



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
[www.cityofmadison.com](http://www.cityofmadison.com)

## Meeting Minutes - Draft EDUCATION COMMITTEE

---

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

5:00 PM

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

---

### CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

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

OTHERS: Connie Bettin, Ann Brickson, Ali Brooks, Arturo Diaz, Alexia Freeman, Irene Katana, Naomi Makesa, Tasi-Jo McFarlane, Olivia Smith, Marsha Standiford

Ald. Matt Phair called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

Present: 6 -

Astra Iheukumere; Matthew J. Phair; Steve Hartley; Maya Cole; Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd and Jenni Dye

Absent: 2 -

Shiva Bidar-Sielaff and Arlene Silveira

### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Astra Iheukumere moved and Maya Cole seconded approval of the February 13, 2013 Education Committee minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### 3. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

Ald. Matt Phair introduced several new staff members to the Committee. He said Anne Kenny is here tonight to do minutes but that another person from Community Development would most likely be doing them in the future. Tariq Saqqaf from the Mayor's Office will be a permanent staff member, as will Mary O'Donnell from the Community Development Division. Connie Bettin has been invited to help as needed from the County. Marsha Standiford from MMSD is also here to staff the Committee.

### PRESENTATION

4. [29389](#) Presentation: Memorial High School Leadership Group with Ali Brooks, Southwest Madison Youth Organizer

Attachments: [Student Handout.pdf](#)

Presentation: Memorial High School Leadership Group with Ali Brooks,

**Southwest Madison Youth Organizer**

**Ald. Matt Phair** introduced Ali Brooks and several youth from Youth Empowering Students (YES), including Alexia Freeman, Irene Katana, Naomi Makesa, Tasi-Jo McFarlane, and Olivia Smith. The youth gave a presentation on issues that surround the achievement gap, as well as other issues having to do with minority students. They discussed racial discrepancies that minorities face in school.

**ROLL CALL**

**Ald. Shiva Bidar-Sielaff** arrived at 5:25 p.m.

**Present:** 7 -

Astra Iheukumere; Shiva Bidar-Sielaff; Matthew J. Phair; Steve Hartley; Maya Cole; Carousel Andrea S. Bayrd and Jenni Dye

**Absent:** 1 -

Arlene Silveira

[29389](#)

Presentation: Memorial High School Leadership Group with Ali Brooks, Southwest Madison Youth Organizer

**Attachments:** [Student Handout.pdf](#)

**Alexia Freeman** recited a poem for the Spoken Word portion of the presentation.

The youth gave some observations on their school experience and some suggestions for addressing racial discrepancies, including the following:

- Teachers need to be more engaged with their students and have a better understanding of their students. Teachers should also be more engaged in the classes they're teaching.
- Diversity is lacking in advanced classes because many minority students are intimidated by the teachers and the classes. Encouragement and support is needed for minority students in advanced placement classes. The district should create an academic support team for minority students who wish to take advanced placement courses. Tutors would help them to succeed, but tutors are expensive.
- The education they are getting is Euro-centric. They do not get educated on African, Asian, or other cultures so that they are culturally competent. None of their history classes teach them about other cultures. Ethnic Studies should be a required course, and teachers should be culturally competent to reduce stereotypes.
- It's discouraging to be around teachers who have unconscious biases against minorities and their culture, for example, referring to their music choices as "hoodlum music" or referring to minority students as "monkeys." It's also discouraging to see teachers treating minority students differently from white students with respect to discipline.
- Memorial High School has one minority teacher, one minority counselor, and one minority service provider. The youth said they would like to see more diversity among teachers. They gave statistics on the number of minority teachers in Wisconsin. They would like the minority teacher population to match the minority student population in their school. Statistics show that minority students perform better when they have teachers of color.
- The students went over some statistics about minorities from a handout they

distributed to the Committee. They reviewed the graduation and suspension rates among African American students. Only half of African American students graduate from Memorial High School.

Committee members expressed their appreciation for the teens' presentation. Members encouraged the youth to get in touch with the new Board of Education, the new superintendent, the Student Senate, and the Mayor's Office about their concerns.

## DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM

5.     [28749](#)     Development: List of Short-Term and Long-Term Initiatives to Address the Achievement Gap

Attachments:     [Updated 02\\_13\\_13 Short Long Term Initiatives.pdf](#)

The Committee took this item out of order.

Ald. Matt Phair gave a little background on the trip to Baltimore that he and several community members took recently to learn about building citywide after school systems. The Wallace Foundation put on a conference in Baltimore to teach people all over the country about what a citywide after school system is. Ald. Phair said he thinks this could work for Madison. The idea is to build a system of coordination among all after school providers in Madison.

Mary O'Donnell said that the city should take a look at the after school or out-of-school-time systems for elementary through high school aged youth in the area to see whether their out-of-school needs are being met. For elementary and middle school children, we are usually talking about after school programs or summer camps. For high school youth, we are talking about employment. A system would allow one to look across the city and identify what the needs are per neighborhood and what the barriers to participation are, like transportation.

Tariq Saqqaf said that a few different groups are looking at the possibility of implementing a system, including neighborhood centers like Goodman and Lussier.

Ald. Phair said that most places that are implementing an after school system had a separate entity, called an intermediary, administering the program. The intermediary would operate apart from the schools or the city government, but might contain members from those groups.

Supv. Carousel Bayrd asked where the after school system fits in with the Committee's goals. Ald. Phair said that the Committee should put it on its list of initiatives to be discussed. Mary O'Donnell said that one of the thoughts was that the Education Committee might be the legislative body to discuss the possibility of an after school system, since the Committee has members from the City of Madison, Dane County, and MMSD. She also said there is talk of doing a pilot program in two elementary schools and two middle schools in Madison.

Jenni Dye suggested that discussion should also include communities that are not within the City of Madison boundaries but are still within the scope of

**MMSD.**

Jenni Dye moved to refer this item to the next meeting. Shiva Bidar-Sielaff seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ald. Matt Phair thanked Maya Cole for her service to the Committee. Someone else will be appointed to replace her by either the May or June meeting.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

Astra Iheukumere moved to adjourn at 6:50 p.m. Ald. Shiva Bidar-Sielaff seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 8, 2013 at 5:00 p.m., Room LL-120, Madison Municipal Building**