

MPS- Board of Directors Meeting

January 25, 2024

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Pre- Board Meeting:

- At 4:30 PM on January 25, 2024, Christy Stone will escort the SSAC Officers, **Johnathan Dye, Jeffery Payne, and Manuel Ishag** to the auditorium (Chad Meyer and Paulette Chambers) to familiarize them with the microphones and space for the Board meeting)
- When the officers are done with the above, they will return to rooms 206/208 to have dinner and meet with the SSAC members
- At 5:25 PM – the officers will be escorted (by Christy Stone) to room 103 to prep for the Board meeting.
- 5:30 PM Members of the SSAC will take seats in the auditorium.

At the Board Meeting:

- Dr. Posley will introduce SSAC Advisor David Valdés who will come to the podium in the auditorium to introduce the SSAC Officers.
- Upon being recognized by Dr. Posley, advisor David Valdés will introduce the three SSAC members from the podium

David Valdés - *“Thank You Dr. Posley. President Herndon, members of the Board, my name is David Valdés and I am the proud advisor to the Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council, SSAC. Tonight, students are here to share the mission, accomplishments, and goals of the SSAC. After any questions, they will be returning upstairs to resume our monthly work session. Before I introduce these three incredible MPS ambassadors and SSAC officers I would like to share a little more about this group. One of our goals is to have representation from each high school in the district. In 2019, when I began my journey as advisor of the SSAC, there were 19 members representing 8 different high schools. Last year, 2022-2023, the SSAC had 51 members from 14 different high schools and this year, I am proud to state that the SSAC is represented by 79 students from 21 high schools in the district. Each year participation in the SSAC has grown – creating a diverse group of student leaders who advocate for their school community. Members of the SSAC play an instrumental part in providing student voice and input on topics that impact students and the district as a whole. Tonight we would like to offer a synchronized presentation of our work.*

*At this time, I am very proud to introduce our President, **Johnathan Dye** seated to the left of Dr. Posley, In the middle seat is Vice-President **Jeffery Payne** from Marshall High School, and seated to the left of Jeffery is one of our at-large members, **Manuel Ishag.**”*

Johnathan– President Herndon, members of the Board, my name is Johnathan Dye and I proudly represent the Milwaukee School of Languages, Hawks. I was elected as President of the Superintendent’s Student Advisory Council and I am the founder and organizer of the Student

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Principal Advisory Council (SPAC) at MSOL, and an honorary ambassador for Black Latino Male Achievement.

Jeffery: President Herndon, members of the Board, my name is Jeffery Payne, a proud trans-student representing the Mighty Eagles of Marshall High School. I also serve as a member of LIT and YES in the community.

Manuel: President Herndon, members of the Board, my name is Manuel Ishag – I am an at-large member of the SSAC. I represent the Generals from Rufus King International High School. The SSAC consists of a diverse group of students. Our purpose is to engage with our Superintendent, sharing with him our views and perspectives regarding the everyday happenings at MPS high schools across the district.

Johnathan: It is an honor to be selected as officers and ambassadors representing high schools from across the district. Student voice plays an integral role as it provides us an opportunity to improve the high school experience for all students.

As SSAC Officers, we meet with Mr. Valdés before our monthly meetings to set the agendas and topics for each meeting.

We would like to begin with our **five guiding anchors** of the SSAC

- Engaging in meaningful dialogue by sharing students' views and perspectives with school leaders, administration, and the school board.
- Creating an atmosphere where students are valued for their honest and focused feedback.
- Empowering our youth with the tools, knowledge, and experience needed to be successful leaders.
- Providing students with a sense of trust and belonging by changing the culture of their respective schools.
- Sharing ideas to promote equity among all high schools in the district.

Jeffery: We define our roles as members to include:

- Communicate honestly, openly, and directly with the Superintendent and other administrators
- Encourage student engagement throughout their school
- Quality education for every student
- Welcoming inclusive, non-threatening school culture
- Work collaboratively to help create a student culture of mutual respect
- Provide feedback for improving the high school experience for all students

Manuel: I would like to quote research on Student Voice from the *Quaglia Institute for School Voice and Aspirations, 2016*. Research indicates that students who believe they have a voice in school are **seven times more likely to be academically motivated** than students who do not believe they have a voice.

