



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 11, 2013

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room LL-120 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Supervisor Bayrd arrived at 5:05 p.m.

Present: 7 - Astra Iheukumere; Shiva Bidar-Sielaff; Matthew J. Phair; Jessica Hankey;
Dean Loumos; T.J. Mertz and Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd

Absent: 1 - Jenni Dye

CITY STAFF: Anne Kenny, Mary O'Donnell, Tariq Saqqaf

MMSD STAFF: Marcia Standiford

Others: Mike Barry, Allison Brown, Judge Daniel Koval

Ald. Phair called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Iheukumere moved and Loumos seconded approval of the August 14, 2013 minutes. Hankey requested a friendly amendment to strike the words "and behavior" and replace them with the word "improvement" in the second sentence of the first paragraph under Item 31216, so that the sentence now reads, "There is a partnership with United Way and MMSD with attendance improvement as the focus."

She also requested to strike the sentence, "The focus is on children who are chronically absent," and replace it with the sentence, "There's a multi-tiered focus on issues of attendance," in the first paragraph under Item 31216. Iheukumere and Loumos accepted the friendly amendments. The motion passed with Ald. Bidar-Sielaff, Hankey, Iheukumere, and Loumos voting aye, and Mertz abstaining.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

REPORTS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

1. [31586](#) Chair's Report

Ald. Phair gave an update of Council action on the HERE! campaign. The Council joined with United Way and the school district and wore the HERE! t-shirts at the Council meeting. The Mayor also wore a t-shirt.

2. [31500](#) MMSD Budget Update

Attachments: [MMSD Budget Notes](#)

Assistant Superintendant Mike Barry distributed a handout to the Committee. Barry began with a brief description of the budget development process. He said that this year, the Madison budget process was somewhat non-traditional. A normal process begins in January and runs until April or May at which time there is a preliminary budget presented publicly. Normally, the board would adopt the budget by May, but this year was atypical due to the change in school board members and change in administration, as well as new district offices. The budget process was revisited from May to August under the new leadership. Currently, the district has an adopted budget that has to be finalized in October when tax levies get certified.

The biggest challenge the district faced for 2013-2014 was the loss of about nine million dollars in aid. They were looking at an increase in levy as high as 9% early in the process to offset the loss of aid. They did a lot of work to bring the levy down to 4.47%. The management developed a strategy to hold back funding new initiatives.

The overall financial position of the district is sound. The fund balance is sufficient at 13% of general fund operations. The district's credit rating is triple A.

The planning process for 2014-2015 starts in about eight weeks. They have to focus on multi-year forecasting. They're adopting a zero-based allocation process, and they will ultimately focus on a strategic alignment of resources rather than cost to continue.

With a big aid loss, the district's levy will increase substantially even without any spending increases. Spending in 2013-2014 will actually be down by 1% over 2012-2013 despite an enrollment increase of 150 students. The districts margins are razor thin this year, but the essential work of the district, the key classroom—teacher—student nexus, is not disturbed by this budget. However, long-term issues are out of alignment, with the capital budget for example.

Supervisor Bayrd asked how the County could help supplement what the district does, could help fill gaps, for example, with mental health services and training.

Mertz said that the district and the City's and County's budgets differ on several levels. He said there was a right wing push against the community services

fund.

Barry said that an unintended consequence of decreasing funding aid to school districts was a decrease in adult education and community recreation programming. The legislature came up with a fix to support community recreation programs with local control to set the levy.

Iheukumere asked if there's any expectation of what state aid will look like in October. Barry said they're expecting a 15% decrease and loss of nine million dollars.

Loumos asked what impact the slight increase in enrollment will have on the budget. Barry said that it will give the district the authority to levy beyond where they estimated, but they're under-levied as is.

Bidar-Sielaff asked about collaboration with County, City, and school district relating to community services.

Ald. Phair asked whether the third Friday count will determine the state's allocation of funds for next year. Barry said that there is a revenue limit determined by the current year's third Friday count, and then there's the state equalization aid, which is based on the prior year actual information, including enrollment.

3. [29034](#)

Annual Truancy/Habitual Truancy Report for Fall 2011 - Spring 2012 - Judge Daniel Koval, Madison Municipal Court

Attachments: [Annual Truancy_Habitual Truancy Report for Fall 2011_Spring 2012.pdf](#)

Municipal Court Judge Koval and Allison Brown from the school district presented a PowerPoint presentation with charts and other information.

