



WEEKLY UPDATE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

January 28, 2021

A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT CARLTON D. JENKINS

Dear Board Members,

This week, which marks our first week of the 3rd Quarter and 2nd Semester, has certainly been eventful. Recently, President Biden issued executive orders affirming the values of racial equity and diversity as well as reinforcing critical protections for LGBTQ and DACA students. Although these orders align with many of MMSD's core values, they also compel us to actively address policies and practices which place limitations on the ability of our students, staff and families to fully participate in our democracy.

This week, district and building leaders have continued to engage in planning and preparation for returning to in-person instruction when conditions permit us to do so safely. During this week's Senior Leadership Team meeting, our elementary chiefs of schools shared an update on how they have worked collaboratively with principals to continue refining instructional plans for in-person and virtual instruction. In addition, conversations with our public health advisors during our advisory committee meeting on reopening involved vigorous discussions on topics such as athletics, potential vaccination schedules, and the transmissibility of new COVID-19 variants. In order to keep the Board members apprised of planning for the reopening, please follow these links to the recordings of our two most recent weekly District Ops Meetings:

[January 21](#)

[January 28](#)

As we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, while continuing on our journey towards equity and excellence, we must involve the voices of our students, whose education is directly impacted by our policy and practice decisions. As such, I was encouraged by the insights shared at yesterday's Student Senate meeting where student leaders discussed ways to better engage their peers and center student voices in our planning for an eventual return to in-person instruction. I look forward to sharing their emerging plans as they take shape in the coming weeks. Please note that we have a meeting scheduled with students for March 3, 2021 via Instagram!

Finally, I want to thank board members Gomez-Schmidt and Muldrow for their participation in last night's listening session with the East High School families. As we address challenging situations where our district has not yet lived up to the ideals of our Strategic Framework and Core Values, our students, staff and families are encouraged by the support provided by all of our board members. As we experience some growing pains in our transformation, I am reminded of the caterpillar's process in becoming a

butterfly, and remain convinced that, if it can happen anywhere, it can happen in Madison!

Thanks for your continued partnership. We look forward to providing you with more updates on our district's progress next week.

Sincerely,

Carlton

Carlton D. Jenkins, Ph.D.

BOARD OF EDUCATION QUESTIONS



Response to Question about Cares Staff Pay

A board member asked the following question via email:

Would it be possible to get some information about our policy on paying staff at CARES sites when sites are closed due to COVID cases or prevention?

Deliberate discussions were had regarding the current regulations when HR gave guidance to MSCR on what to do when this happens early on in MSCR Cares.

Employees who have been impacted by COVID at work (such as being a close contact to a student who has tested positive or because MMSD/MSCR closes a classroom) will continue to get paid while they quarantine through "COVID Closure Pay."

Additionally, even though Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) expired on December 31, 2020, we are continuing to offer FFCRA-like leave for the following reasons:

- Has tested positive for COVID and needs to isolate
- Has COVID symptoms and is seeking medical advice (such as testing and waiting for results)
- Has been a close contact to someone outside of work and needs to quarantine
- If personal/private daycare has closed due to COVID

OTHER INFORMATION



Referendum-Funded Facilities Projects Input Process Update

Since the beginning of January, MMSD Senior Leaders, our Facility Design Team, and our architects have been implementing our community input phase of our six facility referendum projects. This phase of work includes gathering input

and ideas on facility design and feel and gathering information that can lead to a stronger climate and culture in the building. The plan has taken on two different paths, one for the five high school projects and one for the new elementary school. Additionally, we have two different sets of questions, separating groups by school user groups (parents, staff and students) and community users (non-profit partners, community leaders, and community homeowners in the neighborhood). With each part of the plan, there is a particular focus on engaging and lifting up the voices of people of color.

High Schools

The high school facilities input phase is moving forward successfully. A great deal of valuable insight is being gathered by Building Services staff and Eppstein Uhen Architects (EUA) from daily school user groups. Each week, Building Services and EUA are holding day-long meetings at each high school. During these days, multiple input sessions take place with content-specific user groups (e.g., science, music) of principals, staff, and students. In addition, Building Services and EUA are meeting with affinity groups (e.g., students interested in sustainability, teachers of color). Kudos to our principals for serving as ambassadors of this exciting work to our schools and helping to coordinate hundreds of hours of meetings!

Input is also being gathered from parents (e.g., East Latino Parent Empowerment Group, Memorial Latino Parent Empowerment Group, Athletic Boosters) across all five high schools. Community input is being sought via FaceBook live input sessions. In addition, MMSD staff are meeting with internal groups (e.g., Black Educators Network), community groups (e.g., Neighborhood Center Directors, Madison Area Sports Commission), business and community leaders (e.g., Katie Boyce from Exact Sciences, Scott Resnick, Superintendent's Human Resource Advisory Council (SHRAC)), and Alderpersons for each area (e.g., Shiva Bidar, Arvina Martin, Syed Abbas, Grant Foster). Nearly 20 sessions have been completed and at least that many more are scheduled or in the process of being scheduled.

Input is being shared via detailed note taking with the Research & Program Evaluation Office (RPEO). RPEO will share an interim update with the Board of Education at the February 8, 2021 Operations Work Group with a final report to follow by April. EUA is simultaneously gathering information and receiving MMSD's notes. EUA's real time information and the RPEO reports will heavily influence the design process.

