



## WEEKLY UPDATE TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 23, 2022

### A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT CARLTON D. JENKINS

Dear Board Members,

This week is the first week of our summer semester. Throughout this week, staff members have engaged in the traditional activities of late June: finalizing state and federal reports; developing plans for the fall semester; participating in scheduled trainings; and continuing to reflect on which lessons from the previous school year can be useful for an even more successful next school year. Each of these activities are designed to help our district move from leaning forward to building momentum for a breakthrough as we pursue the ideals of our Strategic Framework.

This week, many of our staff are building on the positive energy from the recent graduations, and last week's professional learning, to refine plans and strategies for next year. They are recalibrating School Improvement Plans, starting to address items on the Day One Readiness checklist, and collaborating with our Human Resources Department on filling staff vacancies. While these activities are not necessarily high-profile, they greatly assist our efforts to ensure all our learning spaces are places where our students, staff, and families can thrive.

As we grow our district's capacity to graduate all our scholars ready for college, careers, and the community, we must continue to center human decency in our efforts. Hence, we are proud to receive ongoing reports of our students, staff, and families engaging in activities which reflect our district's core values. Some of these activities include engaging in advocacy for environmental sustainability; participating in Pride Month observances; enjoying the festivities in local Juneteenth celebrations; and undertaking volunteer and service opportunities. All these efforts reinforce our need to uplift humanity as we continue to build what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others called "the beloved community".

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. I look forward to updating you on our district's progress next week.

Sincerely,

*Carlton*

Carlton D. Jenkins, Ph.D.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION QUESTIONS



### **Consent Agenda Questions Posed by Board Members with Answers**

**1.)** Consent Item 10.6 - Referendum Update - can someone explain when I look at FY22 Budget to FY22 Actual and the actual looks much lower - is that related to the timing of the report or does it mean that we're way behind on construction? Or neither? Perhaps I need to better understand how to read the Referendum budget and report. Thanks!

*The majority of the construction for the capital maintenance referendum will take place this summer. The costs that have been made to date reflect more of the design work and preparation for a robust construction phase this summer. This is also why we just issues the second round of bonds for the 2020 Capital Maintenance Referendum, as it is anticipated we will spend all of our first bonds this summer on construction.*

**2.)** Consent item 10.16 is related to Driver's Ed and Behind the Wheel. As you all know I submitted a budget amendment to explore the possibility of expanding this program in Summer 2023 and 2024 using ESSER Funds (if allowable). I see that the cost for CESA is \$50,400 to provide up to 120 low-income individuals with access to this program and they do this in collaboration with MSCR at the four comprehensive high schools.

Ross - I think you mentioned at our June OWG that we did not need to include this amendment in the June preliminary vote and instead do it in October? Is that correct? I would love to see if MSCR can find out if CESA has the capacity to take on more students. My proposal would include an increase from 30 students per comprehensive high school to 50 students per high school and to add students from Cap High and other alternative programs like students who are at OFS. So perhaps this is an increase of approximately 130 more seats (80 more seats across the comprehensive HS and maybe 50 more in alternatives). This might be an additional \$55,000 from ESSER....

*Correct. Ross is already working with Cindy Green to identify what to plan for regarding next summer's drivers ed program. We will incorporate this information into the October budget to make sure that resources are available to continue this program for Summer 2023.*

**3.)** Consent Item 10.42 - Referendum increases - Owner Contingency Funds - can someone explain if we're funding the \$3 mil increase from the TID that is closing? Or is the Owner Contingency Funds sitting somewhere else in the budget?

*This funding is already within the referendum funds in the original scope. Cedric's team will be working on a memo for the weekly update explaining this in greater detail. This item has been removed from the consent for the June Regular meeting.*

**4.)** Upon looking at the Check Register, I noticed \$67,944 spent with Qualitemps and \$28,384 spent with Personnel Specialists LLC (\$96,000). Is there a way to get a brief update about how we're using staffing agencies to assist with our daily operations and hiring? This is a curiosity about our overall Human Resources strategy. I realize these are payments that we have already made....