Judge Koval said that the report from his office to the Committee was filed back in January and pertains to the previous school year.

Judge Koval went over the school based court, which is in all four public high schools, plus the alternative school. He alternates between East and Memorial on Tuesdays and between LaFollette and West on Fridays. It's a collaborative effort, and Brown deserves much of the credit for coordination. The court has been a very positive experience with having all the people around the table to help support the student. Follow up is key. The follow up of the school based court is more stringent than in regular court.

The sanctions that can be ordered for truancy cases are community services hours, forfeiture, counseling, revoking a work permit, suspending a driver's license, or prohibiting students from getting a license.

Brown said that state law mandates that students attend school every day. The goal of the district is students attending at 94% or greater, which means that students can't miss more than eleven days per year. A new term in attendance is chronic absenteeism, which is defined as all absences, not just truant absences, and is greater than 10% of the year, or 18 days. Average daily attendance rates hide the reality of chronic absenteeism. Every school has a

student attendance monitoring team that is looking at attendance data for chronic absenteeism and what the district can do about it. Last year, in kindergarten, 20% of students were chronically absent.

Good attendance is 94% attendance. The PowerPoint presentation showed the rates among students for good attendance, at risk attendance, and chronic absenteeism. They use a multi-tiered approach to attendance: the universal, which is something they do for all students; the selected, which is where they come in on habitual truancy conferences and develop attendance improvement plans for students; and the intensive, which is where the courts come in.

They have a rubric they follow. When a student has had three unexcused absences, the school social worker gets an auto truancy alert email, which is forwarded on to the teacher at the elementary level and usually at the middle school level also. At five unexcused absences is when the interventions begin. When they get to the habitual truancy level, they're mandated to have parent conferences. There's a thirty day review period.

The definition of habitual truancy is unexcused absences for five days in a semester for a third or more of the day. Tardiness can add to unexcused absences.

Supervisor Bayrd left the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Present: 6 - Astra Iheukumere; Shiva Bidar-Sielaff; Matthew J. Phair; Jessica Hankey; Dean Loumos and T.J. Mertz

Absent: 2 - Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd and Jenni Dye

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The data was broken down by race/ethnicity on the PowerPoint presentation. Mertz noted that attendance in 2010 seemed to be worse than a couple of years before or after it.

Judge Koval said that habitual truancy may result from the student's problems or from problems at home. School based court usually begins in October because a number of things have to happen prior to students ending up in court.

Loumos asked who attends the court sessions. Judge Koval said that it depends on the student's needs. Usually a social worker will be there. Then the assistant principal will be there, a school nurse if there are health issues and a school psychologist if there are mental health issues. Sometimes teachers attend also. There could be someone from a social service agency. It's all based on the individual student's needs.

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff asked what the top reasons for habitual truancy are. Judge Koval said that in high school, mental health is the top reason, followed by

drug and alcohol use. Sometimes it's the mental health or drug use of the parent or guardian. Brown said that for younger students, family disorganization plays into it, along with poverty, housing, and transportation issues.

Mertz asked what they do with unaccompanied youth. Brown said that the support staff at the schools work jointly to determine a course of action.

Ald. Bidar-Sielaff left the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Present: 5 - Astra Iheukumere; Matthew J. Phair; Jessica Hankey; Dean Loumos and T.J. Mertz

Absent: 3 - Shiva Bidar-Sielaff; Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd and Jenni Dye

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The PowerPoint presentation showed graphs of parent participation and the number of students served, broken down by sex and race/ethnicity. The presentation also showed that grade point levels among the habitually truant have decreased over the last couple of years.

Graphs showed that at West High School, they had 100% parent participation; at LaFollette, they had 95% parent participation; at East, they had 97% parent participation; and at Memorial, they had 89% parent participation.

Loumos left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Present: 4 - Astra Iheukumere; Matthew J. Phair; Jessica Hankey and T.J. Mertz

Absent: 4 - Shiva Bidar-Sielaff; Dean Loumos; Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd and Jenni Dye

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. **31503** Community Based Case Management - Next Steps

The Committee did not get to this item.

5. **31504** Reach Out and Read - Next Steps

The Committee did not get to this item.

ADJOURNMENT

Ald. Phair moved to adjourn at 5:55 p.m. Mertz seconded. The motion passed unanimously minus Supervisor Bayrd, Ald. Bidar-Sielaff, and Loumos.

Anne Kenny, recorder