



Milwaukee Public Schools

May 27, 2009

District releases plan for federal stimulus funds *Board to deliberate uses for millions in ARRA dollars*

MPS Superintendent William Andrekopoulos' proposed plan for more than \$95 million in ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) stimulus funds over two years has been delivered to the Board of School Directors. The Committee on Strategic Planning & Budget will consider the plan, as well as a proposal for Stimulus Borrowing (Qualified School Construction Bonds) on **Tuesday, June 2, at 6:30 p.m.** at MPS Central Services.

The stimulus funds addressed in the ARRA proposal are \$64.5 million dollars in Title I-A funding and another \$31.2 million in IDEA dollars. IDEA stands for Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. The Superintendent's proposal includes a spending plan for fiscal year 2010. While it also includes an outline of a potential budget for FY11, a formal proposal will be developed for FY11 in time for that year's budget cycle.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has outlined four priorities for use of the ARRA money. They are:

1. Improving teacher effectiveness.
2. Establishing rigorous standards and assessments to improve teaching and learning.
3. Improving achievement of low-performing schools.
4. Enhancing data use to improve student learning.

The MPS Superintendent's ARRA 2010 proposal is in line with those priorities and is based on information available to date.

Elements of the proposed MPS ARRA budget include:

- \$2.5 million to increase parent involvement and parent training in 40 low-performing K-8 schools and parent engagement strategies in the older grades.
- \$1.5 million in an expansion of Early Childhood Education.
- \$8.9 million for more learning time in reading and math through Saturday academies; more career and technical education; expansion of credit recovery options; curriculum improvements and improvement in graduation rates.
- \$10 million for improvements in teacher effectiveness.
- \$8.8 million to improve the district's data tools, including those tools that help the district make early identification of children who are at risk.
- \$1.8 million to maintain service levels at all Community Learning Center (CLC) sites.
- \$1.7 million to improve post-secondary preparation, reducing the number of MPS students who need remedial courses at MATC and UW-Milwaukee.

District releases plan, p.2

- \$1.6 million to introduce the Comprehensive Literacy Plan in all schools and grade spans.
- \$460,000 to increase student performance in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.
- \$1.6 million for textbooks and training materials to assist staff in teaching reading to special education students.
- \$5.8 million in “classroom supports.” These supports include Saturday and after-school reading and math instruction, credit recovery and materials for new teachers in special education classrooms.
- A longer school year for nine MPS charter schools.

The proposal has been presented to the Board of School Directors for its deliberation during the FY10 district budget process.

Superintendent Andrekopoulos added a caution about using the one-time stimulus money: “This money goes away after two years. It does not help us address the very serious long-term challenges of the district. There is still a school funding flaw. There is still a dwindling pot of state aid. Stimulus money does not make the problems of funding public schools in Wisconsin go away.”

The administration’s proposal for ARRA funds is available on the MPS portal at http://mpsportal.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_201_54331_0_0_18/ARRABudget.pdf

In addition to the ARRA funds, federal monies are available to school districts nationwide for construction projects. The MPS Administration is carefully weighing potential eligible projects, and prioritizing them. “The stimulus construction money must be paid back,” explained Michelle Nate, Director of MPS Finance & Operations. “The final determination of which projects to fund will be based on affordability and impact on future budgets, making it unlikely all the projects will be funded.” More information on Qualified School Construction Bonds is available on the MPS portal at the following link:

http://mpsportal.milwaukee.k12.wi.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_2_54430_0_0_18/ARRA%20Constr-QSCB%20Facilities.pdf

MPS is Wisconsin’s largest public school district, serving 85,000 students in 213 schools. District achievement is guided by its *Working Together, Achieving More* strategic plan. For additional information, contact Roseann St. Aubin, MPS Communications Director, at (414) 475-8237.



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