



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 balanced 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.

MPA Implementation Team Meeting Minutes from February 9, 2009

Bama Brown-Grice, MPS	Erik Conner, MPS	Pat Ellis, Stritch
Victoria Frazier, MPS	Beth Giles, UW System	Reginald Ivy, MPS
Joe Kmoch, MTEC	Mike Langyel, MTEA	Deb Lindsey, MPS
Dennis Oulahan, MTEA	Linda Post, UWM	Lee Ann Pruske, MPS
Ruth Short, UWM	Louise Small-Hamilton, MATC	Betty Smith, Milwaukee Catalyst

Announcements and Updates

- **MPA Interim Executive Director Position** – A meeting with interim co-executive director candidates is scheduled for later this week.
- **MTL and Literacy Coach Positions** - Math and Literacy work group members are currently meeting concerning alignment/consistency across the MTL and Literacy Coach positions and the Math Work Group will continue discussion at its 2:00 meeting today. There is much yet to discuss.

Learning Team Initiative Update

The writing team has been drafting a number of pieces and hopes to have a completed draft after its meeting on February 18th. The editing team will go over the draft and then it should go out to everyone.

Reorganization/Restructuring of MPS & the Effect on Work Group Membership

Major restructuring/reorganization is taking place in MPS Central Services, particularly in the academic/instructional area.

- Arleen Dansby-White is now acting as Principal at Gold Meir School, and the former principal there, Tom Hanley, is on a one-semester special assignment to Central Services.
- Kathy Williams, who held the position of Director of Teaching & Learning, has retired.
- Vicky Frazier, Staff Development Supervisor, now reports to Human Resources.
- A hiring process is in progress for the positions of Director of Educational Services, Chief Academic Officer, Literacy Coordinator and Math Coordinator. A number of other positions under the instructional umbrella are vacant and we are unsure if they will all be filled. The first two positions referenced have not been in place in recent history, but there had been the position of Director of Instructional Leadership & Support, which was held by Arleen Dansby-White.
- Some areas have been reorganized under Catherine Thome, Director of District & School Improvement.
- There are additional reorganization rumors.

The reorganization is affecting membership on the Implementation Team and its work groups which must be addressed. A brief history of Implementation Team membership and purpose was reviewed and discussion took place on the current membership model and how we might proceed. In the current model, key Executive Partners appointed people to the Implementation Team from their organizations and Work Group Co-chairs also serve on the Team.

Comments:

- It would be logical for those taking the place of those who left or those acting in the positions to be the replacements when the positions remain intact.
- Should the current model be kept?
- Perhaps membership should be based upon critical positions in the reorganization, and maybe the new interim executive director(s) should make those determinations.
- Share MPS's MPA membership vacancies with the Superintendent and ask him to assign replacements. If those assigned don't match the needs, then address it with him. Some appointments may be short-term because of the position searches in progress.
- Perhaps all appointments should be reviewed with the Executive Partners at this time.
- Before bringing in new people, get in writing a procedure for replacements/appointments.

- It would be helpful to describe the Implementation Team's purpose, goals and agenda as well as the roles of the Executive Partners in a document on membership procedures.

Linda Post will pull together information, have discussion with the Superintendent and Alfonzo Thurman about procedures and draft something for the Implementation Team to review.

Review of Work Group Work Plans

Skunkworks Work Group

The work group would like to move to the next step of meetings with students and sees itself as a broker of meetings of students with different groups throughout the district and the MPA. The work group would like to have some of the students it has worked with meet with each MPA work group, beginning next month with the Teacher & Principal Quality Work Group. Work groups could inform Skunkworks of the topics they wish to discuss and Skunkworks could facilitate and get the students to the meetings.

It is desired to set up a sustainable structure for meetings with MPA work groups and other groups and apply for a \$20,000 grant that is available which is geared towards the drop-out or drop-off problem. Technology, the online structure and work with the Speak Out group would also be pursued.

Another meeting the work group will pursue is a School Board Forum for approximately 50-60 students with hopes of holding it around the next School Board election and receiving media coverage. Possible dates being considered at this time are March 16th, 17th and 18th. Possible locations and other details were discussed.

