



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 November 10, 2008

Phyllis Anderson, MPS	Bama Brown-Grice, MPS	Erik Conner, MPS
Arleen Dansby-White, MPS	Patricia Ellis, Stritch	Victoria Frazier, MPS
Bernadette Halloran, MPS	DeAnn Huinker, UWM	Reginald Ivy, MPS
Amy Johnson, MTEA	Joe Kmoch, MTEC	Henry Kranendonk, MPS
Dennis Oulahan, MTEA	Linda Post, UWM	Lee Ann Pruske, MPS
Betty Smith, Milwaukee Catalyst	Kathy Williams, MPS	

Announcements and Updates

- **MPA Interim Executive Director Position** - One excellent candidate is very interested, but only on a part-time basis. Therefore, the Executive Partners Co-chairs were approached about the possibility of a two-person team and additional candidates are now being contacted. Efforts are being made to present names to the Executive Partners by the end of November.
- **MPA Retreat on Learning Teams** – Retreat locations have been confirmed— November 24th at the Plumbers’ Union and December 15th at the UWM School of Continuing Education downtown. Continental breakfast, lunch and parking will be provided. Invitees include Implementation Team and work group members, Executive Partners, Literacy Specialists, Math Teaching Specialists, Math Teacher Leaders, Literacy Coaches, Curriculum Generalists, System of Support Representatives including special education, ASC Board Members, Principals, classroom teachers not involved in Learning Teams and Deans of the schools of higher education. RSVPs thus far indicate the retreat will be well attended. The draft agenda outline includes: context and background on Learning Teams; how Learning Teams are expected to make a difference; the difference between Learning Teams, Governance Councils and Building Committees; discussion and possible update of selected pieces we have developed on Learning Teams; discussion of the basic

requirements of Learning Teams, perspectives on characteristics of high performing Learning Teams, effective communications and effective principal participation. A small group will pull together information generated from Day 1 and bring it back for Day 2. The second day of the retreat will likely include discussion on professional development needed for Learning Teams and how Learning Teams should be held accountable for their work.

Work Plan Updates

Comprehensive Literacy Work Group

A draft work plan was distributed. Strategies include:

- Create structure for the position of Literacy Coaches/Leaders
- Create a professional development model of comprehensive literacy for Literacy Coaches/Leaders
- Create a system for communications of structure and professional development of comprehensive literacy
- Review recommendations of the External Review Committee Report
- Continue to write and apply for literacy-related grants

Several work plan changes made at the work group meeting this morning were shared verbally. The work plan will be updated.

The work group has looked at a body of research that indicates the important parts for Literacy Coaches are pedagogy, content, and interpersonal skills, and the work group decided that all three should be embedded within.

Comprehensive Mathematics Work Group

- In the midst of implementing Year 6 of the Milwaukee Mathematics Partnership as well as the Governor's/Superintendent's math initiative.
- Learning from monitoring conferences going on at the schools. Schools without released MTLs are even asking for conferences.
- Work is in progress to attempt to secure money in the next Governor's budget to continue funding of MTLs.
- Planning is in progress for December MTL meetings.
- Official announcement has been made of the award of National Science Foundation (NSF) funds in the amount of \$2 million over three years for the Phase II Proposal to study the work and effectiveness of the Math Teacher Leaders initiative in the district with some support for ongoing professional development.
- The external review of the Milwaukee Mathematics Partnership has found interesting information on the role of Learning Teams in the effective implementation of mathematics in schools, thus supporting Learning Teams as an effective way of closing achievement gaps. This information will likely be shared at the retreat on Learning Teams.

