



Milwaukee Public Schools

December 4, 2009

Board to weigh futures of five MPS schools ***Closures, termination of charter contracts recommended***

The Milwaukee Board of School Directors' Committee on Innovation/School Reform will weigh on Tuesday, December 8, 2009 the proposed closure of five schools. The schools include two traditional MPS schools, LaFollette and Fletcher, and three schools that have charter contracts with the district. The three MPS charter school contracts proposed for termination are with Northern Star, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Foster and Williams.

The reasons for the proposed closures vary. In the case of Robert M. LaFollette K-8 School, 3239 N. 9th Street, the reason is low enrollment. Enrollment is 216 students, down from 509 ten years ago. School budget allocations are based on the number of students and the projected budget allocations for 2011 may not provide the school with the resources needed for adequate programming.



Superintendent William Andrekopoulos and his administrative team also are recommending the closure of Dr. Arthur Fletcher Elementary School, 9520 W. Allyn Street, because of low enrollment. Fletcher, formerly known as Granville School, merged with Happy Hill School in 2006. At the time of the merger there were 350 students, but in just three years enrollment has fallen to 223 students. If Fletcher and LaFollette stay in operation, they may need to operate with part-time principals, no specialists and combined-grade classes. "That's not acceptable," said Superintendent Andrekopoulos. "We must move our students to programs where there are enough resources to gain successful classroom outcomes."



The MPS Administration also is recommending that the charter contract with W.E.B. Du Bois High School be terminated. The school is located in the Marshall Complex at 4141 N. 61st Street. The recommendation was made because Du Bois failed to fully implement its educational program and students failed to make adequate progress in math and reading.

The school leaders at two other charter schools have requested termination of their contracts. Northern Star is a program serving 40 students in grades 6 through 9 that shares space with Custer High School at 5075 N. Sherman Boulevard. Foster and Williams High School of the Visual Arts and Communications has also requested a termination of its contract with the district. Foster and Williams, which shares space with Burroughs Middle School, 6700 N. 80th Street, currently has 140 students.

The closures of Fletcher, LaFollette and Du Bois, if approved as proposed, would be effective June 2010. Foster and Williams has requested termination of its contract at the end of the current semester. If the Board approves, Foster and Williams will close in January 2010. The administration has recommended that the contract with Northern Star be terminated in January, but that the school remain open to students and operate as a traditional MPS school until June 2010, at which time it would close. In all cases, if the closures are approved by the Board, district personnel will work with families to find appropriate placements for the students involved. The administration proposes exploring potential uses for the LaFollette facility, to be presented to the Board at a future date.

The Innovation/School Reform Committee will meet at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 8, 2009, at MPS Central Services. The meeting is open to the public and public input is welcome.

MPS is the largest public school district in the State of Wisconsin, with 198 schools serving more than 82,000 students. Achievement and improvement are guided by the MPS strategic plan *Working Together, Achieving More*. For more information call MPS Communication Director Roseann St. Aubin, (414) 475-8237.



Office of Communications and Public Affairs

5225 W. Vliet St., P.O. Box 2181 ■ Milwaukee, WI 53201-2181

Phone: (414) 475-8237 ■ FAX: (414) 475-8430 ■ E-mail: 537@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us