK MUSIC CANNABIS
 CULTURE FILM HEAR ME OUT LIFESTYLE NEIGHBORHOODS
 SPORTS EVENTS PUZZLES PODCASTS STORE

SUPPORT THE SHEPHERD ADVERTISING INFO
 to earn college credit before they graduate. The district also has “dual enrollment” arrangements with Milwaukee Area Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee allowing students to get credit in a variety of disciplines, from nursing to mechanical HVAC systems.

Friends of the *Shepherd*

Help support Milwaukee's locally owned free weekly newspaper.

LEARN MORE

The list could go on, from the eco-friendly “green revitalization” of our playgrounds to our STEM programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Yes, we have serious challenges, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have a shortage of certified teachers, para-professionals, bus drivers and other staff. We need to work harder at issues of equity, ensuring that all students are treated with respect and dignity, and have access to quality curriculum.



BEST OF MKE NEWS FOOD & DRINK MUSIC CANNABIS
CULTURE FILM HEAR ME OUT LIFESTYLE NEIGHBORHOODS
SPORTS EVENTS PUZZLES PODCASTS STORE
SUPPORT THE SHEPHERD ADVERTISING INFO

Project found that Wisconsin has the highest incarceration rate of any state in the country. Those numbers are driven by Milwaukee County, where nearly 70 percent of the Black population lives.

MPS is working to address these problems, in conjunction with the unions representing MPS employees, in particular the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association, and with area officials, community organizations and businesses.

At times, the problems facing MPS seem overwhelming. But I know that, quite literally, MPS is educating the city's future.

It should be no surprise that many of our elected officials graduated from MPS high schools—such as County Executive David Crowley (Bay View High School), County Board Chairwoman Marcella Nicholson (Milwaukee School of Languages), and Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes (Marshall High School). A majority of Milwaukee alderpeople graduated from MPS high schools—Nik Kovac, Ashanti Hamilton, Milele Coggs and Khalif Rainey from Riverside University High School; Marina Dimitrijevic, Chantia Lewis and Cavalier Johnson from Bay View; and Michael Murphy from Madison High School.

I wake up every morning thinking about MPS. After teaching in the system for three decades, serving as president of the teachers union for four years, and now



BEST OF MKE NEWS FOOD & DRINK MUSIC CANNABIS
 CULTURE FILM HEAR ME OUT LIFESTYLE NEIGHBORHOODS
 SPORTS EVENTS PUZZLES PODCASTS STORE
 SUPPORT THE SHEPHERD ADVERTISING INFO

in Wisconsin.

RELATED TO

MPS Diversity Milwaukee Public Schools

Bob Peterson

Bob Peterson is President of the Milwaukee Board of Schools Directors and taught fifth grade in Milwaukee Public Schools for 30 years.

[Read more by Bob Peterson](#)

DEC. 08, 2021 1:37 P.M.

[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)
[Reddit](#)
[Email](#)
[LinkedIn](#)

[More](#)

[RSS](#) [PRINT](#)

Friends of the *Shepherd*

Help support Milwaukee's locally owned free weekly newspaper.

[LEARN MORE](#)

RELATED

