



NEWS RELEASE
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CONCERNED CITIZEN GROUP HOLDS FIRST ACCOUNTABILITY MEETING WITH MPS



*Progress Results Unveiled to Business, Community, Government and Education Leaders
as Part of Initiative to Address Academic Achievement in Milwaukee Public Schools*

Milwaukee – The Accountability and Support Group, (ASG), a concerned citizen group, kicked off their first accountability meeting on February 21st as part of their efforts to provide support and hold Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) accountable for achieving results through the MPS “Working Together, Achieving More” Strategic Plan. During an intense three-hour meeting, members of the ASG group heard from key leaders involved in the implementation of the MPS “Working Together, Achieving More” Strategic Plan.

“Hard questions were asked and there was a willingness to answer,” said Cecelia Gore, Program Manager for the Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation.

In this first joint meeting, MPS was asked to address key strategies around at least one of the four promises in the Strategic Plan for 2012:

- No less than 70% of MPS students will meet grade level proficiencies in math;
- No less than 75% of students will complete rigorous high school coursework;
- No less than 80% of MPS students will be reading at their grade level; and
- MPS will cut the achievement gap between African American and white students in half; (long term it will be eliminated)

MPS Superintendent William Andrekopoulos opened the meeting with a call to action regarding the urgency of the task at hand and the need to improve results for all students, especially in mathematics. He then introduced Henry Kranendonk, Mathematics Curriculum Specialist, who presented the principal elements of the Strategic Plan pertaining to a comprehensive mathematics framework. A key strategy in the implementation of this work is the development of Math Teacher Leaders (MTLs). Currently, 75 percent of MPS schools have an active Mathematics Teacher Leader who provides teacher training in content and improved teaching strategies. Early results show initial limited improvement in MPS mathematics achievement in some schools.

In addition, MPS staff shared plans to increase rigor in high school mathematics with the goal of creating a pathway for students ensuring rigorous preparation for career or college. After hearing the overview of the mathematics program for MPS in grades K-12, the ASG made the following recommendations:

- Accelerate and expand the program's initial successes to all schools within MPS;
- Develop a clearer communication plan for teachers and families to increase their understanding of the Comprehensive Mathematics Framework and how it helps students learn; and
- Communicate and create a tighter connection between this work and the "Working Together, Achieving More" Strategic Plan's promise of having 70 percent of all MPS students become proficient in math by 2012.

In addition, ASG members have requested MPS to return within 30 days to present an update on further progress in the implementation of the mathematics program.

"It was a good start; the public is demanding clearer definitions and plans to meet the rigorous goals of the Strategic Plan. That is why we are meeting again in 30 days," noted Sister Joel Read, Co-Chair of the GMC Education Committee and member of the ASG. "Critical friends always practice tough love."

The Accountability and Support Group (ASG) is a group of key government officials, business and community leaders, educators and concerned citizens who are working to support and hold MPS leadership accountable for implementation of the "Working Together, Achieving More" Strategic Plan. The ASG is an initiative of the Greater Milwaukee Committee. A complete list of the ASG members is attached.

ABOUT THE GREATER MILWAUKEE COMMITTEE

The Greater Milwaukee Committee is a private sector civic organization whose mission is to contribute to the cultural and economic base of the Milwaukee metropolitan area. The organization was formed in 1948 and is comprised of the top leaders in business, the professions, labor, education philanthropy and nonprofit community development. For more information, visit www.gmconline.org or call 414-272-0588.

GREATER MILWAUKEE COMMITTEE
Accountability and Support Group

- Mayor Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee
- Judge Carl Ashley, Milwaukee County Circuit Court
- Tony Baez, President/CEO for the Council for the Spanish Speaking
- Tia Bojar, Dean, College of Education & Leadership, Cardinal Stritch University
- Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Pedro Colon, State Representative Wisconsin Legislature
- Cecelia Gore, Program Director, Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation
- Beverly Greenberg, VP Public Affairs, Time Warner Cable, SE Wis.
- Bill Henk, Dean of Education, Marquette University
- William Jenkins, Principal, Jenkins & Associates
- Linda Post, Chair, Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, UW-M
- Sister Joel Read, President Emerita, Alverno College
- Paul Roller, Retired Chairman, MillerBrands, Milwaukee
- Mark Sabljak, Publisher, The Business Journal
- Reverend Louis Sibley III, Chairman, MICAH
- Lena Taylor, State Senator, Wisconsin Legislature

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