

---

Common Council President

---

15th District Alderman



**Willie L. Hines, Jr.**  
*City of Milwaukee Common Council*

---

**For Immediate Release:**  
January 4, 2011

**Contact: Alex Runner**  
414-286-3771

## **President Hines and Senator Darling: Joint Announcement on Plans to Attract High-Performing Schools to Empty MPS Buildings, TOMORROW**

City of Milwaukee Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. and Wisconsin State Senator Alberta Darling will hold a press conference TOMORROW in front of the still-empty 38<sup>th</sup> Street School, in order to present solutions to the ongoing problem of vacant school buildings in Milwaukee.

“For several years, the City of Milwaukee has experienced an ironic disconnect between the overabundance of empty school facilities and the lack of outstanding educational options for students and families,” said President Hines. “These facilities must be available for high-performing schools, and the City of Milwaukee is in a position to ensure they are put to use in the best manner possible.”

The current system allows the MPS Board of Directors to prevent any sale of a facility to an “educational competitor,” even though the land on which the school sits is technically owned by the City of Milwaukee. In November, the Common Council adopted, as part of its state-lobbying “legislative package,” the official position that these policies must be changed in order to improve education in Milwaukee.

“We must focus on educating children and not on whose name is on the front of the building,” said Senator Darling, who is proposing significant legislation at the state level to address the problem. “All of us owe it to the taxpayers to ensure that these schools are used to provide quality education for children.”

The significance of 38<sup>th</sup> Street School is that for several years, Milwaukee College Preparatory School attempted to purchase the site for an expansion of its high-achieving, nationally renowned program. Unfortunately, current policies prevented that transaction. However, when the City of Milwaukee closed one of its own charter schools, it was able to get MCP into a city-owned building in less than two months. This was despite the fact that MCP is chartered by UW-Milwaukee, not the city.

-More-

***TOMORROW, Alderman Hines and Senator Darling will hold a press conference proposing much-needed reforms that will allow the City of Milwaukee to have authority to sell or lease vacant MPS buildings to high-quality schools with a proven track record of excellence.***

**WHO: Wisconsin State Senator Alberta Darling and Alderman Willie Hines**

**WHAT: Press Conference to Address Empty MPS Buildings**

**WHERE: 38<sup>th</sup> Street School, 2623 N. 38<sup>th</sup> St.**

**WHEN: TOMORROW, January 5, 9 a.m.**