Family Literacy & Tutoring Work Group

- The work plan is being updated.
- Tutor training sessions continue. The last session was held at UWM. A community-wide tutor training session is being offered and targeted to community agencies and anyone who offers tutoring or works with kids or adults in order to teach them how to increase reading skills in others. A flyer was distributed. The session is from 5:45-8:00 p.m. December 4th at the North Division Multiplex.
- Another Clergy/Superintendent breakfast meeting was held on October 30th and included discussion about the MPS budget and funding, presentation of information from Title I and sharing of key dates on the pre-college planning calendar from COMPASS Guide—churches are interested in getting these key dates on their church calendars. This group wishes to continue regular meetings. Betty Smith would like to share additional budget information on areas such as the Math Teacher Leaders in the form of bullet points at a future meeting.
- The Family Resource Directory (tutoring database) is still not up on the new MPA website. The work group asked for recommendations from the Implementation Team on how to proceed with getting a functioning database. A different database may be pursued. Linda Post will contact Steve Percy at the Center for Urban Initiatives and Research.
- Various Parent Congress models in different districts have been looked at. The Parent Congress for Milwaukee is being organized after a model used in Memphis with groups that represent parents, organized with a united voice. The goal for the next meeting is to bring in a snapshot of a functional plan and then develop ideas for strategies to empower parents and lead to improvement of student achievement.

Teacher & Principal Quality Work Group

- Teacher Induction Handbook—looking at follow-up and evaluation.
- Discussions are taking place with the Teacher Center and Deborah Ford, MPS Executive Director of Human Resources, about assessments for mentors and initial educators.
- Work around cooperating teachers is developing from the student teaching mapping project. Outcomes may include a training module. Retention issues will be looked at.
- Coordination of PDP development is being looked at and a possible collaboration between the MTEA, IHEs and MPS for a fair or showcase for initial educators to have their PDP reviewed and their team established.
- National Board Certification—want to grow this and develop support systems.

Dennis Oulahan offered the MTEA's help in:

- PDP work—meeting space and more
- Retention—sharing of helpful information from a project funded by the Joyce Foundation on district employee exit interviews

Linda Post reported that UWM has re-implemented the cooperating teacher verification workshops as a result of the Cooperating Teacher Academy funded by TNE that brought

together a group of cooperating teachers across grade levels and across disciplines to ask them how the program is doing. Over 30 teachers are scheduled to attend the workshop on November 15th and Engleburg has requested one just for their school. Linda stated that there should be some consistency with what is done and suggested it be looked at collectively and it be determined what co-ops should have before they work with students. Induction should begin with cooperating teachers and student teachers.

Issues were discussed about student teacher placements, field experiences and cooperating teachers in the program. Suggestion was made for better coordination of placement and common course attributes across institutions. Linda Post will bring up issues at the Deans Group meeting in November and take it back to the Teacher & Principal Quality Work Group for discussion.

Skunkworks Work Group

- The Skunkworks Work Group will try to include students in all of its future meetings.
- Discussion has taken place about the possibility of including students on Learning Teams and either inviting students to the Retreat on Learning Teams or discussing at the retreat the possible role of student input in the work of Learning Teams and it was determined that:
 - Students could play a role in evaluating the work of Learning Teams.
 - Student involvement in the Learning Team process should be substantive involvement in issues around teaching and learning.
 - A pilot program may be a good start. A meeting is being scheduled with the principals of the three programs at Washington High School to discuss the idea.
 - Perhaps there should be incentives for students involved on Learning Teams.
 - There should be some professional development and support for students involved on Learning Teams.

Suggestions from today's meeting participants:

- Give students a process to choose their own Learning Team representatives.
- Input is needed from not only the exemplary students.
- Determine what work must be done with the adults in order to make it effective.
- Hold discussion first with Learning Team members before proceeding.
- Inform students of the benefits they would receive from serving in such a role.
- Include students in the Parent Congress.

Phyllis Anderson will share notes from a recent educational symposium with students which included discussion on barriers to student success.

Work groups should contact the Skunkworks Work Group if they want help with facilitation of student involvement in their meetings.

Math Teacher Leader & Literacy Coach Models

Linda Post indicated the MPA may be asked to make some recommendations concerning the Literacy Coach position and model and stated that the Comprehensive Literacy Work Group and the Comprehensive Mathematics Work Group need to come together to discuss the differences between the Math Teacher Leader Model and the Literacy Coach Model and whether or not there is a consensus model. A successful model used in Chattanooga has been mentioned; Linda Post will seek information from Chattanooga.

