

# HALL MONITOR – Fare Thee Well Hall Monitor



Thank you, Bay View, for 11 years of readership and conversation. I appreciate all your emails, letters, and in person words when you've run into me at Anodyne or Outpost. It was always a thrill to meet a reader and know that my words were never merely shouted into a void.

However, all things must pass, and that is true as well for this column.

Obviously, "the work" isn't done, however I might define "the work."

There's the work I do on a daily basis in my classroom. Retirement for me is barely a glimmer on the horizon, but in a larger sense, all teachers in the Milwaukee Public Schools still need the time, resources, and training to do better what they already know how to do.

There's the work of pushing MPS to improve. I never promised I had a sliver bullet or magic beans; indeed, I spent many column inches establishing that educating poor, urban students is hard, and anyone peddling a simple solution is a liar.

Still, I used this space repeatedly to nudge MPS leadership away from policies I saw as dangerous and toward solutions I saw as improvements on the status quo.

This occasionally even worked. For example, Bay View High School, where I teach, just graduated its first class of students completing the brand-new program of studies in arts, engineering, and technology that grew out of a reform I

advocated in these pages some five years back.

And there's the work of trying to influence opinion and public policy. Goodness knows the policy around public education in this state is still disastrous—even more so than it was when I started at the *Compass*. I have many feelings about the governor's most recent comments concerning MPS, enough to fill many, many column inches.

But writing a monthly column just isn't rewarding for me anymore. I have been opining about education in this city and state for 15 years in one medium or another, online and in print—and occasionally on television and radio.

There's only so long such a thing is sustainable. This is especially so when the work isn't done yet, and I feel I need to direct more of my attention and energy to the classroom.

The classroom is, after all, the place with the most important work yet to be done.

*Compass* publisher Katherine Keller has been a great ally and friend, and I hope to grace these pages occasionally in the future. The other writers and columnists I've met through the years have been delightful and I look forward to what more these pages hold in store.

But for now, fare thee well, readers. The Hall Monitor is hanging up his sash.

*Jay Bullock still teaches English at Bay View High School, still tweets as @folkbum, and still gets your email if you send it to*

[MPSHallMonitor@gmail.com](mailto:MPSHallMonitor@gmail.com).