



State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

GENERAL NOTIFICATION – DISTRICT IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT (Level 3)

August 19, 2008

William Andrekopoulos
District Administrator
Milwaukee Public Schools
P.O. Box 2181
Milwaukee, WI 53201-2181

Dear Mr. Andrekopoulos:

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is required by state and federal law to annually identify districts that did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) towards meeting the state's academic performance standards. Your district has been identified as a *District Identified for Improvement (DIFI) Level 3* based on testing in the 2007-08 school year. As a district, Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) has failed to make adequate yearly progress for four consecutive years on the same objectives (i.e., reading and mathematics) at elementary, middle, and high school grade spans. While the DPI may take corrective action at any time with respect to a district identified for improvement, once a district reaches *DIFI Level 3* status, the DPI is required to impose corrective action. The plan for corrective action is enclosed. This is the document we reviewed with you and members of your staff on August 11, 2008.

As you are aware, the law requires prompt notification of the parents of each student enrolled in the school district that the district has been identified for improvement. This notification must be in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand. It must include the reason(s) for the identification and information on how parents can participate in upgrading the quality of their local education agency. Districts may use existing communication vehicles such as newsletters, letters, or other communication forms to parents.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jessica Justman at 608-266-8009 or jessica.justman@dpi.wi.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald L. Stevens".

Donald L. Stevens
Assistant State Superintendent
Division for Reading and Student Achievement

DLS:ejm

Enclosure

c: Deb Lindsey, Director, Office of Research and Assessment
Arleen Dansby-White, Director, Office of Instructional Leadership and Support
Phyllis Anderson, Title I Coordinator

Corrective Action for Milwaukee Public Schools District in Need of Improvement-Level 3 (2008-09)

I. District/School Improvement

To improve academic achievement among all students, reduce achievement gaps, and make adequate yearly progress in meeting the state's student academic achievement standards, the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) shall take the following actions:

- A. MPS shall continue to restructure the district through the MPS District and School Accountability Model. MPS shall continue to use the model to ensure consistent implementation of the district DIFI Plan and district- and state-identified high leverage strategies to improve student achievement, as well as monitoring of educational plans at the school level. DPI shall continue to provide technical assistance and monitoring as detailed in the model and outlined below.
- B. MPS shall maintain implementation of the following state-identified high leverage strategies to improve academic achievement:
 - Summer school with a mathematics and reading focus in all Title I Schools Identified for Improvement (SIFI);
 - Individually tailored, differentiated support for principals in all Title I SIFI;
 - Extended reading and mathematics instruction in all Title I SIFI: 90 minute reading block and 60 minute mathematics block grades K-3, 60 minute reading block and 60 minute mathematics block grades 4-8, and reading intervention courses provided in high school; and
 - Extended calendars of a minimum of 30 additional days of instruction in one or two Title I SIFI schools must be implemented at the beginning of the 2009-10 school year.
- C. The MPS DIFI Director and key MPS administrators shall develop a comprehensive district-wide plan for literacy that is standards-based, articulated across levels, and utilizes a limited number of programs by December 15, 2008. The plan must be based on a review of the district's current literacy programs by external experts facilitated by the MPS DIFI Director with technical assistance provided by DPI. Implementation of the comprehensive literacy plan must be implemented at the beginning of the 2009-10 school year.
- D. In accordance with federal law, MPS shall revise the district DIFI plan for 2008-09 by October 15, 2008. The DIFI plan must be developed in consultation with parents, school staff, and others, and shall incorporate district, state, and federal requirements. DPI shall provide technical assistance to MPS as needed in developing and implementing the revised district DIFI plan.
- E. By October 15, 2008, MPS shall submit evidence to DPI that parents were promptly notified of DIFI/SIFI status, and involved in the revision of the district DIFI Plan, as required by NCLB.
- F. MPS shall submit its 2008-09 ESEA Consolidated Application and its 2007-08 End-of-Year Report by August 30, 2008 and submit required corrective action resulting from annual ESEA monitoring by the timeline indicated in the monitoring report. MPS staff (i.e., both finance and program) involved with the ESEA Consolidated Application will meet with DPI staff to discuss outstanding questions related to the 2008-09 MPS ESEA Consolidated Application by October 15, 2008.
- G. The MPS DIFI Director, key MPS administrators, and MPS School Improvement Supervisors shall meet monthly with the DPI Director of DIFI and key DPI administrators to monitor implementation of the corrective action requirements and the district DIFI Plan.
- H. Each August, the MPS Superintendent, MPS DIFI Director and other key administrators shall meet with the State Superintendent and her Cabinet to review the implementation of the required corrective action and the district DIFI Plan, and, if the district remains in DIFI status, discuss additions and revisions for the upcoming year.

