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## 2012 EDUCATION REPORT CARD 20TH EDITION

Submitted by the Chamber Education Report Card Committee  
Co-Chairs Ron Corbin and Todd Vandawater  
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools  
2011-2012 School Year

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For 20 years, the Chamber's Education Report Card Committee has examined the progress of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' (MNPS) most recently completed school year. Along with overall school system performance, the committee conducts an in-depth analysis of a topic essential to the long-term success of the school system. This year, our focus area was charter schools – an issue that has garnered much public interest in recent months.

The committee's already challenging task of reviewing Metro Schools' annual performance is often complicated by changes in the way annual achievement data are reported by the state. This occurred when the state drastically increased its academic standards beginning in the 2009-2010 year, and when it began requiring that every student take the ACT. Last year, the state altered the way it reports graduation rates, creating further inconsistencies of data and difficulty measuring real progress from year to year.

The 2011-2012 school year followed a similar pattern of change, due to Tennessee's new accountability framework that resulted from the state's No Child Left Behind waiver. The new accountability system sets annual goals for every district and school to increase proficiency for all students and to close the achievement gap by ensuring faster growth for students who are furthest behind.

MNPS made gains from the previous year across multiple measures. In a district serving nearly a third of the state's English Language Learners, with a student population that's 72 percent economically disadvantaged, we are pleased to see that all subgroups improved in grades 3-8 math and reading, and most subgroups improved in grades 9-12 English II and Algebra I. Having met seven out of nine Annual Measurable Objectives, MNPS was placed in "Intermediate" status under the new accountability system, as were many of our neighboring counties, including Williamson County.

However, the pace of improvement remains a serious concern. The Report Card Committee acknowledged in its 2009 report that complete turnaround would take three to five years of annual measurable progress. Three years later, we remain **anxious for dramatic gains** in student achievement.

***"We remain anxious for dramatic gains in student achievement."***

Improving our public education system is paramount in order for Nashville to be a city of choice for residents, businesses and families. To meet this challenge, our school leaders must be relentless in their drive for academic improvement, identifying key predictive measurements of performance and actively translating those into definitive action plans. These measurements should be continually examined, evaluated and discussed so they remain at the forefront for every school board member, administrator, principal, teacher, student, parent and community member.

MNPS Director of Schools Dr. Jesse Register has demonstrated leadership by instituting a number of reform initiatives that fall under the umbrella of MNPS Achieves. Now, it's time to measure results and scale up initiatives that are contributing to real academic progress, while eliminating those that are not. Additionally, the district's Innovation Zone, created to turn around its lowest-performing schools, could have a significant impact if expanded to a larger percentage of schools. By implementing proven strategies for improvement in every school and every classroom, MNPS can move toward its goal of becoming the "first choice for families."

Fortunately, Metro Schools does not have to go it alone. In Nashville, our elected leaders have shown that education improvement is paramount. This couldn't have been more apparent than during Metro's 2012 budget process. Nashville Mayor Karl Dean proposed - and the Metropolitan Council passed - a budget and tax increase that added more than \$40 million to MNPS' operating budget, including a significant increase in starting teacher pay. We encourage Mayor Dean and the Metro Council to continue their support of MNPS as they gain momentum and work toward dramatic improvement.



While the city has made its support of Metro Schools clear, public perception has remained stagnant for the past four years, despite incremental progress in student achievement. Clearly, significant gains are needed to affect public opinion on the progress and quality of our schools. MNPS achievement levels remain below the state average, as well as the average of most of our regional and large urban system peers in the state. We cannot be satisfied with small steps forward; we must aim for dramatic growth.

This year, the committee chose charter schools as our focus topic with the thought that there is no better, or more urgent, time for the district to clarify how it will integrate charter schools into its overall strategy to advance the growth of the school system as a whole. Charter schools – which are public schools governed and operated independently of the local school system in order to provide maximum flexibility for achieving high performance goals – are gaining steam on the national, state and local levels. We understand that charter schools are just one tool that educators can use to improve student achievement, and we also firmly believe they must be held accountable for their performance.

MNPS exhibited an early commitment to collaboration with charter schools through a district-charter compact outlining ways the district and the city's charter schools would work together. MNPS is also taking deliberate steps to become a high-quality authorizer through its work with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. Now that state law allows open enrollment in charter schools, there is an increased urgency to develop an informed, strategic plan for the future of public education that includes a strategy for charter schools. The district has a great opportunity to identify choice gaps and proactively recruit charter operators to fill those gaps. Possibilities also exist for increased efficiencies and cost savings through shared services.

With 14 charter schools currently open in Nashville – one set to close at the end of the 2012-2013 school year, and six more to be added in the fall of 2013 – we are beginning to have a better understanding of the opportunities these schools bring, as well as the challenges that should be overcome. Notably, charter schools should increase the overall quality of Metro Schools, rather than burdening the system. In that vein, those that consistently underperform should not be allowed to continue operating. The school board's role in authorizing quality charter schools is a critical element in ensuring the entire school system is on a path to improved quality, higher academic performance, and better options for students and their families.