*The usage of a temp agency is used to aid in filling positions within the whole district and all divisions. The district uses the temp agencies on an as needed basis. This process has been used for quite some time.*

## 5.) HR Transaction Report

I know we will have more information by the July report, but do we have a current status on the contracts that Ms. Caradine had mentioned at OWG?

*Here is the information regarding the teacher contracts that were sent out:*

- 2404 contracts were sent out
- 2335 contracts was the expected total after all resignations and retirements were tallied (69) after the contracts were sent out.
- 2315 total as of today (15 people didn't turn in their contracts)- Those fifteen will be receiving a call from Human Resources and their Principal to determine why their contract was not returned.
- 99.10 % turn in rate
- Four staff that did not return their contracts are currently on leaves of absence
- One person returned their contract in a file format that could not be read. Human Resources is working with that individual to get a different file format.

6.) Consent Item 10.28- 4AM Consulting- I appreciate the level of detail that is provided in the memo about their work with strategic recalibration. I noticed that it says an email was sent out for bids, and that only 4AM Consulting and CESA responded. Who were the emails sent to? Also, Dr. Maxine McKinney de Royston is mentioned in the memo, but she isn't the owner of 4AM Consulting, right? Perhaps you can include in the memo how the three consultants are working together...?

*We posted the RFQ on LinkedIn [see here](#) and sent out through our general procurement listserv. In addition, staff members that knew any potential consultants that may be a good fit, also shared the RFQ information. Gail Anderson, Dr. Alisia Moutry and Dr. Maxine McKinney de Royston have over 80 years of successful experience designing, improving, and supporting administrators and educators in implementing inclusive, equitable, and just educational systems. Ms. Anderson's expertise in training and coaching system level coherence combined with Dr. Moutry's expertise coaching district and school leaders, and Dr. McKinney de Royston's expertise creating learning spaces of intellectual thriving and holistic well-being provides the comprehensive approach needed to ensure MMSD attains its anti-oppressive goals.*

7.) Consent Item 10.29 ICS Equity- I appreciate the level of detail that is provided in the memo and that it now only includes 1-year of PD of Central Office Staff. Who were the emails sent to for bids that you only received one quote? Also, I notice in the memo that it states in year 2 & 3 there will be additional PD with ICS Equity. Is the plan to bring back a memo for additional years next year sometime?

*We posted this RFQ on LinkedIn [see here](#) and sent out through or general procurement listserv. In addition, staff members that knew any potential consultants that may be a good fit, also shared the RFQ information. Yes, we will bring a consent back to the BOE for year 2 etc. We will ensure that we reflect and adjust based on progress this year and adjust scope if needed.*



## Behavior Education Plan Board Member Questions Answered

Please see the attached document that has answers to all the questions that were posed by Board Members during the Instruction Work Group on June 6, 2021.

## OTHER INFORMATION

### ➤ **School Safety Assessments**

Board Update on School Safety Assessments: Pursuant to Wisconsin Act 143, every 3 years (last completed in 2019) a multidisciplinary team of MMSD leaders in Building Services, Office of School Safety, Operations, Communications, and Student/Staff Support complete a full building walkthrough at each of MMSD's 52 buildings to review key areas of school safety: human action, infrastructure, and technology.

As of June 6, 2022, all 52 schools have been assessed. These teams have walked through each level and perimeter of each building using a 144-item tool to observe and record what was in place, partially in place or not consistent, or not in place. Each team met with the building leader and their team to discuss their thoughts on strengths and areas to strengthen in their buildings as well as debriefing the district team's visit and discussing recommendations.

Linked are agenda templates for an [elementary school/middle school](#) and [high school](#).

Here is the [walkthrough tool template](#).

Timeline: Now that these initial assessments are completed, the teams will work together to identify areas of strength, areas to strengthen and surface recommendations to the BOE. This summer the team will:

- Complete a full multidisciplinary team debrief and review of work (June)
- Connect with departments across the district to review and update District Safety Plan (June/July)
  - Major updates: Standard Response Protocol Updates, Sexual Assault and Title IX protocols and training, and revising district guidance document for police involvement
- Work with school administrators and department leaders to provide recommendations for updates for School Safety Plans (June/July)
- Expect full recommendations and revisions update in early fall 2022 (August/Sept)

### ➤ **Weekly Metrics and Ops Recordings and Agendas:**

6.21.2022 Weekly Metrics Meeting [Agenda](#) & [Recording](#)  
No Biweekly School-Central Office Operations Meeting

### ➤ **Human Resources Written Plan**

A Human Resources written plan will be shared with the Board Members on Friday, June 24, 2022. This will be instead of the staffing analysis.