The broad view is to engage our students in this process that the MPA, business community, universities and everyone else is in engaged in relative to shaping what education should look like. All our deliberations ought to include how our students feel about what is happening to them. The work group has found it very valuable to listen to what students have to say and feels it would be extremely valuable for the adults to listen to thoughtful young people. Forums with other groups would be planned on an ongoing basis. It is also desired to use technology to efficiently bring the message to our students that they have a place in the dialog that is occurring in the schools and to allow the students in their classrooms to watch this legitimate activity to engage adults. The goal is for a permanent structure for students to have input with the people who make decisions and effect change in MPS.

The work group would like support and commitment from MPA Partners to help cover the costs for the work group meeting and forum. Discussion with Executive Partners would be needed for any ongoing resources.

Implementation Team Feedback:

- The forum location should be a neutral place
- Be clear to the students on the expectations of the events
- Need commitments from the schools and teachers to help facilitate permission, be involved, etc.
- Need an informative piece before the event and follow-up afterwards to include de-briefing and legitimate expectations, which will need to involve teachers and parents
- Helping students participate in processes of decision-making could be made part of their high school curriculum; a long-term plan could be to see how we can help students get credit for their participation which would then allow more opportunity for creativity, maybe under the umbrella of Service Learning
- Include Tina Flood, Curriculum Specialist for Social Studies, who has a good online network and does some really good things

Dennis Oulahan will prepare proposals with budget information and needs that can be taken forward to partner organizations to seek resources.

Since the Teacher & Principal Quality Work Group would need to use their meeting next month to plan and prepare for a meeting with student participation it was suggested that student participation at an MPA meeting next month be with the Implementation Team.

Comments:

- Need to have pre-meeting activity/information and follow-up/de-briefing with teachers involved
- Should structure the event and how to involve student voices; we need to be thoughtful about how to frame the purpose and engage the interaction
- When students meet with the Implementation Team, don't just have the regular meeting but rather seek to learn/gather information from them by asking questions and letting them share
- Need a clear purpose for the meeting not connected with the forum and clear expectations that are not unrealistic
- The purpose for a meeting with the Implementation Team or even other groups should be two-fold: 1) for the adults to hear through focused student discussion what issues are greatly affecting them, and 2) for the students to see there are structures in place where people are trying to solve problems
- It would be helpful for everyone to have some structured dialog with the understanding that it may not go beyond just talking.
- The student meeting with the Implementation Team should focus on the MPA mission, and the structure could be to give students an overview of the MPA including some history prior to the meeting, have work groups share some things they have done that have implications for students and classrooms, ask them how we are doing in terms of achieving our mission, and then receive feedback from them

- Let students know the feedback they give us will help us with our work as we move forward and let them know that we may not be able to fix everything they present, but that we can be mindful of those things as we move forward
- Skunkworks could conduct a conversation and information-sharing session about the MPA with the students in preparation for their meeting with the Implementation Team

The Implementation Team agreed to devote its March 9th meeting to student participation. A high level of Implementation Team member attendance and participation will be important. Linda Post will craft an E-mail to all Implementation Team members about this meeting. It was suggested that the Executive Partners be invited. RSVPs will be needed for lunch and room setup.

Teacher & Principal Quality Work Group

The draft Work Plan was handed out. The work is focused on the areas of teacher induction, cooperating teachers, PDP development and National Board Certification.

Some of the things being looked at concerning teacher induction are:

- how the Induction Handbook is being effective
- the matrix of mentors—e.g., where they are, how many initial educators have multiple mentors
- the initial educator and mentor surveys—e.g., how these DPI surveys might be restructured and more responses can be received or whether one should be created just for MPS
- using data from the surveys for decision making

Some of the things being worked on now around cooperating teachers/student teachers are:

- development of a protocol for a pipeline for getting student teachers from universities into the district
- support for cooperating teachers and student teachers to feed into recruitment efforts
- how to develop a database with IHEs

Concerning coordination of PDP development, the work group is looking at:

- bringing in someone to work with new teachers and new administrators around developing and writing PDPs
- reviewer training—a list of reviewers is being made available

Recommendations Concerning the External Literacy Review Report

Time did not permit discussion on this. Recommendations can be shared directly with Linda Post (lpost@uwm.edu). She will be attending a meeting concerning response to the review report on Friday, February 13th. Several people from the MPA will participate in the group that is drafting the response.

Next Meeting – Monday, **March 9, 2009** at the REACH Center, 2342 North 27th Street, Room 116, **from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.** (lunch at 11:30).

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.