



## MILWAUKEE PARTNERSHIP ACADEMY MONTHLY REPORT December 2008

- Day 2 of the MPA Planning Retreat on Learning Teams took place on December 15<sup>th</sup>. There were 62 people in attendance. Participants observed Learning Team meeting scenarios; reviewed information generated from Retreat Day 1; engaged in small and large group discussion on characteristics of high performing Learning Teams, professional development support and rollout of Learning Team Report; and submitted written comments. A writing team is being formed to take this work to the next level. Participant feedback on the retreat has been excellent.
- Contact continues with potential candidates for the MPA Interim Executive Director position.
- Dr. Christine Anderson, NEA Foundation Grant Principal Investigator, reported out to the Implementation Team on the Focus Schools, work of the grant, and upcoming activities. The Implementation Team will participate in and assist with planning the NEA Foundation cross-sectional site visit to Milwaukee next October and has already shared some ideas.
- The Implementation Team held some discussion about teacher leadership in the district and will pursue further discussion to address some important issues surrounding it.
- The Implementation Team held some discussion on Benchmark Assessments and the appropriate use of them.
- Planning is in progress for the next MPA Partners Meeting which is to be scheduled for sometime in January.
- MPA work group membership has continued to grow. Work plan updates were shared with the Implementation Team.
- The Comprehensive Literacy Work Group has been discussing possible improvements to the Literacy Coach Model including better alignment to the Math Teacher Leader Model. The Implementation Team also held some discussion. The work of examining and redefining the Literacy Coach role/initiative will be postponed until the literacy audit report is available.
- Family Literacy & Tutoring Work Group Update:
  - Forty-two youth from MPS and several non-public schools attended tutor training conducted at Our Next Generation on December 2nd.
  - There were 43 in attendance at the community-wide tutor training session conducted on December 4th at the North Division Multiplex including existing tutors and new tutors from Community Learning Centers, churches participating in the MPS Cooperative Tutoring Program, SES providers, and

potential new tutors from the Latino Community Center. Participants were given an overview of the MPA and the Family Literacy & Tutoring Work Group and WKCE data in reading and math. Four reading help strategies, including after reading exit cards and think-pair-share, were introduced and modeled. Interactive small group discussions and role playing were also a part of this session.

Suggestions from participants were received for training in other languages—specifically Spanish, training for the Latino mentoring group that is being formed, training for congregation members not yet involved in tutoring, similar training in math, and an end-of-year discussion on how the strategies worked.

- The Skunkworks Work Group is continuing its efforts to engage student groups around the area, bring in the student voice and develop a structure for it. The work group most recently met with a group of students from Speak Out, an internet-based interaction of students currently totaling over 400 who care about their schools and their education and want to show it. They discuss such topics as why small schools are being put into high schools, dropout rate, why students don't come to school every day, student motivation to attend school and learn, school violence, teen pregnancy and how school budgets are spent.
- K7 Math Teacher Leader meetings were held on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Highlights included math knowledge needed for teaching (content), leadership, formative assessment and portfolios.
- NEA Foundation Grant Update:
  - The NEA Foundation grant is hosting a retreat for 30 staff members from Pulaski at Alverno to review the NEA Focus Group report and to consider devising plans for conflict management, self-esteem workshops for students and study skills for 9<sup>th</sup> graders.
  - Focus groups will be held during January for NEA Focus Schools to identify areas that are impeding progress in their work.
  - The Action Research Fellows are planning a spring conference.

**The date of the next MPA Partners Meeting is TBA.**

### **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.