### ➤ **Special Education Advisory Council Update**

Please see the attached letter that is being sent to the Board of Education from the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC). The district has developed an initial response to the questions/points raised in the letter. Please also see the

responses attached below.



### **Article of Interest**

[Green Bay's school district projects \\$36 million deficit after COVID-19 funds run out](#)



### **Great Things Happening Around MMSD**

- MMSD school and district staff celebrated at (and participated in) [Madison's Juneteenth parade](#).
- Learning beyond the four walls of a classroom - [Lake View Elementary's "StoryWalk"](#) a hit on Madison's north side.
- [MMSD offers free meals for kids](#) this summer.
- Rising senior Sofia LoConte, West High School, received the [Exemplary Performance Award](#) at the 2022 Wisconsin School Music Association State Music Festival in Soprano Solo vocal performance.
- MMSD human resources staff engage in [strategic conversations](#) to prepare for next school year.

## **OUR UPCOMING BOARD CALENDAR**



Mon., June 27, 8 a.m.

Board Officers  
Virtual



Mon., June 27, 4:30 p.m.

Special Meeting in closed Session  
In person



Mon., June 27, 6 p.m.

Regular BOE Meeting  
In person and virtual – Open to the public



Tues., June 28, 5:30 p.m.

Jefferson Renaming Citizens' Ad Hoc  
Virtual



Thurs., June 30, 5:15 p.m.

Safety and Student Wellness Ad Hoc  
Virtual



Mon., July 11, 8 a.m.

Board Officers  
Virtual



Thurs., July 14, 5:15 p.m.

Safety and Student Wellness Ad Hoc  
Virtual



Week of July 18

Board Briefings  
Virtual



Mon., July 25, 8 a.m.

Board Officers  
Virtual

- Mon., July 25 6 p.m.      Regular Board of Education Meeting  
In person and virtual—Open to the public
- Thurs., July 28, 5:15 p.m.      Safety and Student Wellness Ad Hoc  
Virtual

### ITEMS ATTACHED FOR INFORMATION

1. Behavior Education Plan Questions and Answers
2. Special Education Advisory Council Letter
3. Initial Response to points/questions from Special Education Advisory Council

## **Behavior Education Plan- Board of Education Questions 2022**

**Q: How are we decreasing school discipline rates and increasing feelings of belonging while holding staff accountable for students and families? How is this being impacted?**

A: Data from the Climate survey is currently being analyzed to share a comprehensive summary with the Board. One of the components will focus on is belonging and safety data markers over time.

A few key strategies implemented this year:

- Moratorium of Out-of-School Suspensions for elementary students
- Fall and Spring Culture & Climate visits that center reflecting, adjusting and planning to decrease discipline rates and increase belonging.
- Mobile Response Training: offered every summer to prepare for the upcoming school year
- District-wide culture & climate coaches consistently supporting schools and providing crisis response by level and feeder pattern
- Adding an RJ Coordinator to each comprehensive high school
- Calibrating on a new Climate Survey that is nationally normed and includes the Power Questions related to safety and belonging.

**Q: How many fires are set this year to justify this shift? Is there any data that will show if students are aware the punishment is higher the less likely they will do so?**

A: We do not have a significant number of students setting a fire or attempting to set a fire. Simply, those surveyed suggested a change to the elementary BEP moving from levels 2/3 to levels 3/4. After further consideration, the administration is rescinding this recommendation. District-wide there were 26 events and only one instance where a student lit a second fire (high school) suggesting students learn from their first mistake.

**Q: Please provide more information / data on how the moratorium on elementary out of school suspensions have been working this year.**

A: Over the course of the year, we are learning that schools need more support in developing restorative alternative practices to OSS. In addition, staff shortages have made it challenging to offer in-class support for students who are consistently struggling with significant behaviors. As we look to next year, in partnership with schools, we will research and pilot creating spaces and interventions that will support student regulation when they are experiencing a significant crisis. Predictably, there have not been any out of school suspensions documented since the moratorium was implemented.