Rimrock Area Elementary School

The Rimrock Area Elementary School input work is progressing nicely on two parallel tracks with an eye toward raising voices along the way. To assist, EUA has retained the services of Equity by Design, a woman- and BIPOC-owned business with experience in strategic advising and planning to help organizations and communities develop and design their engagement and inclusion activities to meet their diversity needs for today and tomorrow. In consultation with Senior Leaders, Equity by Design has developed an engagement strategy for the facilities design input in the Rimrock Road area.

The first track of work is as follows: Dr. Tremayne Clardy and Chelsey Tubbs are leading an instructional design input process, whereby they are engaging the Allis community at large and a small external advisory group to gather information on the instructional strategies within the school. They met with about 20 members of the Allis community on January 20, 2021 to gather input from parents on instructional design of the Rimrock Area School. They have also met with an advisory group comprising African American community leaders and Rimrock area community leaders, parents, Candace Terrell (Allis principal), and Allis staff. They will continue to meet with stakeholders including the Allis community, the Rimrock area community, and community leaders. The group is focusing on the type of instructional model (e.g., environmental, social justice, dual language immersion) of interest to the community.

The second track of work is as follows: a structural facility design, which is intentionally paced a step behind the instructional design track, is being led by Chad Wiese, Nichelle Nichols, and EUA/Equity by Design. Key components of the strategy include two communitywide Facebook Live input sessions and smaller focus groups with community leaders. The focus groups will engage Black voices in one session and Latinx voices in another community session. Additionally, the voices and input from the instructional design process will feed into the structural facility design process.

Survey

An MMSD post-referendum facilities survey has been sent to all MMSD families and shared with community members and various stakeholders (e.g., community groups, businesspeople) as we meet with them for their input. As of January 21, 2021, over 1,100 responses had been received. An update on the survey will also be included in the February OWG update to the Board and in the final April report.



Community Events:

All dates for community announcements are posted on the [Board Community Activities Calendar](#)

- For each High School, there are virtual Facebook Live **Facilities Feedback Sessions** on the 2020 referendum. These are opportunities for the public to provide feedback on the facility projects for each school:
 - **Wednesday, January 13:** [La Follette High School](#)
 - **Tuesday, January 26:** [Memorial High School](#)
 - **Thursday, January 28:** [East High School](#)
 - **Wednesday, February 3:** [Capital High](#)
 - **Thursday, February 4:** [West High School](#)

- The UW Madison Randra Rosenbaum School of Social Work is hosting the **2021 Social Workers Confronting Racial Injustice Conference** on **Thursday, January 28**, from noon-5 p.m. This year's theme is "Moving into Action with Anti-Racist and Abolitionist Ideas." Registration info. can be [found here](#) for the free event.

- MSCR is hosting the annual **MSCR Winter Fun in the Park** this **Saturday, January 30**, from 1-3 p.m. at Garner Park. There will be several family activities that abide by social distancing rules. More info. can be [found here](#).
- The UW Memorial Union is hosting the annual **Winter Carnival 2021** virtually this year from **Wednesday, February 3 through Sunday, February 7**, from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. daily. This event challenges families to get outside if able to participate in winter activities but also provides virtual workshop and contest activities as well. More info. can be [found here](#).
- The YWCA of Madison is hosting a **Virtual Circle of Women Event: Reimagining Resilience**, on **Wednesday, February 17**, from 12-12:30 p.m. Participants will have the opportunity to be “in community” with one another while learning about the work and future goals of the YWCA. More info. can be [found here](#).
- This year’s **Latino Youth Summit**, co-hosted by UW Badger Precollege and Centro Hispano, will be held virtually from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Monday, **March 29, and Tuesday, March 30** (the Monday and Tuesday of Spring Break). This is an opportunity for Latinx students and families to connect across schools and engage in culturally and linguistically relevant pre-college workshops and experiences. Centro Hispano is reaching out to [point people](#) at each of your schools in the coming days to support recruitment. Check out the [flyer](#), [website](#), and [application form](#) for more info. For further questions, contact FYCE Coordinator Hannah Nerenhausen (hnerenhausen@) or La Follette Escalera Coordinator Yari Hernandez (yhernandez4@).

OUR UPCOMING BOARD CALENDAR

- Mon., Feb. 1, 5 p.m. Instruction Work Group
Virtual
- Mon., Feb. 8, 9 a.m. Board Officers
Virtual
- Mon., Feb. 8, 5 p.m. Operations Work Group
Virtual
- Mon., Feb. 8, 6 p.m. Special meeting in closed session
Virtual
- Tues., Feb. 9, 4 p.m. Student Senate
Virtual
- Wed., Feb. 10, 5:30 p.m. City Education Committee
Virtual
- **Week of February 15 Board Member Briefings**
- Mon., Feb. 15, 5 p.m. Special meeting in open session
Virtual

- Tues., Feb. 16 Spring Primary Election
- Mon., Feb. 22, 9 a.m. Board Officers
Virtual
- Mon., Feb. 22, 6 p.m. Regular BOE meeting
Virtual
- Tues., Feb. 23, 4 p.m. Student Senate
Virtual

ITEMS ATTACHED FOR INFORMATION

No attachments this week.