



2025 – 2026

Wednesday, September 24, 2025 | 4:30 – 6:30 PM | Central Office – Room 206/208
Meeting minutes below, approved 10/29/2025

ITEM		TIME
Dinner Service Student Arrival	Set and ready for students upon arrival. Students will arrive via pre-arranged transportation plans and enjoy dinner service.	4:15 PM
Welcome	<p style="text-align: center;">Official opening of the 2025-26</p> <p>Superintendent's Student Advisory Council/SSAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenni Hofschulte, Interim Advisor • Roll Call of Schools & Returning Representatives <p>Department of Strategic Partnerships and Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christy Stone, Director <p>Introduction of President Mèi Namiko, Wisconsin Conservatory of Lifelong Learning Welcome Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools</p>	4:30 PM
Meeting Norms & Expectations	<p>Overview of the function and roles Meeting Protocol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Expectations • Housekeeping 	4:45 PM
Reports	<p>Back to School 2025-26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District level overview • Student perspective sharing • Director Ferguson. District 4 & FACE Committee Chair 	5:00 PM
Discussion Focus	<p>Co-Creating the SSAC -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with Principals • Communication Models – proposal • Goals & Expectations – what worked, what was missing? • Roles & Responsibilities – Elections 10/29 • Committees (Nutrition Services, Recruitment, Leadership Opportunities...?) 	5:30 PM
Next Steps	What are our follow-ups and needs between now and our next meeting?	6:15 PM
Closing & Gratitude		6:25 PM

End Meeting	Board buses - departures	6:30 PM
Next Meeting	October 29, 2023 – Central Office - 4:30-6:30 PM Meal & Mingle: 4:25 – 4:40 Meeting 4:45 – 6:30 PM Board buses 6:30PM	

<h2>SSAC Meetings</h2> <p>As posted: mpsmke.com/ssac</p> <p>September 24, 2025 Central Office - Room 206/208 Returning members</p> <p>October 29, 2025 Central Office - Room 206/208 Welcoming new members</p> <p>November 19, 2025 Central Office - Room 206/208</p> <p>December 18, 2025 Board Report</p>	<p>January 28, 2026 Central Office - Room 206/208</p> <p>February 25, 2026 Central Office - Room 206/208</p> <p>March 25, 2026 Central Office - Room 206/208</p> <p>April 22, 2026 Central Office - Room 206/208</p> <p>May 6, 2026 - Special Mtg & Celebration Central Office - Room 206/208</p> <p>May 7, 2026 Board Report</p>
---	---

Meeting Notes 9/24/2025

MPS High Schools Represented: Bay View, Golda, MacDowell, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Regan, King, and Wisconsin Conservatory of Lifelong Learning. (11 students)

MPS Staff: Dr. Cassellius, Superintendent, Michael Harris, Chief of Staff, Brian Litzsey Chief of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships, Aaron Shapiro, Secondary Academic Superintendent, Christy Stone, Director of Strategic Partnerships & Customer Service, Nhya Everette SPCS Administrative Assistant, and Jenni Hofschulte, Family & Community Engagement/SSAC Advisor

[Slide Deck](#)

Welcome – Introductions and overview of communications leading up to the first meeting. To prepare for this meeting we conducted outreach to returning members, activated of the SSAC Google Classroom, and SSAC interim advisor, Jenni Hofschulte and President Mei to set the agenda for this meeting.

Overview of the function and roles within the SSAC - Why we are here: *The Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SSAC) shall be comprised of student representatives from each high school in the district. The council's goal is to create meaningful dialogue between students and the Superintendent, providing a platform for them to share their views and perspectives. Members of the SSAC are tasked with advocating for all students.*

Meeting Protocol

- Meeting Expectations & Housekeeping – these meetings are a place where all members should be comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences with each other. Adults are to participate in the meeting and should be open to sharing, asking for student feedback and input as well as practicing active listening to learn from the students. The introduction of the jargon giraffe, a meeting norm that helps people to understand a term or an acronym that they may not understand. People present during the SSAC meeting are expected to actively participate and are welcome to step out for personal care, brief calls or to excuse themselves if they do not plan to stay for the entire meeting time.

Reports -- Back to School 2025-26 - areas in need of improvement and joy!

- **District level overview with Dr. Cassellius** – Dr. Cassellius shared that over the nine Listen and Learn sessions she has held so far, many students, various staff members and the community at large came out to give feedback about improving the school district. She stated that she will be hosting internal listening sessions to get feedback specifically from MPS staff members and will continue to carry out her town hall style of community engagement as the year presses on. She requested the consideration of the SSAC to help host a *Listen and Learn* opportunity for high school students specifically and she reiterated a topic she presented in the spring of 2025 - assembling a Student Cabinet or subset of student representatives to serve in a most specific advisory role which will include shadowing opportunities for students and her administrative cabinet members. More to come on that.