To their great credit, each year the school board and administration carefully consider the Report Card's findings and recommendations. The school district's and State of Tennessee's responses to last year's Report Card recommendations can be found in Appendix E. In looking back at the 2011-2012 school year, the committee hopes MNPS and the broader community will give each of these recommendations careful thought and consideration.

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- 1** The school board should develop a dashboard to review progress on key performance measurements at their regularly scheduled meetings. (PAGE 15)
- 2** MNPS should create and implement a comprehensive strategy for integrating charter schools into the district, as a step toward creating an overall strategic plan that clearly connects all reform efforts. (PAGE 25)
- 3** MNPS should develop a system to offer shared services for charter schools as a way to increase efficiencies and cost savings. (PAGE 26)
- 4** MNPS should broaden the Innovation Zone to the bottom 25 percent of district schools. (PAGE 13)
- 5** The Tennessee General Assembly should amend state law to implement a default closure mandate for charter schools that are placed on the state's priority schools list for not meeting performance standards. (PAGE 27)

*Over the course of the past 20 years, nearly 160 individuals have served on the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce's Education Report Card Committee. These diverse and committed individuals have dedicated countless hours each year toward the development of an in-depth report that offers a community perspective on the progress of Metro Schools. Six committee members have gone on to serve as members of the school board; two as Metro Council members; and two in the state legislature.*

*The 2012 Education Report Card Committee began its work in August 2012 and conducted interviews with state, city and school system leaders, community stakeholders, principals, teachers and students. The committee also collected data and visited schools before developing findings and recommendations. This report represents our consensus view of the 2011-2012 school year in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS).*

## MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

In our 2009 report, this committee acknowledged that it would take three to five years of measurable gains to turn around Metro Schools. For the past three and a half years under Director of Schools Dr. Jesse Register, the district has made progress toward this goal, and specific reform initiatives are showing signs of success. For the second consecutive year, we saw gains across multiple measures of academic achievement. Still, the fact remains that fewer than half of MNPS' third-through eighth-graders met the state's proficiency benchmarks in reading or math. The committee is anxious to see dramatic gains in the years ahead, and we believe this can be accomplished by concentrating on the strategies that are producing results while maintaining a relentless focus on the key predictive measurements that drive success.

While the 2011-2012 achievement numbers are far too low, the district is moving in the right direction: third- through eighth-graders showed fairly significant math gains, with 39 percent scoring proficient or advanced, up 6.5 percent from the previous year; but more modest reading gains, with 41 percent meeting proficiency benchmarks, representing growth of 2.9 percent. For ninth- through 12th-grade end-of-course exams, the district saw growth of 2.1 percent in English II, up to 48.7 percent proficient or advanced, and 4.2 percent growth in Algebra I, up to 41.8 percent proficient or advanced.

In February 2012, the U.S. Department of Education granted Tennessee, along with 10 other states, a waiver that provides flexibility under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law. As a result, Tennessee developed a new accountability system to replace the old system under NCLB. Tennessee's new accountability system measures growth for all students, and sets

goals for closing achievement gaps by ensuring faster growth for students who are furthest behind. MNPS was granted "Intermediate" status for meeting the majority – seven out of nine – of its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs), having fallen short on its third-grade reading and graduation rate targets. Compare this to MNPS' status under NCLB, where the district remained in some form of "Restructuring" for the past four years. While this year's status is generally considered more favorable than previous years, these two accountability systems are based on different criteria, making a comparison of progress difficult. To put it in perspective, MNPS was among 42 percent of Tennessee school districts receiving the "Intermediate" designation, as was Williamson County Schools, one of the top-performing districts in the state. Another 42 percent of school districts were "In Need of Improvement," while only 16 percent received "Exemplary" status.

Because Tennessee is one of only a handful of states in which nearly every student takes the ACT, we feel this test is the closest thing we have to an exit exam with real stakes for students and families. A composite score of 21 or above qualifies students for the lottery-funded HOPE scholarship. The percentage of students scoring a 21 or above has increased by one point per year for the past three years, from 27 percent in 2010, to 28 percent in 2011, to 29 percent in 2012. This real, if incremental, progress is important. ACT is a difficult measure to impact, since it assesses skills learned over a number of years. However, at the current rate of improvement, it will be well over a decade before even the majority of our graduates attain at least a 21 on the ACT, making it imperative that MNPS accelerates the pace of improvement. Last year, one of the committee's recommendations was to make growth on ACT performance a factor in determining whether high schools and systems meet the state's accountability targets. We remain hopeful that the state will consider including this measure when they revise their accountability framework in the next few years.

### **ANXIOUS FOR DRAMATIC GAINS**

From a competitiveness standpoint, the ground we have to cover is particularly apparent when MNPS is viewed alongside other Tennessee school districts. Metro Schools' 41 percent of third-through eighth-graders meeting proficiency benchmarks in reading compares with 50 percent statewide, and the district's 39 percent meeting proficiency benchmarks in math compares with 47 percent statewide. When measured against school districts in the 10-county Middle Tennessee region, MNPS is the lowest-performing school district in reading and outperforms only Maury County (by 0.1 percent) in math. In comparison with the other three urban school systems in Tennessee (Hamilton County, Knox County and Memphis), MNPS outperforms only Memphis.

