



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Superintendent's Report – April

The Superintendent's Report is designed to provide the Milwaukee Board of School Directors and the MPS community with an update on current activities underway to support the district goals of academic achievement; student, family and community engagement; and effective and efficient operations as they are aligned to the district's eight strategic objectives:



Closing the GAP



Re-envisioning Partnerships



Educating the Whole Child



Communication & Outreach



Redefining the MPS Experience



Workforce Development



Rethinking High Schools



Organizational Processes

Meetings from late March through mid-April follow.

State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Secretary Eloise Anderson visited Bradley Technology and Trade High School. She had a student-led tour of classes and the external work-based opportunities, followed by a lunch meeting to review the commitment and actions being taken by community leaders, MATC, UWM and MPS.

I met with Municipal Judges Hill, Mosley, Chavez and Himle to discuss progress of the *In-School Courtroom* pilot program that has been instituted at Madison, Pulaski and Washington high schools. These schools were selected by their location, high population of students and high number of open cases in municipal court that the judges have anecdotally seen in their courts. They also have the Violence Free Zone (VFZ) program, which is ideal for helping with the logistics of bringing students from class to the on-site "courtroom."

MPS is one of 12 districts invited to attend the Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) at Harvard University this summer. Our cohort will consist of members of my senior team and me. In preparation for this seminar, we participated in a virtual class. The purpose of PELP is to improve the management and leadership competencies of public school leaders in order to drive greater educational outcomes. This is a joint venture between Harvard Business School and Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Members of my team and I met with Captain Banks, the new Milwaukee Police Department Community Outreach Liaison. Captain Banks has several new initiatives that he would like to implement. These initiatives focus on school attendance and engaging our young people in order to keep them out of serious trouble with the law.



We had a conference call with the U.S. Department of Education, as MPS has been selected to join the *My Brother's Keeper* Success Mentors Initiative. This initiative aims to connect students with a Success Mentor — a school-based or school-linked adult who will help increase his or her mentees' attendance, engagement and success. This initiative will serve sixth through ninth graders who are chronically absent or at risk of becoming chronically absent.

I had my recurring meeting with Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch. One of the main topics of conversation was how we can give our students a successful work experience at the Wisconsin Dells this summer through a program with the Department of Tourism. Because the jobs are so far away and many of our students have never been away from home for any length of time, we need to have supports in place for them to succeed.

I visited the Center for BioMolecular Modeling at MSOE. Dr. Tim Herman is the director of this new program. We discussed how we might engage MPS teachers in this work and in the SMART Team Program. They are working with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation to secure funding for three MPS teachers to participate in a week-long summer course which is the prerequisite to running a SMART Team.

Awards/Recognition

Principal Michael Roemer of Reagan High School was selected as one of the first-ever 2016 Herb Kohl Leadership Award school-leader recipients for setting high standards for instruction and creating a climate to best serve students! In addition, eight MPS students were awarded 2016 Herb Kohl Foundation scholarships, marking the highest total number of student winners in the district since 2007 and the nine MPS teachers honored this year, tie a record set in 2000.



District winners include three MPS students who were named "Excellence" scholars for "excellence in the academic arena," "high motivation to achieve," displaying "a broad range of activity and leadership outside the academic setting" and showing "strong promise for succeeding in college and beyond," according to the Kohl Foundation. They are:

- Zing Cer, South Division High School
- Elijah Evers, Riverside University High School
- Diego Vega Rivera, Reagan College Prep

Another five MPS students were named "Initiative" scholars who have "demonstrated exceptional initiative in the classroom and have shown strong promise for succeeding in college and beyond, but have not yet received other academic-based scholarships." They are:

- Ma Lay, South Division High School
- Kendal Mastin-Miles, Community High School
- Neva Novak, Rufus King International High School
- Marlon Smith, New School for Community Service
- Cindy Xiong, Hmong American Peace Academy

The nine MPS teachers named "Fellowship" recipients for their superior ability to inspire a love of learning in their students, their ability to motivate others and their leadership and service within and outside of the classroom include:

- Lorreen Becklund, Morse•Marshall
- Susan Boushon, Academy of Accelerated Learning
- Krista Claypool, Milwaukee High School of the Arts
- Carol Hanney, Cooper Elementary School
- Kristina Huppertz, Morse•Marshall
- Michelle Mueller, Wedgewood
- Adam Murphy, Reagan College Prep
- Kelly O'Keefe-Boettcher, Rufus King International High School
- Sigurd Piwek, Milwaukee German Immersion School

Sojourner White, a 2012 graduate of Rufus King International High School and student at Bradley University in Illinois, has received the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Student Award. White, who attended Elm Creative Arts School and Roosevelt Creative Arts Middle School before heading to King, will teach English and serve as a cultural ambassador in Spain. The MPS alumna plans to work in school psychology after she returns from Spain and continues on to graduate school.