**Q: Cell Phone policy in classrooms- often goes unimplemented. This is something that needs to be addressed now, it is disruptive to the entire class. Do teachers not have what is needed to implement this in their classrooms?**

A: MMSD has a [cell phone policy](#) in place and discipline may be applied. At elementary, use of an unauthorized electronic device starts at level 1 and progresses to level 2 which could result in one day of ISS for 4th and 5th grade students; in middle and high schools, it starts at a level 1 and progresses to level 3, which would result in 1-3 days of suspension.



## Behavior Education Plan- Board of Education Questions 2022

The use of cell phones in a classroom is often tied to levels of student engagement and consistently held high-levels of expectations for the classroom teacher. Students are less likely to engage in off-task behavior on their cell phones when they feel both personally connected to their teachers and when their individual academic needs are being met. Our team contends the most critical factors to mitigate cell phone use include: a) engaging instruction and high expectations; b) centering of community and relationships; c) setting clear expectations and teaching appropriate cell phone use; d) school policy and rules are consistently and respectfully applied by all staff.

**Q: Want to lift the 80% of students that feel safe in their schools. I think that is connected to the BEP, need to know why and it has to be addressed. Same with belonging at 75%**

A: The first goal of the BEP is the following: Increase the number of students, families, and staff who feel safe and a sense of belonging as measured by the annual school climate data. We have the opportunity to examine the data across school years and present a comprehensive review and analysis as we seek to increase safety and belonging. The data will be forthcoming.

What we gleaned from this school year in a qualitative manner is that belonging has been on the forefront of many of our schools' planning. Since the onset of COVID schools have engaged in creative ways to create a sense of belonging. Schools have relied heavily on classroom structures such as Morning Meeting, Circles of Power and Respect and other forms of advisory to support ways that children can safely come together. Additional specific examples include: creating space at teaming meetings to discuss and ensure that each child in the school has an adult that they are connected to, holding grade level or classroom events that focus on connection and belonging, intentionally creating spaces, practices and intervention for students who may be having a more challenging time connecting with staff and/or students. At the elementary level, there has been an intentional focus on implementing Social Emotional Learning lessons that build on a students sense of identity, emotional development, justice and safety. As is our bi-annual practice, schools participate in Culture & Climate visits. Here is the planning template from the Spring visit: [Culture and Climate Planning document](#). It aids schools in reflecting on their school's culture and climate in the following areas: Justice and Belonging, Rigorous and engaging learning, data and capacity building as well as providing an agenda for them to start planning for the fall.

**Q: Interested to know what the self-assessment and intervention data tell us about the implementation of the BEP to date and what adjustments have been made to that data?**

A: There are eight grounding principles in the BEP. Two of the principles are directly connected to self-assessment and intervention:

- We believe in teaching and intervention over consequences and punishment
- We will use disaggregated data to identify disparities, monitor progress, and drive decisions

Teaming is critical as it relates to the BEP, specifically related to teaching, intervention and data practices. One challenge we continue to lean into is the time constraints and staffing issues that do not allow for teams to be able to come together and meet. School-based teams need these opportunities to come together to calibrate around the implementation and evaluation of the BEP. Through our Culture and Climate Visits, we have learned that schools are taking explicit steps to prioritize times to meet for next school year.



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**Q: What additional supports do teachers and staff need to implement, especially in level 1 interventions? What data can you provide about those interventions over time?**

A: The feedback we have received from schools in our Culture and Climate Visits is that proactive interventions are critical in establishing a positive classroom environment. Setting clear, consistent and predictable routines and expectations have been effective in supporting a majority of students in the classroom. Building relationships through community building activities, SEL instruction, and other content areas has also proven effective in creating positive classroom environments. Teachers and staff are utilizing multiple universal practices to support student's needs such as student breaks, classroom brain breaks, seating arrangements, visual schedules, communication home with families, engaging in proactive community building (Morning Meeting, SEL Lessons, Circle of Power and Respect, Advisory). Qualitative data from teachers and staff have shown us that these practices are effective for a majority of the children in their classes, but additional support is needed for a smaller number of children who are presenting with intensive behaviors. Feedback from teachers and staff indicate that more opportunities for teaming and meeting are needed to plan and support students with intensive needs. The inability to engage in behavior coaching cycles with teachers due to staffing shortages has been identified as a challenge in several of the Culture and Climate Visits. Data collection and analysis will be a focus of Climate work next year as we update and train on EduClimber practices.