School quality impacts a community's overall prosperity and is a top factor when individuals and businesses decide to relocate to or stay in Nashville. For this reason, the committee feels an increased sense of urgency to accelerate Metro Schools' performance gains over the next two years. With strong district leadership and a new school board in place following the August 2012 election, the potential for dramatic gains is real, but it will require a relentless focus on improving key achievement measures. At least one new MNPS school board member, Will Pinkston, agrees that it's time to "hit the gas pedal." During a recent school board meeting, he said that the board has an obligation to instill a greater sense of urgency in the school improvement work that's underway. He has also pointed to rough calculations that show the horizon for reaching career- or college-readiness for all students — defined as "proficient" or "advanced" on the state's standardized tests — could be as far out as the year 2030 based on the district's current rate of improvement. That's why it's critical to focus on strategies that have the greatest chance to improve the entire system.



*Dr. Jesse Register addresses a group at the Hillwood High School Academies of Nashville VIP Tour in September 2012.*

## Performance Among Middle Tennessee and TN Urban School Systems (2011-2012)

System		Grades 3-8 Reading/Language Prof. + Adv. (%)	Growth Over Previous Year (%)	Grades 3-8 Math Prof. + Adv. (%)	Growth Over Previous Year (%)
Middle Tennessee 10-County Region	Davidson County**	40.6%	2.9%	39.3%	6.5%
	Cheatham County*	49.0%	-2.7%	48.4%	2.4%
	Dickson County**	58.4%	2.1%	54.9%	0.4%
	Maury County**	49.0%	3.0%	39.2%	7.6%
	Montgomery County**	55.0%	3.6%	49.6%	8.4%
	Robertson County**	51.2%	2.3%	50.9%	12.1%
	Rutherford County***	61.3%	1.7%	58.1%	7.7%
	Murfreesboro*	59.7%	6.1%	59.2%	6.0%
	Sumner County**	57.7%	1.8%	52.8%	9.7%
	Williamson County**	82.4%	5.3%	74.6%	8.9%
	Franklin SSD***	70.2%	3.0%	68.8%	8.2%
	Wilson County*	62.4%	3.3%	57.7%	14.5%
	Lebanon*	50.8%	0.4%	42.3%	0.3%
TN Urban Systems					
	Hamilton County**	45.7%	1.1%	49.6%	4.7%
	Knox County**	57.0%	1.9%	52.1%	4.5%
	Memphis*	29.2%	3.2%	27.6%	4.2%
	Tennessee	49.9%	2.4%	47.2%	6.2%

### NEW ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM MORE REALISTIC, BUT LESS TRANSPARENT

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 brought a focus on data, accountability and success for all students. Yet most education observers agree that the goal of reaching 100 percent student proficiency in reading and math by 2014 was unrealistic. Tennessee, along with 33 other states and the District of Columbia, now has a waiver releasing schools and districts from the NCLB accountability requirements and replacing them with new accountability measures.

While the NCLB waiver has given Tennessee the flexibility to customize its accountability system, it has also resulted in a system that is much more difficult for the average parent and taxpayer

\* In Need of Improvement/Subgroup Improvement  
 \*\* Intermediate  
 \*\*\* Exemplary

to understand. Previously, targets under NCLB were the same for every district across the state; under the new accountability system, the state sets its own targets for statewide achievement, and district goals have to meet or exceed state goals. Districts then develop goals for individual schools, which have to meet or exceed district goals. The state approves district- and school-level goals and submits them to the U.S. Department of Education. The result is that each district, school and, in some cases, subgroup of students may have a different accountability target.

## HOW TENNESSEE STUDENTS ARE MEASURED

The state's new accountability system under the NCLB waiver includes two overriding goals: growth for all students every year (achievement measures), and closing achievement gaps by ensuring faster growth for students who are furthest behind (gap closure measures). Based on their results, districts are designated as "Exemplary," "Intermediate," or "In Need of Improvement."

Goals for K-8 schools include: proficiency increases in third- and seventh-grade math and reading, and proficiency increases and gap reduction in third- through eighth-grade math and reading. Goals for high schools include: graduation rate increases, and proficiency increases and gap reduction in Algebra I and English II. Algebra II and English III will be added in future years.

Schools can be granted "safe harbor" – meaning they are counted as having achieved their Annual Measurable Objective target – based on value-added scores or by reducing the percentage of students not proficient by 10 percent in one year, 19 percent over two years, or 27 percent over three years.

In contrast to the way schools were deemed successful under NCLB, the state now measures schools' relative accountability every one to three years by ranking them against each other. The top 5 percent of schools showing the highest achievement and the top 5 percent of schools showing the greatest student progress will be recognized as "reward schools" every year. Every three years, schools with success rates in the bottom 5 percent will be identified as "priority schools" and will be subject to rigorous turnaround strategies. Finally, 10 percent of Tennessee schools will be identified as "focus schools," based on the following criteria: high schools with graduation rates below 60 percent; schools with less than 5 percent proficient or advanced for any subgroup; or schools with large achievement gaps. Focus schools must implement research-based strategies that support students and subgroups with the greatest needs.

