

Resolution 2223R-007

Uniting With the City and County to Meet Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Climate Justice Targets

By Directors Herndon and Peterson

WHEREAS there is an overwhelming scientific consensus that human-made global warming is an existential threat to the lives and wellbeing of billions of people, and even civilization itself; and

WHEREAS the Milwaukee Public Schools Board of Directors adopted “Our House is On Fire” Resolution 1920R-016 in 2020, which set in motion a series of steps to integrate climate justice curricula and sustainability practices into all aspects of MPS’ work and functions; and

WHEREAS because preventing runaway climate change requires urgent action at all levels to hold global temperature increases under 1.5 Celsius, many local units of government across the world and in Wisconsin have committed to meeting the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) global greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets of a 45% reduction (from 2010 levels) by 2030 and an 80% reduction by 2050; and

WHEREAS The City and County of Milwaukee created the Milwaukee City-County Task Force on Climate and Equity in 2019 to develop a comprehensive plan to meet the IPCC targets not only in their own operations but community-wide, and in a way that also dramatically improves economic equity and the supply of family-supporting jobs, especially for marginalized people of color communities; and

WHEREAS Milwaukee Public Schools is not currently part of the City-County climate action planning process; and

WHEREAS Milwaukee Public Schools are a major missing piece needed to achieve a Milwaukee climate transition that substantially improves racial economic equity, because MPS is the leading educator in Wisconsin of low income and BIPOC children, and its physical infrastructure is a major producer of greenhouse emissions; and

WHEREAS major urban school districts across the country, including New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago, have committed to meeting the greenhouse reduction targets and have developed plans to meet the benchmarks within their aging portfolios of school and administration buildings; and

WHEREAS the green economy is one of the fastest growing economic sectors, and offers potential living wage careers for MPS graduates; and

WHEREAS according to the most definitive federal study of green-collar jobs, 4 of 5 green sector workers are currently white, and three quarters are men; and

WHEREAS a key way to make the climate transition dramatically improve economic equity is to provide the career counseling and workforce development supports needed to make these promising career opportunities available to low income students, students of color, women, and others who are not receiving these opportunities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that Milwaukee Public Schools join Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee by specifically adopting the international climate reduction targets, which includes the interim target of cutting greenhouse emissions by 45% by 2030; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee Public Schools join Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee in the planning and implementation of a community-wide climate action plan which meets the IPCC international greenhouse emissions reduction targets; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, Milwaukee Public Schools advocate for a community-wide Milwaukee climate action plan that uses the climate transition to dramatically improve economic equity, setting as a benchmark the Justice40 initiative being pursued by the Biden Administration which stipulates that 40% of all new climate benefits, including new jobs, go to residents of marginalized communities; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Milwaukee Public Schools continue to dedicate staffing and resources to both promote climate justice education and to develop the climate action plan which includes educators, parents, and students in the process; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Milwaukee Public Schools utilize the existing structures created by the Resolution 1920R-016 in 2020 whenever possible; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Milwaukee Public Schools continue to seek the resources from federal and state government needed to undertake a large-scale energy conservation and renewable energy retrofit of all district-owned buildings, and do so in a way that creates green economy learning and career development opportunities for its students.

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