**Q: Please provide restorative justice data, the metrics of success, and how are students processing?**

A: As we turn attention to district level planning and implementation of restorative justice in the 2022-23 school year, we recognize the importance of attending to strengthened and consistent data systems for RJ work. Following are examples of current practices at each level.

**High School** - In the first year with an allocated Restorative Justice Coordinator at West High School, over 80 Circles were held for students and staff and supported by the RJ Coordinator, attending to both the proactive work of community building and establishment of community agreements, and responsive work of addressing interpersonal conflict, and harm related to the impact of the pandemic, racial harm within classrooms, and other difficulties. Additionally, many restorative conversations were held, and students participated in RJ club and provided leadership in Regent Pride activities. Feedback indicates restorative processes were effective in creating understanding, empathy, connection, and resolution.

*Examples of West High student feedback on restorative justice processes:*

- *Restorative justice can help our school community to heal and become more cohesive. It can offer an opportunity to expand our acceptance of others and design more effective methods for resolving conflicts.*
- *Restorative justice provides an alternate method to work through conflict that builds relationships in the process, not destroying or upsetting them. It gives opportunities to provide people with what they need without as much placing of blame or harm.*

**Middle school** - The YWCA supports restorative justice work at three middle schools, with a model focused on adult capacity-building and youth leadership. Implementation data from the 2021-22 year-end report will be shared when it is available.

**Elementary school** - For the past two years Huegel Elementary has invested in becoming a restorative justice school by leveraging the role of the Culture and Climate coach for RJ work and prioritizing access to RJ learning experiences, including staff Circles, adult wellbeing activities, and book studies to deepen

## Behavior Education Plan- Board of Education Questions 2022

understanding of RJ foundations and applications to teaching and learning. The work has included shifting aspects of their behavior response system, RJ and liberatory education work with all instructional teams, regular optional staff Circles, RJ Club for 4th graders, and classroom Circles school-wide.

**District-wide** - In addition to the targeted and resourced work in a number of schools, many other schools are also committed to staff learning around restorative justice and to increasing use of restorative processes. Examples include an elementary SBLT engaged in monthly RJ learning throughout the year, staff RJ book studies, regular practice of Circle as a process for reflection around race and equity work, and Circles to address conflict or harm among adults, including families. As we plan for the coming year, we will look to capture more of this work as well.

*For information on effective implementation of restorative justice in schools see [The Starts and Stumbles of Restorative Justice in Education](#)*

### **Q: What is an in-school suspension? What happens at each level?**

A: As of November 2021, "In the Behavior Education Plan, In-School-Suspension (ISS) is defined as "a disciplinary response in which a student is removed from the classroom environment and assigned to work within the school for up to one day." The BEP behavior responses grid lays out when ISS is allowed as a response. It is never required. It is only ever available for up to one day. " (Guidance for Use of In-School Suspension, Nov. 2021)

- The usage of ISS does differ some school-to-school. Many schools are moving away from ISS altogether, including many of our secondary schools are trying to revisit and re-engage with their Alternative to Suspension Plans/Models.

### **Q: How might we adjust for staffing issues? What if a staff member is not in place to be responsive?**

A: Staffing shortages have been one of the greatest barriers to providing sufficient support. It will take a district-wide, comprehensive approach to alleviate staff shortages. If there is not a staff member available to support ISS, a different intervention is selected.

### **Q: How are we using the same BEP for 4 year old and 5th graders? Critical we relook at the elementary plan to see if it is appropriate to have such an age range included together**

A: The elementary BEP is differentiated by grades K-3 and 4-5.

### **Q: What are data collection procedures for behavior at the school level?**

A: **EduClimber** is the universal data collection system that all levels, K-12, use to enter behavior incidents. Data Dashboard, IC, and Tableau are systems often used to review and analyze behavior data sets. Here is best practice/guidance for entering in behavior data

Teams are to build out a data collection system within their response system & team that works best for their school community.