Although the state has set fairly ambitious goals for raising achievement and closing gaps, a district or school is simply required to reach the majority of targets in each category, and subgroups just have to progress in the majority of subjects, to avoid being labeled "In Need of Improvement." The state will only intervene at the district level, with the exception of priority, focus and reward schools.

While this system allows for greater customization of accountability targets to align with each district's and school's needs, it also weakens accountability at the school level, with the exception of schools identified as priority, focus or reward schools. For all other schools, their individual performance data are available for public viewing online, but there is no defined consequence or intervention for not meeting accountability targets. What's more, allowing a three-year window to pass before additional schools are listed as priority or focus schools has the potential consequence

of allowing schools that are underperforming, but were not on the initial lists, to avoid timely intervention.

To further complicate year-to-year comparison, the state's accountability system will change again in 2014-2015, when the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers (PARCC) assessments will replace the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) test in reading/language arts and math. This new assessment is being designed to specifically measure mastery of the new Common Core State Standards, which are being phased into Tennessee schools several grades at a time. Tennessee will continue to use the TCAP for other subject areas.

## CITY COMMITMENT STRONG, MUST CONTINUE

Improving public education has long been a priority for our city - from our elected leaders, to the business and nonprofit communities, to our citizens. For the past five years, the Chamber has commissioned a public opinion poll on education, conducted at the end of the most recently completed school year. Every year, education has been named as the top issue facing the city, above both the economy and crime. In addition, 85 percent of respondents said improving public education is "very important" to them personally. Knowing that our schools will not succeed without the support of the entire community, the public's awareness and interest in improving public education is encouraging.

The city's commitment to public education was made clear during the 2012 Metro budget process in which the council passed, following Nashville Mayor Karl Dean's proposal, a budget and tax increase that added more than \$40 million to MNPS' operating budget, including an increase in starting teacher pay that moved MNPS from 30th to third among school districts in the state by this measure. Friends of Metro Schools, a grassroots coalition led by Stand for Children, worked tirelessly during this process to help build public support for Metro Schools' 7 percent budget increase.

In addition to our city's financial support of Metro Schools, hundreds of nonprofit organizations are partnering with MNPS every day to bring added resources, support services and expertise to Metro Schools' students and educators. Alignment Nashville serves as a convener for many of these nonprofits, bringing community resources together to sustain efforts such as Parent University and Art2STEM, developing a community schools model as part of MNPS' Community Achieves strategy, and providing coordination for initiatives such as America's Promise and the Ford Next Generation Learning Hub.

Other community partners are making a difference as well: the Nashville Technology Council is working with MNPS to develop a comprehensive learning technology plan for the district, and the Nashville Public Education Foundation and Music City Music Council are continuing their partnership with the Mayor's Office to invest in the district's Music Makes Us program, with a goal of making MNPS the worldwide leader in music education. In addition, more than 5,300 people have joined [onenashville.org](http://onenashville.org) to support Metro Schools, and the campaign has



Nashville Mayor Karl Dean at the 2012 Academies of Nashville Awards.  
(Photo credit: Gary Layda)

welcomed nearly 70 Endorsing Partners. Business engagement continues to grow as well, with nearly 200 business partners signing up through PENCIL Foundation to participate in the Academies of Nashville high school redesign of our 12 zoned high schools.

While Nashville's business and nonprofit communities have worked to build a strong foundation for our city's public schools, it is imperative that the city and school system not become complacent about the importance of community support around public school improvement. That's why we encourage the mayor and Metro Council to continue their support of Metro Schools, while also expecting MNPS to increase the pace toward dramatic gains. One concerning result from the public opinion poll is an ongoing lack of optimism regarding the performance and direction of public schools, despite incremental progress in student achievement over the past few years. Only 14 percent think K-12 public education is better now than it was a year ago; 13 percent think it is worse; and 58 percent said it's about the same. In addition, the overall rating of the school system's performance is slightly below average at 2.85 on a scale of 1-5, virtually unchanged since 2009.



## ADJUSTING TO STATE REFORMS

Prompted by a challenge made by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in August 2011, Tennessee set a goal of becoming the fastest-improving state in the country by 2015. In addition, the state legislature has made significant changes to Tennessee's education policies over the past few years, keeping our state at the forefront nationally in education policy and reform. The state moved from the landmark First to the Top legislation passed in January 2009, to receipt of \$500 million in federal Race to the Top funds and the raising of its academic standards under the Tennessee Diploma Project in 2010. Following those changes, Tennessee implemented new teacher tenure and evaluation systems in 2011, and made the decision to integrate to Common Core State Standards in every classroom by 2014. On top of these actions, the state eliminated the cap and opened enrollment for charter schools in 2011, and voted to expand "virtual schools." With more legislative changes implemented every year, educators and the students they serve must constantly adjust to "new norms" while working on the front lines to accelerate academic achievement.

