



MILWAUKEE PARTNERSHIP ACADEMY MONTHLY REPORT

September 2010

- New Executive Partners, Dr. Gregory Thornton, MPS Superintendent, and Dr. Michael Burke, MATC President, were welcomed to the MPA. Dr. Thornton's priorities for the district include increased student achievement, effective and efficient operations, and sustained partnerships with the Milwaukee parent and business communities.
- Focus for the MPA this year is being discussed. Math and literacy will remain to be two areas of focus.
- The Teacher & Principal Quality Work Group has continued to work on the cooperating teachers/placement of student teachers handbook.
- Comprehensive Mathematics Work Group Update:
 - Math Teaching Specialists have been conducting school collaborative monitoring visits.
 - The Annual Math Teacher Leader (MTL) Kickoff was held at South Division High School on August 26th. The focus was on the Common Core State Standards, Wisconsin's newly adopted standards for mathematics. Dr. Hank Kepner, Immediate Past President of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, spoke on this topic and meaningful mathematics through building mathematical practices. Dr. Heidi Ramirez, MPS Chief Academic Officer, presented data from NAEP and WKCE-CRT assessments; spoke on lesson objectives, communication and assessment; and gave several challenges to everyone regarding further acceleration of student progress and improvement of teaching and learning.
 - For additional information on the kickoff and the work of the Milwaukee Mathematics Partnership (MMP), please see the attached August 2010 issue of *The MMP Messenger*.
- The Milwaukee Area Academic Alliance in English will be conducting an open forum on computers, social media and English education from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 2nd at the Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business, 3202 North Maryland Avenue, in Computer Lab N234C. Participants will see a demonstration of Wordpress.com, explore social media sites with a focus on how students use them, engage in an informal discussion of the impact of technology on teaching and learning including how technology is changing the role of teachers, and preview the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English convention. Interested parties should pre-register with Mariann Maris at sarim@uwm.edu.

- Cardinal Stritch University held an open house for its Literacy Centers on September 16th for people to learn more about the centers including their CLIFFTOPS model that is making a difference in classrooms across the city and the comprehensive literacy assessment and intervention services. All MPA Comprehensive Literacy Work Group members were invited to attend. The mission of the centers is to provide access to functional, lifetime literacy for all K-12 students in Milwaukee, regardless of cultural, economic, linguistic or biological factors.
- MATC conducted an event on September 22nd for high school educators and local employers regarding preparing a qualified workforce. The event focused on WorkKeys (National Career Readiness Certificate), AccuVision (soft skills assessment and training tool) and KeyTrain (interactive training system for career readiness skills).
- NEA Foundation Grant Update:
 - The first 2010-11 professional development day for NEA Focus Schools was held on September 11th. Each focus school was invited to register 10 participants, and there were 170 in attendance. Keynote speakers, Jerry Benston and David B. Hunt from Critical Measures, LLC, focused on diversity and cultural competence for educators and helped participants to:
 - Learn about three demographic “megatrends” that are rapidly changing the face of public education in the U.S. and in Milwaukee’s public schools. These trends include dramatic increases in children of color, immigrants and children with different religious and linguistic traditions.
 - Understand what is meant by “cultural competence” in public education—in particular, its four elements: cultural awareness (including awareness of one’s own personal and cultural biases); cultural knowledge (knowledge of core cross-cultural variables likely to impact the educational encounter); cultural skills (needed to succeed in a more culturally diverse educational environment) and application (through sustained, cross-cultural encounters).
 - Participate in an intercultural simulation (game) called “BARNGA.”
 - Understand ten core cross-cultural differences that can positively or negatively impact intercultural encounters between teachers, students and parents.
 - Understand what additional skills educators will need to face the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly racially and culturally diverse student body and faculty.
 - Learn how to manage cross-cultural conflict by applying the insights of the Intercultural Conflict Style Assessment Inventory to everyday interactions with students, families and peers.

Feedback on the event has been very positive. Participants thought the presenters were very knowledgeable and engaging and found their presentation to be very informative, insightful and of great value. Many of the evaluation respondents found the information on intercultural conflict (styles,

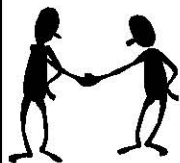
styles model, styles assessment and conflict resolution) and the BARNGA intercultural simulation (game) to be the most effective parts of the session.

- The NEA Foundation Grant is working in concert with MPS and Alverno College to provide professional development to MPS Central Services on literacy strategies and techniques for administrators.
- MPS, UWM, Alverno, MMABSE and the MTEA will all be participating in the NEA Foundation Grant to Close the Achievement Gaps cross-site convening in Washington, DC this October.
- A grant in the amount of \$100,000 was received from Assurant Health Foundation to support learning teams at NEA Focus Schools and community and family involvement.