- Classroom managed behavior
  - Level 1(s) - Classroom behaviors that are teacher/classroom staff managed, resolved, and restored do not need to go into eduClimber (no Level 1 doc required in EduClimber)

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- Call for Support and Behavior Response Roles
  - Responding staff (Behavior Response, Mobile Response, etc) are responsible for the following (within their team design):
    - Respond to call (hear from calling staff to see why call was made, what practices did staff use & try to manage or respond to student behavior within the environment, and what staff and student(s) are needing; a removal from class, space to process together, etc.)
    - Responding staff then processes the incident from all perspectives, teacher & student, student & student, etc. to determine how the call should be entered.
      - Level 2(s) - When a classroom teacher or staff calls for support, the responding staff can use this guide ([Guiding factors](#) document) to determine if a call should be entered as a level 2 under the BEP.
      - **Not all calls for support from a classroom are appropriately captured as a Level 2 under the BEP** - this is where review and discussion are important For 21-22, classroom teachers are not required to enter Level 1s into eduClimber ([Training - Behavior Incidents in eduClimber](#))
    - Once responding staff have made their decision, they enter it into EduClimber and follow the following steps link here ([eduClimber Behavior Incident Entry, Editing, Viewing Instructions](#))

**Q: How do we ensure they are followed consistently across schools? Are staff trained on methodology?**

A: Responding staff across all roles, Behavior Responders, SSTs throughout the school district 4K-12; are all invited to join the yearly Mobile Response Training that includes the following components:

- Welcomes team back from summer
- Shares BEP Policy Updates, Guidances Documents
- Provides teams a time to connect and to begin to build, reconnect, or revamp their school's response system.

This training typically takes place in August of each school year. [Last year's Mobile Response](#) training was framed through a healing, restorative, and transformative lens and really leaning into the mindset shift/ and work that would support a much more restorative approach when talking about behavior within our community, district, schools, and teams.

- Ongoing training/connecting around behavior response systems happen throughout the school year via Roles Alike PD and coaching support via Culture & Climate Coaches.

Moving forward, to ensure that this more Restorative Support System around tending to students' and staffs' needs, we envision the following:

- Intentional, universal, & ongoing training around the BEP, data analyzation, and the Foundational Practices (SEL & RJ) and Mental Health, specifically, need to be prioritized for all staff throughout the district.

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- Resources also need to be allotted equitably among all schools, such as staffing, funding, and training.
- Youth involvement also needs to be prioritized when developing, implementing, and evaluating this system and this involvement needs to center our students who are and who have been most impacted and affected by the behavior response system.

**Q: Were there disruptions to this procedure last school year due to shortage or other challenges?**

A: Yes. There were significant disruptions to maintaining high quality, proactive and responsive systems due to staff shortages, lack of teaming time, and insufficient time dedicated to professional development and learning.

## SEAC Letter - June 2022 - Response Talking Points

- Student Services plans to maintain PINE at these two schools, and expand this opportunity to a handful of additional schools next year (Hamilton, Spring Harbor, West). MMSD would like a revised fee structure of PINE for large districts. PINE charges per school and by size of school, but the average is \$10-12K per school. The fee for PINE for the two schools for 2021-22 was \$20,000.00. The quote from PINE for 26 schools for the 2022-23 school year was \$460,000.00. MMSD will seek a Request for Quote from PINE, proposing that the fee structure be adjusted to incorporate more staff, particularly SEAs, versus the per school annual fee.

### [PINE Overview](#)

Participating staff at Franklin and Randall have reported PINE content is relevant and beneficial to enhancing job-related knowledge and skills. Staff have also reported challenges finding time to complete training modules and engage with the materials. Student Services offered PD rate pay (\$25.00 per hour) for any staff member at Franklin and Randall who wanted to engage with PINE modules.

MMSD provides support to staff to understand best practices for including neurodiverse learners in two additional ways. Professional learning is offered to staff using WI DPI resources for supporting neurodiverse learners and the Autism internet modules, and we offer coaching from an expert on staff at CESA 2.