## COMMENDATIONS

As in previous years, the committee would like to highlight the key successes of the 2011-2012 school year:

### GROWTH IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

While test scores are not increasing quickly enough, nearly every measure and every subgroup did experience some improvement in 2011-2012 over the previous year. For the past two years, Tennessee students have been measured against higher standards that align more closely with

the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a measure of student achievement that allows comparison with students across the nation. With the adoption of Common Core State Standards and the transition to PARCC assessments in 2014-2015, it will become much easier to measure Tennessee students' performance against other states.

The measure commonly viewed as the most difficult to move is the percentage of students scoring a 21 or above on the ACT. MNPS has declared a goal of every student scoring at least a 21 on the ACT and is taking bold, proactive steps to improve scores, despite the fact that growth on the ACT is not included in the state's accountability framework. To reach its goal, the district launched three pilot projects and, based on their 2012 results, determined that Hillwood High School's model, ACT Now, was the most effective in improving ACT scores. Hillwood's percentage of students scoring a 21 or above increased from 21 percent in 2010 to 31 percent in 2012, compared to the district's increase of two percentage points during the same time period. Hillwood's program has been shared with all zoned high schools in hopes of seeing similar growth in ACT scores across the district.

### GRADUATION RATE INCREASING

The graduation rate is the only measurement in the state's accountability system that lags one year behind. While MNPS did not meet its 2012 Annual Measurable Objective for graduation rate, we already know that the district will meet its 2013 AMO for this measure. The district fell short in 2011 due to a change in the state's calculation method, which no longer allows English Language Learners and special

education students a fifth year to complete a regular diploma. The accountability target for 2013 is 77.7 percent during the 2011-2012 school year, so MNPS has already met one of its targets for next year by achieving a graduation rate of 78.4 percent in 2012. Even more encouraging is the fact that both the 2011 and 2012 rates exceed the 2009 graduation rate of 73.1 percent, which was based on the five-year calculation. We are especially pleased to see how far the district has come on this measure over the past eight years, up from 58.2 percent in 2004. This progress would not have been possible without specific programs, including the Academies of Nashville high school redesign, that have helped "catch" students most at risk for dropping out.

## NATIONAL RECOGNITION

A few years ago, high schools were considered a weak link in MNPS, but this is no longer the case. In July 2012, seven of MNPS' Academies of Nashville programs received national accreditation from the National Career Academy Coalition, with five of those receiving the highest designation as "model" academies. Very few communities across the country are implementing academies in every zoned high school for every student, as MNPS has done, and few programs have the level of business and community support seen in Nashville. As further validation of the program's success, over the past two years of implementation, MNPS has seen a 6.8 percent decrease in the number of students with unexcused absences and a 13.3 percent decrease in the number of students expelled and remanded to alternative school.



## WILLINGNESS TO TAKE RISKS THROUGH INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

MNPS made two bold moves in 2011 and 2012 to increase innovation in Metro Schools – one focused on turning around the district's lowest-performing schools, and one aimed to scale up some of the more promising practices of the district's highest-performing schools. In July 2011, Dr. Register announced the creation of an Innovation Zone, or iZone, that would take the district's 10 lowest-performing schools and implement aggressive strategies to turn them around. These schools are being transformed by strong leaders, and are encouraged to focus on individual school strengths, while engaging in collaboration across schools to share best practices and build systemic changes in culture. Led by MNPS' Executive Director of Innovation Alan Coverstone, the iZone is showing overall positive results in its first year of operation, and other districts in Tennessee are beginning to consider the model. Since this program has only one year under its belt, the committee realizes that the proof points are not yet clear; however, we feel strongly that this approach exemplifies exactly the type of proactive methods that are needed to move performance more quickly in all MNPS schools. Many presenters pointed out that it's about investing in people and giving school leaders the latitude needed to truly lead and produce results – a combination of autonomy, accountability and leadership capacity. That's why the committee recommends that MNPS broaden the Innovation Zone to the bottom 25 percent of schools, with an understanding that all Metro schools could benefit from a model that provides increased flexibility to school leaders in exchange for greater accountability around student outcomes.

In August 2012, Dr. Register announced the creation of a network of highly effective principals to help improve student achievement growth beyond the walls of their own schools. In exchange for greater autonomy, the "network lead" principals are working directly with up to six schools – which include both district-run and charter schools – in each of their networks, providing coaching around instruction, data-driven decision making and leadership development. By sharing lessons learned and scaling effective practices, these experienced school leaders have an opportunity to impact academic progress for a greater number of schools and students across the district.

