



## MILWAUKEE PARTNERSHIP ACADEMY MONTHLY REPORT April 2009

- The writing group for the learning team initiative met with additional MPS staff members for input and work on this resource document continues. The goal is to have the document finalized by the end of May.
- The response writing team that MPA members are participating on concerning the External Literacy Review of MPS submitted its work to the MPS Office of District & School Improvement. Other groups are also going through the same process.
- The Skunkworks Work Group continues to plan for the student voice to be heard at an Implementation Team meeting.
- Comprehensive Mathematics Work Group/Milwaukee Mathematics Partnership (MMP) Update:
  - The March Grades 8-9 Math Teacher Leader Summit took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. Highlights included content for algebraic reasoning, leadership and formative assessment. K-7 Math Teacher Leaders met on April 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - Several MMP and MPA members attended and presented mathematics sessions relating to assessment, descriptive feedback, leadership, and other areas of teaching and learning at the NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) Annual Meeting and the NCSM Annual Conference in Washington, DC at the end of April.
  - Planning is in progress for a spring breakfast meeting with school principals.
  - Much work has been done in the sixth year of the MMP efforts around mathematics. Phase II NSF grant funding carries a heavy focus on research and evaluation. A number of Math Teacher Leaders, Math Teachers and Learning Team Members will be participating in various means of data collection this spring that will examine perceptions about things important for improving mathematics teaching and learning, identify current issues, evaluate the work and show correlations to improved student achievement.
- Other work groups and subcommittees also continue to meet and address areas of their work plans.

- Implementation Team and work group members were invited to participate in the MPS textbook selection process for a variety of subjects and grade levels, including English Composition, AP English, Algebra 2 and Trigonometry & Calculus and more.
- Areas of teacher leadership and those with teacher leadership experience are being identified.
- NEA Foundation Grant Update:
  - Barnett Berry, President and CEO of the Center for Teaching Quality, Inc. and creator of the Teacher Leaders Network, will be in Milwaukee in May to talk with a cross section of teacher leaders regarding teacher leadership. The conversation will be focused on the following:
    - What does teacher leadership look like in MPS?
    - What needs to be done to strengthen teacher leadership?
    - How can we better utilize and value our teacher leaders?
    - How could the development of the virtual community within the cities of the three grant sites help us in our work to close the achievement gaps in MPS?
  - Data is a powerful tool in spurring school improvement discussions and developing high performing schools. Seven of the NEA Focus Schools (Browning, Hopkins, Marshall, Milwaukee Education Center, Pulaski, South Division and Wedgewood) are listed in the top twenty MPS schools accessing reports from the MPS Data Warehouse since July 1, 2008 with Pulaski coming in at number one having accessed reports over 4,000 times.
  - Through collaboration with the MPS Department of District and School Improvement and pooling of resources, work is being done to align professional development opportunities for SIFI, AYP and NEA Focus schools. The March 21, 2009 professional development day was conducted for participants from SIFI and AYP schools in addition to learning team members and classroom teachers from the NEA Focus Schools. Participants attended one of six different three-hour sessions of scaffolded professional development that delved deeper into the differentiation and teaching in a block schedule professional development conducted in January. There were nearly 190 in attendance and feedback was highly positive. Presenters shared a variety of examples, information and modeling that included lesson format and design, learning environment design, strategies, activities, use of pre-assessment, tips and resources. Participants engaged in various forms of design and practice. Individual school teams spent time in reflection at the conclusion of the sessions.
  - There were 170 in attendance, including a number of MPA members, at the Metropolitan Milwaukee Alliance of Black School Educators (MMABSE) Education Summit, *Excel To Fly*, on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Summit strands included: 1) Using Quantitative and Qualitative Data to Inform Instruction and Increase Student Achievement; 2) Creating Meaningful and Sustainable Community Partnerships that Impact Student Achievement; 3) Effective Instructional Strategies Across the Curriculum; and 4) Parents as Partners in Closing the Achievement Gaps. Feedback indicates attendees had a very

positive and professionally meaningful learning experience and also provided ideas for future summits and professional development opportunities for educators, parents/guardians and community representatives. The summit was sponsored by MMABSE and the NEA Foundation Grant to Close the Achievement Gaps in MPS.

- Planning is in progress for the:
  - MMABSE Teacher of the Year Recognition Gala to be held on May 2, 2009
  - NEA Focus Schools Data Celebration to be held on May 23, 2009
  - Assurant Health Foundation Sharing Luncheon on how to increase family involvement to be held on May 30, 2009
- Action Research Fellows are continuing their work and preparations for the May 16th Action Research Conference.
- Dr. Christine Anderson, Principal Investigator of the grant has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Sally Ride Academy.
- Lee and Wheatley schools are being merged and will remain an NEA Focus School.

**The date of the next MPA Partners Meeting is June 19, 2009.**

#### **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.