The Fulbright Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries, according to the program.

Pashia Bowens, a fourth-grader at Lafollette Elementary School, was chosen to travel to New York City to perform in a national poetry slam through the organization America SCORES, which teaches soccer and poetry in an after school program. SCORES works off the philosophy that first engaging kids in a fun, healthy activity like a team sport helps create a positive learning environment for reading and writing, improving both health and literacy at the same time. Only 15 students from across the country, referred to as poet-athletes, will be attending the national showcase, all expenses paid. They were selected because of their leadership qualities and excellent performance in the local level poetry competitions.

Reagan Preparatory High School – along with three students from Rufus King International High School – are state champions in high school forensics. They earned the titles during the Wisconsin Forensics Coaches Association State Tournament held on April 1-2 at UW-Whitewater. Reagan won its first-ever state championship by taking first place in the Division II overall team competition. Rufus King students Ruth Fetaw and Carleon Outlaw took first place in the duo interpretation category and Nzinga Acosta, also from Rufus King, took first place in the oral interpretation of literature category. It is the first time since 2008 that Rufus King has had students take state titles in more than one category. Other MPS schools that competed in the state forensics competition included Golda Meir School, Vincent High School, Bradley Technology and Trade School, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, and Riverside University High School. Here are the results:



Finalists included:

- Senia Avery and Kalanni Grady, Rufus King – duo interpretation, 3rd place
- Keziah Carter and Diamond Harris, Bradley Tech – duo interpretation, 5th place
- Julia Brunson, Reagan – impromptu, 5th place
- Collin Featherston, Reagan – radio speaking, 5th place
- Durran Goodwin, Rufus King – solo serious, 4th place
- Fefe Jaber, Reagan – solo humorous, 4th place
- Julia Matiszik, Reagan – farrago, 6th place
- Shun Powell, Riverside – demonstration speaking, 5th place
- Amber Weissert, Reagan – solo humorous, 2nd place

Semi-finalists included:

- Steven Daniels, Bradley Tech – storytelling
- Valerie Bausch, Reagan – storytelling
- Lillian Brunson, Reagan – radio speaking
- Keianna James, Riverside – demonstration speaking
- Kristen Leer, Reagan – poetry
- LaCandra McCray, Rufus King – original oratory
- Audrey O'Brien, Rufus King – extemporaneous speaking
- Talithia Taylor-Hickes, Rufus King – solo serious
- Joe Vitrano, Reagan – solo humorous
- Isis Williams, Reagan – poetry

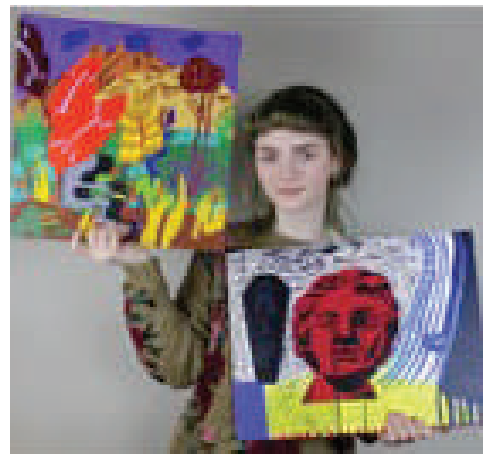


Humboldt Park teacher, **Heidi Reid** was selected as WISN 12's 'Top Teacher' for March. She is committed to helping every child succeed. The work she has done and patience she has shown to help students overcome speech issues are what landed her WISN 12's Top Teacher award for March. Reid and her classroom assistant developed a program to help students succeed.

Six MPS students are winners in the national Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, earning national medals in categories from painting to science fiction/fantasy writing. The winning students' entries were selected from among a record-breaking 320,000 works of art and writing. Fewer than 50 students from Wisconsin were among the national winners and one MPS student, Lilian Solheim of Milwaukee High School of the Arts, won two awards: gold and silver medals for her entries in painting.

The award recipients are:

- William Fendt, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Silver Medal for Science Fiction/Fantasy writing: *"Pearls"*
- Cynthia Monter, Riverside University High School, Silver Medal for a Short Story: *"Final Journey"*
- Jada Patterson, Rufus King International High School, Silver Medal for Painting: *"Reflection in Shapes and Colors"*
- Leah Penn, Rufus King International High School, Creative and Citizenship award for Drawing and Illustration: *"divergence"*
- Marissa Robertson, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Gold Medal for Personal Essay/Memoir: *"A Selected Collection of Human Anatomy"*
- Lilian Solheim, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Gold and Silver Medals in Painting: *"Following Myself"* (gold) and *"Stoic Man"* (silver)



Baude Seitz, a senior at Reagan College Prep and MPS Gridiron Scholarship winner, was just notified by the Wisconsin Chapter of the National Football Foundation that he has been awarded their "Football Matters" award. Nationwide, this program recognizes the positive impact that amateur football can have in the lives of those who participate. Baude was recognized for his accomplishments as a student-athlete.