## WEBSITES

**MNPS.org:** Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

**Innovation.MNPS.org:** MNPS' Office of Innovation, which oversees Innovation Zone, magnet and charter schools

**Scorecard.MNPS.org:** MNPS Scorecard, an interactive tool for comparing schools' performance data

**AchievementSchoolDistrict.org:** State-run Achievement School District, working to move the bottom 5 percent of Tennessee schools to the top 25 percent within five years

**ExpectMoreTN.org:** "Expect More, Achieve More," raising awareness around Common Core Standards

## MOVING TOWARD MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF DATA

Without quality data, it's impossible to make informed decisions about which strategies are – and which aren't – working to improve student performance. In 2011-2012, the district continued to add information into MNPS LEADS, the district's data warehouse. Each evening, new information is uploaded so data are always current within 24 hours. Student data were the first information to be added two years ago, including assessment data (TCAP, EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT), attendance, discipline and interventions, allowing teachers to better meet the needs of individual students. Teacher data such as certifications, professional development and attendance were uploaded to the system last year. This year, financial data are being entered, which will make it easier for the district to tie resource allocation to improving student outcomes. Data still to be added include student health and post-secondary information, which would include whether students have filled out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for college. Teacher evaluation data will also be added, which will allow the system to flag professional development opportunities that match teachers' needs. As MNPS continues to improve the information available, there must be an equally strong effort to ensure that decisions being made across the district are data-driven, and that everyone involved in the education of Metro students, including teachers, parents, administrators, and the students themselves, are focusing on common goals and measurable objectives.

## TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE LEADERSHIP MODEL (2012-2013)

TLG = Transformational Leadership Group

### TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE STRATEGY SHOWING PROGRESS

In November 2011, the Annenberg Institute for School Reform issued its second evaluation report for MNPS Achieves, the district's transformational change strategy implemented by Dr. Register in May 2009, just months after he arrived at MNPS. The plan is driven in large part by nine Transformational Leadership Groups (TLGs) comprised of more than 100 district and community leaders who provide guidance in critical areas of need.

Funded in part by the district's Race to the Top funds, MNPS Achieves aims to promote high student achievement across all subgroups of students. The Annenberg report points to several areas that are showing great promise, including high school academies, data coaches and principal leadership development. As it did in its initial evaluation in 2010, the Annenberg Institute goes on to caution MNPS' approach of focusing on 46 different initiatives under MNPS Achieves. In order to maximize the effect of the reform, the report recommends reducing the number of initiatives to a manageable number by prioritizing high-yield strategies and using resources more efficiently and effectively.



## CHALLENGES

The committee was most concerned with a lack of progress or future challenges in the following areas:

### NEED TO ACCELERATE PERFORMANCE GAINS

In a district serving nearly a third of the state's English Language Learners, and with a student population that's 72 percent economically disadvantaged, we realize that a dramatic increase in student performance is extremely difficult to achieve; however, there are pockets of performance gains in Metro Schools that indicate it can be done. Examples include: Hillwood's 10 percent jump over two years in students scoring a 21 or above on the ACT; Antioch and McGavock's nearly 10 percent increase in students scoring proficient or advanced in Algebra I; Cane Ridge's nearly 18 percent growth in students meeting proficiency benchmarks in English II, and Hillsboro's nearly 14 percent growth on the same measure; and, finally, Rose Park Math and Science Magnet's nearly 40 percent growth in fifth- through eighth-grade math. With those results, it's no wonder Rose Park was the recipient of the highly coveted 2012 middle school SCORE Prize, a statewide award that recognizes significant improvement in student achievement. These impressive results show that dramatic gains are possible, but the district needs a laser focus on the key measurements that will drive success in every classroom. Ultimately, it is the school board's responsibility to decide what those measurements are, and it is for this reason that we recommend the school board develop a dashboard to review the progress on key performance measurements at their regularly scheduled meetings. This will accomplish two goals: it will ensure that academic performance and growth is top of mind for every school board member, helping drive discussions at each board meeting; and it will provide regular, public access to these important measurements to all stakeholders in the community.

### A LOT OF ACTIVITY, BUT LIMITED UNDERSTANDING

As mentioned earlier, the district's reform initiative, MNPS Achieves, has made progress since its formation three and a half years ago. However, the complexity of the plan, with 46 separate initiatives, has created a communications challenge within the district. The lack of enthusiasm around the direction of Metro Schools exhibited in the public opinion poll was reiterated during the committee's discussion with several philanthropic leaders who pointed to the absence of a comprehensive vision or plan around which the community could rally. The fact is, MNPS

*One thing is clear: reducing the number of overall initiatives, developing a cohesive strategic plan that connects all reform activities, and sharpening the focus on strategies with the highest impact could have a profound effect on the success – and the public understanding – of the district's reform efforts.*

Achieves could serve that purpose, but it is too complex for many stakeholders to digest, including some who are directly involved in the process. From the perspective of the broader community, the clear desire to support the improvement of our schools is hindered by a lack of clarity around how best to provide that support, and uncertainty about whether the efforts already underway are producing results. One school system leader pointed to "fidelity of implementation" as a barrier to knowing what is really making a difference. Another school system leader said that reform and systemic change are moving forward, but depending on your perspective, it could look very different.

### DIFFICULTY ACCESSING TEST RESULTS

An issue that arose during numerous committee interviews was the delay in receiving test results from the Tennessee Department of Education. As an example, the state released its priority school list on August 13, 2012, just 12 days after a new school year began in Nashville. This allows no planning time before the beginning of the school year to make the adjustments necessary to transform schools, including both personnel and programmatic changes, and doesn't give parents time to make informed decisions around school choice. Data included as part of the new teacher evaluations are also delayed into the following school year, increasing the chance that a teacher performing at the lowest level, "significantly below expectations," would continue teaching students well into the school year, if not for an entire year. We believe the Department of Education should share priority status and test results with schools and districts as soon as possible for planning purposes, with a public release no later than June 30.