Dr. Cassellius expressed excitement around the back-to-school season and deep gratitude to the members of the SSAC who will continue to serve and support their schools and our district. She also shared concerns around the approximately 1,000 students who have not yet enrolled in or returned to

school. She stated that high school attendance hovers just above 80% on average and the ideal percentage is 95%+. She asked to work with the SSAC to find ways to decrease the levels of truancy and increase student attendance on Mondays and Fridays, the days the high schools see the greatest dips.

Student perspective sharing- Organized by topics

Welcoming Environment –

Students shared a continuum of experiences regarding back-to-school events and activities. Some schools had advertised, well planned and executed events and other schools had no events or had their events go unfulfilled or thwarted by leadership.

Best practice sharing occurred between students – as they offered examples of activities at their schools. They discussed the value of shared school identity, opportunities for rewards for attendance/service/academic performance/etc. Discussion included the importance of having the work and time (students and staff) valued in a way that contributes to positive school culture and climate. ---
This topic is moved to be explored more deeply at a future meeting.

Safety –

Students universally shared the concern about the loss of learning time that occurs while students wait to go through security scanners, the long wait-times take away from the students' first hour classes and they noted some students will simply turn away from the school door when the lines are very long.

Some students questioned the lack of SROs (School Resource Officers) presence within their schools. Mr. Shapiro shared that the distribution of the SROs is based on data from police stations near MPS locations, he also offered that for many schools most of the calls to MPS happen outside of the school-day hours. There was additional conversation about schools needing versus not needing SROs.

Internet Access/Use -

Students shared that there are a variety of changes to the access of certain websites and tools that were once available to students. They cited a variety of reasons that these restrictions hinder learning:

- Reviewing performance videos during rehearsals
- Access to learning-based programs and episodes of specific shows
- Accessing dual enrollment lectures, resources necessary to complete trade and college level course work on time

Students expressed understanding that there are students who abuse systems, access, etc. and that they may not be making good use of their time at school or use of the resources. They shared that a universal block impacts all students, even those who are responsible with their time and tools.

Overwhelming agreement surrounded the idea that they would like to understand the “why” when decisions are made that change protocols that impact student experience – examples: clear/mesh backpacks, YouTube filters/blocking, etc. SSAC members agreed that students would like to be trusted with the *why* when decisions are already made and to have their voice and experience considered as policy and practice decisions are made, when appropriate.

Director Ferguson. District 4 & FACE Committee Chair

Dr. Ferguson greeted the students and welcomed them to the new school year. He shared that he is the chairperson for the Family and Community Engagement Committee of the [MPS School Board](#) and said student voice is encouraged at those meetings.

Upon hearing about students being late to classes due to security protocols, he said that he would report back to his colleagues regarding the concerns of the students missing class times due to the prolonged security screenings and work with staff as appropriate to find a way to make the process more efficient.

He deeply expressed that he's "for the students" and that he wants to make sure the students have the proper tools for learning across the district.

Co-Creating the SSAC -

- Communication Models – proposal to reinvigorate the newsletter and distribute it beyond the SSAC membership. Future planning includes - investigating social media methods, who has ownership? How can we formalize it? Where can up to date and relevant information for the SSAC be accessed by others not yet connected? Sharing 'talking' points or announcement points across the district.
- Goals & Expectations – what worked in the past, what was missing?
 - ❖ Students expressed a desire for this council to take on some action/activity/goal this year that results in a tangible "win" or net positive for students in MPS. The students feel that there are not enough incentives/motivation to keep engagement high throughout the year. Some of the ideas that the students suggested were broadcasting information about the SSAC on the morning announcements, having a booth/stand within the schools.
 - ❖ SSAC returning members would like there to be more Community Building with intention within schools (assemblies, opportunities for fun, etc. where that is lacking) and within the SSAC. They would like to see more collaboration across the schools and to be better able to share good news and opportunities for students happening in other schools in the city.
 - ❖ Focus on best practice sharing to solve problems with solutions that already exist. (Between schools without diminishing what makes each school unique).
 - ❖ Improving the reputation of MPS in the broader community and within – community connections, solidarity and pride.
 - ❖ Advocating for the tools students need to succeed – access to sites for dual enrollment courses, consistency and routine, safety, empathy.
- Roles & Responsibilities – Elections 10/29 - the body agreed to the election of the remaining SSAC leadership to take place at the October meeting. [Students will complete the leadership application no later than October 19, 2025.](#) Responses will be consolidated and shared with registered members of the SSAC no later than 10/22.
- Committees (Nutrition Services, Recruitment, Leadership Opportunities...?)

Item only touched on due to time constriction – there will be upcoming student leadership opportunities on the School Nutrition Services committee, Superintendent's Cabinet and as well as SSAC leadership roles.

Recruitment status as of 9/24/2025

Not yet represented -	In process -	Confirmed -
Project Stay Milwaukee Virtual School Madison Transition North Division Groppi South Division Vincent Alliance Obama Hamilton Washington	Bradley Tech Audubon Marshall	MacDowell Golda WCLL Reagan Bay View MHSA King Riverside MSL Pulaski

End notes. 10/1/2025

Approved for distribution: 10/29/2025

J. Hofschulte