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According to this 239 school, 14 state study, student voice leads to an increased likelihood that students will experience self-worth, engagement, and purpose in school. The more educators can give their students choice, control, challenge, and opportunities for collaboration, the greater their motivation and engagement will be. This can impact a student's level of effort and persistence, which is one of the most important factors that affect achievement (Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012).

We appreciate the efforts of the district for providing outlets for students to express their perspectives through their voices. We would like to **expand** on those efforts by creating more opportunities that elevate student voice at the district level. Students want to ensure that their direct input is heard by board members, the Superintendent, Central Office Staff, Principals, and other school-based staff.

Students of the SSAC are encouraged to raise their voices in a way that leads to meaningful, respectful leadership while activating a powerful student voice. Providing students an opportunity to be heard and valued takes a courageous cultural shift, but it also provides an opportunity to give the students of Milwaukee Public Schools the tools and knowledge they need to be successful leaders. **Johnathan.**

Johnathan: Last year our **SSAC President, Savion Jarvis**, who is currently attending an HBCU, and plans to venture into politics, said: *"In order for our students to achieve academically, we must ensure that our school culture is inclusive and welcoming (to all) so that everyone feels a sense of belonging. That is how we can develop pride in our schools. We need to work on developing safer schools so that our students WANT to stay after school to participate in sports and clubs; they WANT to meet and work with their friends in the classroom and the hallways. We need to focus on developing a better school culture and climate so that all students feel valued, safe and relevant."*

Inspired by that mindset, the 2023-2024 SSAC will continue to work on improving school climate and school culture.

One of the highlights for the SSAC has been, and continues to be the SSAC luncheons. Dr. Posley meets with students at their schools to have an informal conversation about how they can improve the culture and climate at their school. The SSAC members host the event and select 10-12 of their peers to join them. This small group format provides Dr. Posley an opportunity to learn more about the needs of each school. This process provides students with a great opportunity to organize, manage, and demonstrate leadership skills. At these luncheons, Dr. Posley makes sure that all schools are working with their Student Council representatives so that students have a voice at their school. This then provides clear and direct communication from the student council, to the SSAC, to Dr. Posley and to the MPS School Board.

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Jeffery: *Topics we have discussed include:*

- *A unified communication model for all schools in the district – inspiring a bi-lateral communication process throughout the district*
- *Communication with Student Services regarding SROs and Assembly Bill 69*
- *Working with the Communications Department on a new Project entitled “Milwaukee Direct Admit”*
- *Input on a Unified Calendar for the district regarding IB and AP student schedules.*
- *“Culturally Competent Collective” Initiative initiated by Golda Meir School – creating cultural awareness at schools*
- *Working to find ways for students to offer significant input that is included and considered in the decision-making process that impacts the daily lives of students across the district.*
- *Student Wellness and well-being.*

Jeffery:

- Some of our goals for the 2023-2024 school-year include:
 - ✓ Equity among schools: Where are we successful and how do we promote equity? What needs work?
 - ✓ Engaging with the Student Discipline Committees (SDC)/equity groups, how do we promote ideas from the SDC?
 - ✓ How can we be more effective at communicating with all schools and all high school students in the district?

Johnathan: We’d like to leave you with this analogy based on the research that we presented earlier in our presentation:

“If a coach walks into the first meeting of a team in a new season with a list of his expectations and invokes the team rules, then it’s the coach’s team.”

“But if a coach walks into the first meeting of a team in a new season and asks his team, ‘What values do you want to see from your teammates?’ and ‘What rules should be in place?’, then it’s the athletes’ team.” Excerpt from Get Psyched Sports regarding student voice.

Jonathan:

If a student has their voice heard and valued, they are more likely to be invested in all aspects of their education. Students will become more engaged when they realize that their voice matters.

Jeffery: President Herndon, members of the Board, on behalf of the SSAC, we would like to Thank you!

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EXTRA MATERIAL (newly embedded in the script- 1/23/24)

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