North Division High School senior, **Anthony LaPoint** has been named the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee's 2016 Youth of the Year. Anthony represented the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee in the statewide award competition in Madison and finished as a top-five finalist. He was honored locally because of his leadership roles at North Division and in the community. Anthony is a member of North Division's boys' basketball team and is involved with the school's Boys & Girls Clubs.



Thirty-five MPS students will compete in two of the nation's top speech and debate tournaments after besting local competitors at regional tournaments. The students include competitors from **Bradley Tech, Rufus King, Golda Meir, Milwaukee High School of the Arts** and **Ronald Reagan College Prep**. Among the 35 winning MPS students, 19 have earned the right to attend the 2016 National Speech & Debate Tournament (NSDA) in Salt Lake City, Utah in June, most after taking top spots at the Southern Wisconsin regional speech tournament. Twenty-eight of the students have qualified to attend the National Catholic Forensic League (NCFL) Grand National Tournament in Sacramento, Calif. Twelve MPS students have qualified for both tournaments.



The 35 winning MPS students, their high schools, the tournaments in which they will compete and their categories are:

- Nzinga Acosta, Rufus King, NCFL: Oral Interpretation of Literature, NSDA: Program Oral Interpretation
- Seania Avery, Rufus King, NSDA: Duo Interpretation
- Celeste Beals, Rufus King, NCFL: Public Forum Debate
- Alanna Bielawski, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Oratorical Declamation
- Julia Brunson, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Original Oratory
- Keziah Carter, Bradley Tech, NCFL: Duo Interpretation of Literature
- N'namdi Carter, Bradley Tech, NSDA: Int'l Extemporaneous Speaking
- Morgan Coleman, Rufus King, NCFL: Public Forum Debate
- Steven Daniels, Bradley Tech, NCFL: Oral Interpretation of Literature
- Mae Edwards, Rufus King, NCFL: Congressional Debate
- Ruth Fetaw, Rufus King, NSDA: Duo Interpretation
- Collin Fetherston, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Extemporaneous Speaking, NSDA: U.S. Extemporaneous Speaking
- Durran Goodwin, Rufus King, NCFL: Dramatic Interpretation
- Kalanni Grady, Rufus King, NSDA: Duo Interpretation
- Kenneth Guy, Rufus King, NCFL: Policy Debate, NSDA: Policy Debate
- Kirstin Hackbarth, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Oratorical Declamation
- Diamond Harris, Bradley Tech, NCFL: Duo Interpretation of Literature
- Fefe Jaber, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Duo Interpretation of Literature, NSDA: Humorous Interpretation
- Noelle Larson, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, NCFL: Oral Interpretation of Literature
- Kristen Leer, Ronald Reagan, NSDA: Informative
- Anne Liners, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Oral Interpretation of Literature, NSDA: Oratory
- Cherise McMahon, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Oral Interpretation of Literature
- Janiyah Moore, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, NCFL: Dramatic Performance, NSDA: Dramatic Interpretation
- Audrey O'Brien, Rufus King, NCFL: Congressional Debate, NSDA: Congressional Debate
- Carleon Outlaw, Rufus King, NCFL: Dramatic Interpretation, NSDA: Duo Interpretation
- Jeremiah Patton, Rufus King, NCFL: Policy Debate
- Marissa Robertson, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, NCFL: Original Oratory
- Ishmael Robinson, Rufus King, NCFL: Policy Debate, NSDA: Policy Debate
- Nick Savage, Rufus King, NCFL: Policy Debate
- Jaya Sims, Golda Meir, NSDA: U.S. Extemporaneous Speaking
- Talithia Taylor Hicks, Rufus King, NSDA: Dramatic Interpretation
- Harrison Tremarello, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Extemporaneous Speaking, NSDA: International Extemporaneous Speaking
- Joe Vitrano, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Duo Interpretation of Literature, NSDA: Humorous Interpretation
- Amber Weissert, Ronald Reagan, NCFL: Dramatic Performance
- Chue Feng Yang, Rufus King, NCFL: Lincoln Douglas Debate, NSDA: Congressional Debate

Events/Activities

I spoke to the Region V Title I Parents Conference, which was held at the Hilton Milwaukee. There were over 200 attendees at the conference. The theme of this year's conference was "Overcoming Challenges to Serve the Needs of Our Children."



Over 400 grade K–12 students converged at the Serve2Unite Peace Summit at UWM to collaboratively address pressing issues of violence in our community through radical forgiveness, compassion, inclusion and diversity appreciation. Mayor Barrett and I gave the opening greetings.

The monthly Superintendent's Family Roundtable was held at Morse•Marshall School for the Gifted and Talented. This month's discussion focused on STEM programming in MPS. Breakout sessions with district leaders were conducted to facilitate a question and answer period and to share ideas with the administration.