- In terms of SEA training, we have had a dedicated staff member (Penny Simmons) in Student Services coordinating professional learning for SEAs for the past several years. Penny just retired, and Nakia Wiley and Patrick Doty will take over her former responsibilities. MMSD would love to make PINE available to all SEAs, but the fee structure would need to be adjusted to charge for a certain group size versus by school.
- MMSD made a concerted effort to ensure Summer Arts Academy (SAA) opportunities were available to all scholars, regardless of support needs. To support this effort, Student Services staff have worked with SAA to hire special education teachers and special education assistants for each of the three sites. We are also working toward a more integrated model to provide ESY services as part of, rather than separate from, summer semester in future years.

# URGENT ACTION NEEDED FOR OUR CHILDREN

Dear (individual member name of the BOE and Admin),

We represent the 4000 children with IEPs at MMSD. Our purpose is to have the entire MMSD community include and educate our children as whole human beings to learn with and from.

We are focused on the children who are some of the most marginalized in our schools and communities. Children who use wheelchairs, children with autism, children with mental health needs, even children identified with advanced learning needs. Many of these children are from lower income families, this includes children of color, and specifically, historically marginalized African-American children.

While only 14% of students are labeled as students with disabilities, many of our children have a combination of these identities that lead to greater marginalization and face a unique set of challenges both in the classroom, and in the community.

We agree with you that Special Education has been historically racist - similar to other public and private systems. However, the solution is not to further marginalize our students with disabilities. Our students with disabilities already face tremendous barriers put in place by district policies, lack of adequate and trained staffing, as well as inadequate funding to meet the needs of our students. We will not accept the paradigm of simply focusing on disproportionality, while ignoring the deeply flawed service delivery system within our current special education program.

Without presenting system-wide improvements besides the work in regards to disproportionality, you are further marginalizing and hurting many children and families in our schools. Special Education should not only be anti-racist, it should also be anti-ableist. You can do this by making outcomes matched to our childrens' needs and abilities, utilize evidence-based programs to include and educate them and allocate the necessary resources to have a qualified and robust staffing and service delivery model. Last, Student Services requires more attention and **must have** a seat at every table and discussion.

Our children have talents, skills and dreams, so please stop treating them like an afterthought or burden. Respect these children as whole humans and learn from them.

Under the leadership of Nancy Molfenter, Special Education has made substantial improvements for many of our children with IEPs. There are now some nascent successful pilots around MMSD schools, as well as additional support for our families via the Family Ombudsperson.

However, there is still an enormous amount that needs to be done to improve the lives of all our students with disabilities.

In conclusion, nothing about us, without us.

**Questions:**

1. What system-wide evidence-based programs are currently being utilized to include and educate students with disabilities?
2. What funding is allocated in the 2022-23 budget to evidence-based systemic solutions for including and educating students with IEPs?
3. Why are no ESSER funds being allocated to special education or IEP needs in the third round of the ARPA funds, since community feedback showed this was a priority area?
4. Why isn't attention being paid to the lack of funds and training for SEAs?
5. Why did BOE and Administration decide to pilot a Summer Art Academy, while simultaneously removing hundreds of students, including our children with IEPs, from summer semester due to a shortage in staffing?
6. How is Student Services included when making decisions that affect children with disabilities?
7. Who on the BOE and in the Administration represents the disabled population?

**What we are strongly advocating for:**

1. Restore allocation from the third round of ARPA funds to help special education and general education teachers and support staff learn how to work together to include and educate both students, with and without IEPs in the general education setting. This includes adequate staffing, additional training opportunities for staff and adequate time for collaboration between program support teachers, cross-categorical teachers, general education teachers, related services staff and special education assistants.
2. Additional funding, and active support, to expand the use of the Program for Inclusion and Neurodiversity Education (PINE), an evidence-based program, which has proven successful at Randall and Franklin.
3. Additional examination of the district's current staffing model and re-evaluation of current curricula and service delivery models.
2. A \$5 dollar increase in hourly pay for our special education assistants, as well as additional funding for training and compensation for shared collaboration time with case managers.

In best regards,



The Special Education Advisory Council  
SEAC@gmail.com

Signed:

*The Members of The Special Education Advisory Council, Madtown Mommas, (more to come)*