

Mon., September 14, 2009

Mr. William Andrekopoulos, Superintendent  
Milwaukee Public Schools  
5225 West Vliet Street  
P.O. Box 2181  
Milwaukee, WI 53201

Re: **Borrowing for School Purposes**

Dear Superintendent Andrekopoulos:

The City of Milwaukee's Office of the Comptroller has introduced a Common Council file authorizing the sale and issuance of general obligation bonds in the aggregate amount of up to \$53,070,000 for school purposes. This school debt is intended to be issued as Qualified School Construction Bonds pursuant to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

As chairperson of the Common Council's Finance & Personnel Committee, I will not schedule this file for committee action absent a detailed breakout from you of the specific proposed uses of this funding. In these challenging budget times, it would be an abdication of my fiduciary duties to recommend passage and authorization of this massive bonding request without an appropriate level of detail from your office.

According to the City of Milwaukee's Budget & Management Director, Mark Nicolini, you have proposed using approximately \$30.1 million of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Qualified School Construction Bonds for Deferred Maintenance Projects, which includes approximately \$3.9 million for various parking lot asphalt projects and \$3.7 million for playground asphalt projects. I question whether asphalt is the highest use of that total of \$7.6 million, as the City of Milwaukee has promoted the "greening" of MPS playgrounds for student health and safety, and to help reduce stormwater run-off.

For example, the Audubon School property located at 3300 South 39<sup>th</sup> Street, MPS has proposed allocating \$1.2 million for asphalt; \$411,470 for the parking lot and \$791,775 for the playground. This school property is virtually an unsightly sea of asphalt in an otherwise well-maintained neighborhood. Repaving the entire surface area with asphalt is neither aesthetically nor environmentally prudent.

I would appreciate your prompt response to my inquiry.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ald. Michael J. Murphy, Chair  
Finance & Personnel Committee

mjm.MPS ARRA Bonds