Other important data that are difficult to track down include schools' and districts' full ACT reports. While the reports are public information, they are only provided by ACT to each school and district. In order to access the full reports, they must be requested individually. From the committee's standpoint, the most important measure of college- and career-readiness is the percentage of students scoring a 21 or above on this test. Unfortunately, only average composite scores are available on the state's Report Card. To its credit, the district is making this information available through the MNPS Scorecard, which allows parents and community members to view each school's percentage of students scoring 21 or above. Still, providing access to every Tennessee high school's report through the Tennessee Department of Education website would help increase transparency and accountability on this important measure across the state.

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND PARCC ASSESSMENTS BRING CHALLENGES

Along with 46 other states, Tennessee is taking the important step to implement Common Core State Standards in every school by 2014. The new standards, designed to better align with NAEP and ACT exams, include an increased focus on skills necessary for college and career, including critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork. As part of the move to the common core, Tennessee will replace reading/language arts and math TCAP tests with Partnership for Assessment of Readiness of College and Careers, or PARCC assessments, beginning in 2014-2015.

The state is implementing common core in a phased approach by grade levels, with full implementation of the new standards in place by 2013-2014. As the new standards are phased in, teachers are learning how to use differentiated instruction, which focuses on assessing individual needs and re-teaching skills until every student masters every standard. The district is also undergoing a curriculum audit to determine which items currently align with common core, and which need to be abandoned.

The fact that the new PARCC assessments will be taken online raises serious questions about MNPS' technology capacity. Within two school years, the district will have to ensure it has enough computers and bandwidth to accommodate the new assessments. In addition, MNPS must prepare for the possibility that grades could be lower under the new, more rigorous standards –



*District and charter school teachers present to the Education Report Card Committee in September 2012 (L-R: Jared Humm, computer teacher at Jere Baxter Middle; Machel Lucas, literacy coach at Thurgood Marshall Middle; and Jake Ramsey, eighth-grade team leader and Algebra I teacher at KIPP Academy).*

at least initially. As was the case when Tennessee raised its academic standards in 2010, the move to more rigorous, internationally competitive standards will require a robust community awareness campaign. Fortunately, the Expect More, Achieve More Coalition, a statewide alliance of business, community and education organizations, is already working to build local engagement, support and awareness of the new standards.

In addition to analyzing overall school system performance, the committee selects a further area of study that is critical to academic success. The focus topic chosen this year is charter schools, an issue both timely—the state’s charter school law underwent significant changes in 2011—and at the forefront of public discourse. As the committee examined charter schools, we did so recognizing that this model is just one tool state and local education leaders can use to improve student achievement; we would not claim that it is the only solution to Nashville’s educational challenges, or the best solution for every student. We do feel strongly, however, that the thoughtful, informed integration of charter schools into an overall strategy for Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is vital to the future success of public education in our city.

Although charter schools are public schools, and charter school students in Metro Schools are MNPS students, one thing remained clear throughout the committee’s study: there are still varying degrees of understanding among both education and community leaders about the definition of charter schools, their purpose and how they can be used to advance the progress of Metro Schools. Therefore, we start by defining “charter school,” then review the history of charter schools nationally and statewide, and, finally, analyze the charter school sector in Nashville, where charters currently serve about 4 percent of MNPS children.



*Fifth-grade students at STEM Prep participate in a community meeting during the Education Report Card Committee’s tour of the school.*

## HOW CHARTER SCHOOLS WORK

There are two types of public schools in MNPS: district schools and charter schools. Charters schools are public schools governed and operated independently of the local school system, often with a unique curriculum and philosophy. These schools have a contract, or charter, with their local school board to operate inside the district’s boundaries. At first, charter schools were largely seen as laboratories of innovative practices that could then be shared with district schools. In what is described as the “charter bargain,” charter schools are given autonomy in exchange for strict accountability. This means that charters are granted flexibility around areas such as staffing, curriculum and budget management and, in some cases, waivers from state laws and rules, but must produce improved student outcomes in order to continue operating.

## HOW CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE CREATED IN TENNESSEE

Per Tennessee’s Public Charter Schools Act, charter schools can be formed by starting a new school or by converting an existing school. Most charter schools are authorized by local school boards that are responsible for approving, monitoring and, when necessary, closing charter schools.

In the case of new charter schools, the school’s sponsor must file an application with the local board of education. Common sponsors include local nonprofit organizations and charter management organizations (CMOs), nonprofit organizations that operate multiple charter schools. Once a charter application is approved, the sponsor creates a governing board and the school operates under the general supervision of the chartering authority, in compliance with their charter contract and state law.