Henry Kranendonk and DeAnn Huinker shared some information about the Math Teacher Leader (MTL) model and responsibilities in place this year, which is working well thus far at the majority of schools:

- The MTL position is well defined and a good job description is in place.
- In general, the MTL spends about 20 percent of their time in a regular teaching assignment and 80 percent of their time supporting the needs of their school with inclusion of things such as modeling, co-teaching, and perhaps working with groups of students for specific reasons.
- The teaching assignment in K5 schools tends to be more of a rotating assignment from teacher to teacher as opposed to working with a certain grade level or set group of students for the entire year. They are assessing and instructing students.
- The teaching assignment in grades 6, 7 and 8 is generally one specific class.
- The teaching assignment in high school is generally a specific class for one block.
- In addition to the teaching component, the rest of the assignment differs some; however, at the K5 and K8 schools they are usually working with small groups of interested teachers. Others are a combination of working with classroom assessments, descriptive feedback and more.
- A strong part of the model for math is the requirement of the teaching component—it helps guarantee the right people for the MTL positions and gives them credibility with their colleagues.
- The purposeful monthly professional development is very important and includes leadership and facilitation skills, the content for the strand (algebraic reasoning for this year) and formative assessment.
- Accountability is an important piece; must be accountable to someone from outside of the school.
- Problems identified include:
 - Staffing issues, especially at high schools
 - MTL positions filled with people who did not receive the training

Linda Post suggested that some joint professional development be done again with Literacy Coaches.

In looking at mathematics as a model, Kathy Williams emphasized the ongoing professional development on the areas identified in order to really transform practice—the constant revisiting of it and opportunities for conversation and practice, carrying the

training themes over the course of multiple years, which is a key element that we must figure out how to sustain in other areas as well. In addition, the necessary support for success of school-based staff must be there and it was noted that this year the number of Math Teaching Specialists was increased. A realistic look must be taken at how resources are being deployed.

STEM Definition and Continued Discussion

In follow-up to the STEM discussion at the last meeting about the need to reach consensus about what the meaning of STEM is for the MPA and what initiatives it could launch or become involved with, Joe Kmoch distributed five handouts about STEM and Information Technology/Computer Science and shared some additional information. He also has created a wiki website for Implementation Team use that accesses some of this information and more and will be updated as additional information is identified. Janice Hagen will send the wiki website address to everyone.

According to the publication, *Attributes of STEM Education* (accessible from the wiki website noted above), there are several major pieces to making a STEM curriculum or a STEM school. In large measure, it is a curriculum that is heavily project based and is collaborative, cooperative education. STEM is not just a skill, but includes development of high order thinking skills and the top three levels of the Bloom's Taxology—analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Data was noted that indicates five of the top six fastest growing job opportunities projected through 2016 are mostly in the area of Information Technology and also in Engineering and that the number of positions in Information Technology (IT) that will become available in the next ten years is 2-3 times what it is for STEM. More students are needed in the pipelines for STEM and IT jobs.

Problematic Issues for STEM & IT Programs:

- Getting staff development/training for teachers
- No national Information Technology/Computer Science curriculum
- Lack of teachers nationwide in Information Technology/Computer Science
- New teachers who receive training end up going into jobs other than teaching for various reasons including better salaries
- The computer science teaching certification in the State is out of date.

A paper called, *Computational Thinking*, by Jeannette Wing, shows how much Information Technology/Computer Science is embedded in everything we do. This paper was highly recommended for reading and a link to it is posted on the wiki.

Suggestion was made by Implementation Team members that a subcommittee be formed to develop a concise statement or definition and crystallize the language that applies to

each aspect of STEM and that there must be a focus on curriculum development and teacher preparation for student learning and teaching.

Linda Post asked everyone to think more about STEM and research more information including whether DPI has any working definition, materials, or resources targeting STEM.

Discussion on Teacher Leadership

Time did not permit discussion. This item will be moved to the agenda of the next Implementation Team meeting.

Next Meeting – Monday, **December 8, 2008** 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 2:05 p.m.