



## MILWAUKEE EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (MEP) MONTHLY REPORT

**October 2014**

- Meetings and conversations were held between the Milwaukee Education Partnership (MEP) Executive Director, Gerard Randall, and various individuals within and outside of the partnership, including regular meetings with Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) staff, regarding grants, partnerships, parent involvement, professional development, various initiatives, updates and more.
- Mr. Randall and the Executive Partners from MPS, UWM and MATC met on October 21<sup>st</sup> to continue discussion of common institutional issues including possible pursuit of a grant, engaging institutional leadership and staff in MEP activities, a common legislative agenda, and the UW Urban Teacher Initiative.
- Mr. Randall spoke with Linda Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary & Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development, Health & Human Services – Administration for Children & Families, to receive an update on Head Start and additional direction on the types of outcomes she would like to see result from the meetings of the Milwaukee area Head Start operators.
- The MEP convened the second of three planned meetings of the Milwaukee area Head Start operators on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was held on the October Head Start Dental Day event and other collaboration opportunities; a spring site visit by Linda Smith and Head Start staff from Health & Human Services – Administration for Children & Families; site allocations and allotments; literacy instruction/early literacy and language development programs; transitioning out of Head Start. An update from Linda Smith was also shared.
- The Project METRO Steering Committee met on October 20<sup>th</sup>. The committee received updates on the status of the program participants, particularly Cohort #2.
- Mr. Randall hosted an event to introduce new MPS Superintendent, Dr. Darienne Driver, to Julie Underwood, UW-Madison Dean of the School of Education; Gloria Ladson-Billings, UW-Madison Kellner Family Chair in Urban Education; Marion Brown, VP – UW Foundation; and Mary Kellner, President of the Kelben Foundation. Informal discussion was held around teacher professional development, particularly early childhood teacher professional development.
- The October GE Foundation 2014 Business & Education Summit follow-up monthly business conference call took place on the 16<sup>th</sup>. It was led by Joseph Fuller from the Harvard Business School. The topic was U.S. Competitiveness: Building America's Middle Skills. Discussion covered the jobs market in the U.S., its paradoxes of unavailable skilled workers,

coupled with high levels of unemployed, underemployed, or withdrawn workers. Specifically, the connection between the skills gap and U.S. competitiveness and how businesses can align with education institutions to address and close this gap. Argument was presented that by adopting a broad-based focus on U.S. competitiveness, employers, educators and policymakers can address the skills gap and eroding standards of living. Related materials were received.

- Planning took place for the first meeting of the MEP's NSF Grant Planning Task Force.
- Work has continued on development of the HBCU Initiative.
- Planning and preparations were finalized and the MEP Planning Retreat was held on October 29<sup>th</sup>. Executive Partners were surveyed and interviewed prior to the retreat concerning their future involvement and that of their institutions in the MEP, specific interests, connections, and priorities that could be addressed by the MEP. During the first morning session of the retreat, Executive Partners reviewed their contributions and visions and discussed shared goals, unique needs and interests, contributions their institutions could make toward the goals of public education, and the most pressing needs facing PK-16 education. This was followed by a review of their surveys and interviews and then a working session on evaluating results of initiatives and ranking them, setting priorities and identifying resource needs and sources. Approximately 25 individuals from MEP Partner educational institutions and community organizations joined the Executive Partners in an afternoon session to provide feedback and ideas concerning the work presented from the morning. The Executive Partners concluded the day with final reflections. The work from the day is being compiled and a report will be prepared.
- The MEP has continued to work on and seek funding support for the Literacy Initiative.
- The MEP co-sponsored a group of students to attend the Honors Student Reception in Chicago, Illinois. This is an invitation only annual event for the top African-American students in the Midwest, where they are able to meet with collegiate recruiters from the top schools in the U.S.
- Work continued on the new MEP website.
- Mr. Randall participated in a panel discussion regarding the treatment of women in Africa, international health diplomacy, and human trafficking in Milwaukee.