Our Mission

The purpose of the Milwaukee Partnership Academy (MPA) is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS). The broad initiative of the MPA is to ensure that every child in the Milwaukee Public Schools is performing at or above grade level in reading, writing, and mathematics through shared responsibility for student success. The framework for the initiative is comprehensive literacy and mathematics: a comprehensive literacy program that provides skill development across all curricular areas and focuses on reading, writing, listening, speaking, deep thinking, and research skills; a comprehensive mathematics program that provides students an understanding of mathematical concepts, an ability to accurately and appropriately compute, an ability to solve mathematical problems by applying concepts, an ability to provide reasoning to solutions to problems, and an ability to see mathematics as useful and doable.

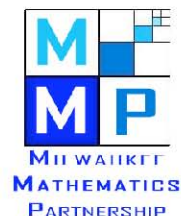
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The MMP Messenger

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The goal of *The MMP Messenger* is to enhance communication and foster discussion among the Math Teacher Leader (MTL), the Principal, and the Learning Team. The *MMP Messenger* is distributed following each MTL monthly meeting. Documents presented at the monthly MTL meetings can be accessed through the MPS portal or the MMP website at www.mmp.uwm.edu.

Dr. Hank Kepner, Featured Keynote

Dr. Kepner, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics President from 2008-2010, spoke on Wisconsin's newly adopted *Common Core Math Standards (CCSS): Meaningful Mathematics Through Building Mathematical Practices*. Dr. Kepner offered national and state views on this powerful document that is now the basis for mathematics in all Wisconsin Schools. Some of the important points include:

- The Standards for Mathematical Practice are about students' mathematical behaviors that grow over time--their entire K-12 educational careers.
- The K-8 grade level standards are NOT a big move from where we are with the MPS Learning Targets and the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards in mathematics. This work has been going on for over 20 years in mathematics and is similar to the 2001 National Research Council's Adding It Up recommendations that have been the basis for MPS's Comprehensive Mathematics Framework.
- As we transition to the new CCSS we will systematically study the standards and make connections to the MPS Learning Targets and Wisconsin Model Academic Standards to the Wisconsin Core standards
- Making connections across all of mathematics should be the goals of teachers as they study the learning trajectories in the CCSS.

It promises to be an exciting year for MTLs as they learn how to effectively use the CCSS!

Dr. Heidi Ramirez, Featured Keynote

Dr. Ramirez, Chief Academic Officer for MPS, is known for asking thought-provoking questions about student learning. At the August MTL Kickoff meeting, Dr. Ramirez congratulated the MTLs for the gains in WKCE-CRT mathematics scores, but challenged them to think critically about how to further accelerate progress for all students, and how they plan to support improved teaching in their buildings this year. She presented data from NAEP and WKCE-CRT assessments, comparing student performance in reading and mathematics in Milwaukee to that in Wisconsin and other urban districts. She elaborated on the benefits of aligning lesson objectives to rigorous standards, communicating lesson objectives in student-friendly language, and assessing student learning in meaningful ways. She finished by posing two more questions for the MTLs to ponder ...

"We KNOW you can move teachers. The question is how FAST can you move them, and HOW MANY of them can you move?"

CCSS 101: Standards for Mathematical Practice

MTLs split into their Region Rooms to study how a Common Core Standard for Mathematical Practice can be infused in a classroom math lesson. They unpacked the first (of eight) Practice Standard, "**Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them,**" in conjunction with an 8th grade content standard. The MTLs modeled a lesson using a rich math problem, and asked the MTLs: What did you as students do to bring this Practice Standard alive? What could you as teachers do in your classrooms, to bring the standard alive?

Your MTL can duplicate any part of this session for your teachers as an intro to the CCSS Standards for Mathematical Practice, K-12.

Region Time: Making Coherency

What will this year look like mathematically? We have all the pieces to the puzzle, but we need to put them together to truly see the big picture. Each region was given time at the end of the day to meet, greet, and get to work! Starting with the piece, "MTL Role Guidelines" for both released and non-released MTLs, we envisioned how those roles support being a leader of self and others and how they fit together with other pieces: the SIP, the Plan of Action, and the Action Plan (just released!).

Looking Ahead...

- The next MTL meeting is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 12/14. The dates are pending due to the site being as yet undecided.
- The first Math Department Chair meeting will be held on Oct. 6 from 4:30-6:00 at Central Services.
- Additional MTL sessions, High School Labs, and High School Summits will be communicated via the Superintendent's Thursday Updates and MTL listserv!

Ask your MTL...

- From what you learned about the CCSS, what implications does this have for us at this time?
- How would you respond to Dr. Ramirez's questions?
- When can we get started on our Math Action Plan?
- When would you like to share what you learned at the Kickoff with the staff?