



NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release
March 28, 2008

For More Information:
Sister Joel Read, 414-672-4026

ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUPPORT GROUP HEARS UPDATES ABOUT MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOL'S STRATEGIC EFFORTS



*MPS Presents Additional Progress Results to Business, Community, Government and Education
Leaders and Recommends Focusing on Communicating the Plan and Its Results*

Milwaukee – During an interactive 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. The Accountability and Support Group, (ASG), a concerned citizen’s group, met on March 25th 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.

“We heard updates specifically pertaining to the five-year strategic plan and we are continuing to build relationships that are more important for our work today and for Milwaukee students tomorrow,” said Mark Sabljak, Publisher of The Business Journal.

In this second joint meeting, MPS was asked to address how to accelerate and expand their initial success in increasing mathematics competency in all schools within MPS so that no less than 70% of MPS students will meet grade level proficiency in math by 2012. Kathy Williams, Director of Teaching & Learning, noted that Math Pacing Guides are now in all MPS schools and classrooms. Henry Kranendonk, Mathematics Curriculum Specialist, presented the MPS Mathematics Continuum consisting of five stages that ranks each school within the district. And the good news is that MPS has few Stage 1 and Stage 2 schools with the majority of schools at Stage 3 and above.

Superintendent Andrekopoulos observed that Kranendonk’s professional development work with teachers and principals and the results of that effort is like a cultural revolution for the District. While math improvements at the beginning are small, they will continue.

Aquine Jackson, Chief Officer of School and Community Support, introduced the MPS plan for furthering the development of a safe school context and culture in support of learning throughout the District. Detailed safety strategy plans were presented by Vince Flores, Director of School Safety & Security and Kristi Cole, Project Director for the Safe Schools/Healthy Student Initiative. Both efforts, federally and locally funded, are developing extensive networks of local relationships with other organizations in support of MPS implementation of its strategic plan. Both presenters emphasized the critical need for these relationships and therefore an expanded communications effort.

In the final presentation, Dr. Catherine Thome, Director of District & School Improvement, provided the ASG with an executive summary of the District Identified for Improvement (DIFI) Plan. Thome

noted that the DIFI plan complements the MPS Strategic Plan by drilling down on the two basic areas of reading and mathematics—both critical skills to be mastered by all children at all grade levels in order to access all content areas.

Discussion throughout the meeting led ASG members to again request MPS to return within 30 days to participate in a working session where MPS and ASG members can collaborate to develop a comprehensive internal and external communication strategy. Implementation of the District's Strategic Plan and its results will then be communicated to all MPS stakeholders.

"The more the Milwaukee community is made aware of and critically supports the efforts MPS is making to improve the academic achievement of all of its students, the better it is for the community and for educators" said William Jenkins, Co-Chair of the GMC Education Committee and ASG member.

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.

- more -

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, School 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

###