



September 26, 2024

4:30- 6:30 PM

Central Office/206/208

Schools in Attendance:

Audubon High School

Bay View High School

Golda Meir School

Hamilton High School

MacDowell Montessori

Milwaukee School of Languages

Milwaukee High School of the Arts

Reagan College Prep

Riverside University High School

Rufus King International

South Division High School

Vincent High School

Washington High School

Summary

The meeting began with Advisor David Valdés discussing the SSAC Protocol, our solution-based mission, luncheons, and respect when addressing topics. SSAC Notebooks were passed out to all members. At the top of the meeting, Director Christy Stone and Volunteer Associate Tamara Martinsek were introduced.

Mr. Valdés then introduced the co-presidents of the SSAC, Owen Driscoll, Manuel Ishag, and Rufus King, who proceeded with their presentation on all things SSAC.

The interim superintendent of Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) discussed the challenges faced by the district, including financial difficulties, the need for School Resource Officers (SROs) due to a state law, and the importance of student voice in decision-making. The superintendent emphasized the need for transparency and community engagement, particularly from students. The council members shared concerns about vending machines in school buildings, the allocation of funds, and the need for more job programs and career opportunities. They also discussed the potential for a student-led newsletter and the importance of voting in local elections. The superintendent highlighted the necessity of adhering to the state's SRO law and the need for proper training and selection of SROs.

Action items

- Establish a student-led newsletter to share positive stories about MPS schools.
- Reach out to principals to discuss school budgets and how funds are allocated.

- Invite someone from the MPS College and Career department to present on the available programs and opportunities.
- Organize student volunteers to tutor younger MPS students struggling with reading.
- Encourage SSAC members who will be 18 by the next election to register to vote and engage their peers in the democratic process.
- Work with MPS administration to provide input on the new MPS superintendent's selection process and desired qualities.

Outline

Commitment to Milwaukee Public Schools

- Interim Superintendent Galvan shares their background, including being born in Milwaukee to immigrant parents and his involvement with Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) since college.
- Interim Superintendent Galvan emphasizes their commitment to MPS, mentioning family members who work or have worked in the district.
- Interim Superintendent Galvan highlights his desire to hear from students and the community about various issues, including finances, SROs, and long-range facility plans.
- Interim Superintendent Galvan discusses the challenges faced by the financial department and the recent submission of a crucial form to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

Financial Challenges and Transparency

- Interim Superintendent Galvan addresses the financial challenges faced by MPS, including vacancies in the financial department and the inability to prepare reports on time.
- Interim Superintendent Galvan mentions the resignation of the CFO and superintendent due to these issues.
- Emphasis is placed on the importance of transparency and addressing issues before making public complaints.
- Interim Superintendent Galvan discusses the need to stop violence and aggressiveness in schools and seeks student input on addressing these issues.

SROs and Financial Responsibilities

- Interim Superintendent Galvan explains the law requiring SROs in schools and the current financial challenges in funding these positions.
- Mr. Galvan mentions the agreement between the state, police union, and city that led to the law and the lack of shared revenue for MPS.
- Mr. Galvan outlines the process for selecting SROs, including the involvement of MPS personnel, community members, and students.
- Mr. Galvan emphasizes the need for SROs to have specific training to work in schools and the importance of student input in the selection process.

Student Voice and Advocacy

- Mr. Valdés encourages students to use their voice to make a difference and advocate for positive school changes.
- Mr. Valdés Valdés highlights the importance of networking among students from different schools to share solutions and ideas.
- Emphasis is placed on the need for a solution-based approach to address school issues rather than just complaining.

- Advisor Valdés discusses the role of the SSAC in advocating for students and the importance of positive media representation of MPS schools.

Officer Roles and Responsibilities

- Advisor Valdés introduces the new officers, Manuel and Owen, and outlines their roles in planning meetings and organizing events.
- The vice president helps plan monthly meetings and other events, while the secretary runs the newsletter.
- Officers emphasize the importance of making tangible success and ensuring that the changes made by the SSAC are visible.
- The officers discuss the need for a newsletter to share positive stories and student voices with the broader community.

Current Issues and Student Concerns

- Students express concerns about the lack of soda in vending machines and the allocation of funds for TVs in the lunchroom.
- Mr. Valdés suggests developing a relationship with principals through the Student-Principal Advisory Council (SPAC) to address budget decisions.
- Students discuss needing more job programs and career opportunities in MPS schools.
- Mr. Valdés encourages students to talk to their principals about budget decisions and to advocate for programs that benefit students.

Tutoring Programs and Curriculum Improvements

- Students propose starting a tutoring program for younger students to help them catch up in reading and other subjects.
- Officers support the idea and suggest making it an agenda item for the next meeting.
- Students discuss the need for more career opportunities and better curriculum in MPS schools.
- Officers explain the tracking challenges and the importance of setting a foundation for students to expand their knowledge.

Voting and Civic Engagement

- The officers emphasize the importance of voting and encourage students to register and vote in local and national elections.
- Students discuss the low voter turnout in Milwaukee and the need for more engagement in local elections.
- The officers highlight the impact of local elections on decisions that affect students and schools.
- Students are encouraged to use their voices to advocate for changes and to engage with local officials to make a difference.

SROs and Community Safety

- The officers explain the law requiring SROs in schools and the challenges of funding these positions.
- Students express concerns about the presence of armed officers in schools and the potential for inappropriate relationships.
- The speaker emphasizes the need for SROs to be trained in working with teenagers and to have a positive impact in schools.

- Students are encouraged to use their voices to advocate for the training and selection of SROs to benefit the community.

Next Steps and Agenda Items

- The officers discuss the next steps and agenda items for the next meeting, including the tutoring program and career opportunities.
- Students are encouraged to continue advocating for positive changes in their schools and to engage with local officials.
- The speaker emphasizes the importance of networking and collaboration among students from different schools.
- The meeting concludes with a call to action for students to continue their advocacy and to make a difference in their schools and community.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM

The next SSAC Meeting is scheduled for October 31, 2024

David Valdés – Sept. 30, 2024