II. Teacher Quality

MPS will ensure that all educators are appropriately licensed for their assignments, are highly qualified under NCLB, and are receiving professional development as specified by the Wisconsin Quality Educator Initiative (PI 34), state statute and NCLB. To document ongoing compliance with these requirements MPS will take the following actions:

- A. By August 30, 2008, MPS shall designate a teacher quality contact person who, along with the MPS DIFI Director, will be responsible for compliance with licensing requirements. The MPS DIFI Director, MPS teacher quality contact person, and key MPS administrators shall meet quarterly with the DPI DIFI Director and key DPI licensing staff to monitor compliance.
- B. By June 30, 2009, MPS must implement an integrated data system that identifies and tracks all educators and includes their license(s) and assignments by subject, grade level, and building site. By the start of the 2008-09 school year, MPS shall designate an Information Technology contact person, who, along with the MPS DIFI Director, will be responsible for development of the data system. The MPS DIFI Director, the Information Technology contact person, and key MPS administrators will meet quarterly or as needed with the DPI DIFI Director, the DPI Information Technology Director, and other key DPI staff to monitor progress and provide technical assistance.
- C. MPS must establish district policies and procedures to ensure all educators are highly qualified and appropriately licensed in all assignments, and provide the following to the DPI Director of Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing:
 - By September 15, 2008, evidence of policies and procedures ensuring that every educator (including new hires and mid-year transfers), is properly licensed or MPS has determined in consultation with DPI that the individual is eligible to receive a license and the individual has submitted a complete license application prior to engaging in activities that require a license.
 - By September 15, 2008, verification that a district system of support is in place for each educator hired with an emergency license or permit.
 - By October 15, 2008 and January 31, 2009, an electronic file documenting each educator's license(s) and assignment by subject, grade and building site.
 - By October 15, 2008, an electronic file identifying all educators not highly qualified under NCLB.
 - By October 15, 2008, evidence that NCLB parental notification requirements regarding highly qualified teachers have been fulfilled.
 - By November 15, 2008, an electronic copy of the district's individual support plans created and implemented to assist each teacher who is not highly qualified under NCLB to become highly qualified; and, by February 15, 2009 and June 30, 2009, an electronic report detailing the progress made on each individual support plan.
- D. MPS shall ensure that requirements for initial educator support are being fulfilled, and provide the following to the DPI Director of Teacher Education, Professional Development and Licensing:
 - By September 15, 2008, evidence that a district system of support is in place for each educator hired with an Initial Educator License, including a mentor training program, selection of mentors, orientation and support seminar activities, evaluation process and timelines.
 - By October 15, 2008, an electronic list of each first and second year initial educator, assignment, location and qualified mentor.
 - Quarterly reports on the implementation of activities included in the initial educator system of support by October 31, 2008; January 31, 2009; April 30, 2009; and June 30, 2009.

III. School Finance

- A. MPS finance staff shall meet at least three times annually with DPI finance staff to review MPS finances.
- B. Should MPS be unable to meet statutory or other deadlines identified by DPI, it will result in DPI withholding and/or reducing federal funds to MPS.