

Education forum: Engage parents, community

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The Minnesota Alliance of Black School Educators (MABSE) recently held its first in a series of public hearings at the Minneapolis Urban League.

Minneapolis School Superintendent Bernadeia Johnson and Commissioner Brenda Cassellius presented updates on how students were progressing academically. The event drew over 50 participants, mostly from North Minneapolis who shared their ideas and comments.

MABSE's president, Francine Chakolis, moderated the public hearing. Chakolis said the purpose of the hearing was to help the Minnesota Department of Education and Superintendent Johnson explain the achievement gap between students of color and their white counterparts. Chakolis asked the audience what are the most urgent issues facing Minnesota public schools in educating African-American children and sought suggestions for addressing the challenging issues. She also asked for suggestions to help us close the achievement gap for African-American children.

One suggestion was to involve North Minneapolis parents and community members in helping other parents and teachers educate children. Another suggestion was a need for more staff and teacher professional development on culture, as the area is home to students of many varying cultures and native languages.

The next Public Hearing in this series will be held Monday, Sept. 10 in Brooklyn Park at Shiloh Temple, 8209 Zane Avenue North. The forum will be held from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. This hearing is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.