**Charter schools are public schools, and charter school students in Metro Schools are MNPS students.**



## HIGHLIGHTS OF TENNESSEE'S CHARTER SCHOOL LAW\*

- Charter schools are considered part of the local education agency (LEA);
- Charter schools must be run by nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) exemption;
- A sponsor of a charter school application cannot be a for-profit entity or a private elementary or secondary school, and must not promote the agenda of any religion or religiously affiliated entity;
- Charter school students must be measured by the same accountability standards and take the same state assessments as other public school students;
- Charter schools cannot refuse enrollment to students eligible for special education services;
- Charter school teachers must meet Tennessee's minimum requirements for licensure; and
- Charter renewal is based on a 10-year cycle.

*\*One committee recommendation proposes to amend state law to include a default closure mandate for charter schools placed on the state's priority list for not meeting performance standards.*

There are several ways for a district school to convert to a charter school, including if 60 percent of a school's parents or teachers petition the local school board to approve the conversion of an existing school to a charter, also known as the "parent trigger law." Additionally, a school system may convert a district school to a charter school, as was the case for Cameron Middle School in Nashville, now being converted to Cameron College Prep in a unique partnership between the district and charter operator LEAD Public Schools.

Charter schools can also be authorized by the state-run Achievement School District (ASD), which was created as part of Tennessee's winning "Race to the Top" application and first became operational in 2011. The ASD was formed to turn around Tennessee's lowest-performing schools – with a goal of moving the bottom 5 percent (priority schools under the state's new accountability system) to the top 25 percent in five years. The ASD has the authority to either directly manage these schools or to authorize charter operators to manage them.

Charter schools receive the same per-pupil funds as district schools, which include state Basic Education Program (BEP) funds, local funds, and federal Title I and IDEA funds for low-income families and students with disabilities, respectively. The school system is responsible for allocating per-pupil funding to its charter schools. Many charter schools also raise private dollars to cover the cost of facilities and other needs not covered by federal, state and local sources. If a charter school chooses to provide transportation to its students, which is not required under state law, it would also receive the transportation component of BEP funds.

## NATIONAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The first charter school law in the country was passed in Minnesota in 1991 with a goal of expanding school choice through the development of localized, flexible public schools. Currently, 41 states and the District of Columbia have passed charter school laws. In 2002, Tennessee was the 39th state to pass a charter school law. Tennessee's late adoption of a charter school law allowed policymakers to craft a rigorous application process, reflecting a decade of lessons learned by other states.

Tennessee's law initially focused on closing the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students and providing options for parents of students in high-priority schools under NCLB. Initially, charter schools were only open to students who were zoned to high-priority schools. In 2009, Gov. Phil Bredesen signed into law a charter school bill that expanded chartering authority to the State Board of Education for schools in "Restructuring II" under NCLB, opened enrollment to students who did not meet NCLB benchmarks, as well as those who qualified for free and reduced meals, regardless of the performance of their existing school, and increased the cap on the number of charter schools statewide to 90, allotting 20 schools to MNPS. In 2011, under Gov. Bill Haslam, the charter law was amended further to remove the cap entirely on the number of charter schools allowed in the state and to open enrollment to all students.

## Nashville's Charter School Growth

Year Approved/ Opened	Charter School	Organization	Application Process
2003/2003	Smithson Craighead Academy	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA
2004/2005	KIPP Academy Nashville	National CMO	Approved by LEA
2006/2007	LEAD Academy	Local CMO	Approved by LEA
2008/2009	Smithson Craighead Middle (to be closed)	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA*
2009/2009	Nashville Global Academy (closed)	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA**
2009/2010	New Vision Academy	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA
2010/2010	Cameron College Prep	Local CMO	Approved by LEA***
2010/2011	Drexel Prep	Local nonprofit	Denied by LEA****
2010/2011	East End Prep	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA
2010/2011	Nashville Prep	TCSI	Approved by LEA
2010/2011	Liberty Collegiate	TCSI	Approved by LEA
2010/2011	STEM Prep	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA
2011/2012	Boys Prep	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA
2011/2012	Knowledge Academies	Local nonprofit	Approved by LEA
2011/2012	Brick Church College Prep	Local CMO/ASD	Approved by ASD
2011/2014	KIPP Nashville Collegiate High School	National CMO	Approved by LEA
2011/2013	LEAD Prep Southeast	Local CMO	Approved by LEA
2012/2013	Intrepid Prep	TCSI	Approved by LEA
2012/2013	Purpose Prep	TCSI	Approved by LEA
2012/2013	Nashville Classical	TCSI	Approved by LEA
2012/2013	KIPP Nashville College Prep	National CMO	Approved by LEA

\* Charter revoked in 2012; will close in May 2013

\*\* Surrendered charter in 2010

\*\*\* Transformation Partnership School

\*\*\*\* Approved following SBE appeal

ASD: Achievement School District

CMO: charter management organization

LEA: local education agency

SBE: State Board of Education

TCSI: Tennessee Charter School Incubator

Several appeals to the State Board of Education are not reflected in this table. KIPP Academy Nashville's 2004 SBE appeal was successful; however, the school chose not to open that year and reapplied. Nashville Academy of Science and Engineering's 2005 SBE appeal was successful; however, the school chose not to open. Great Hearts Academy's 2012 SBE appeal was successful; however, the Metropolitan Board of Public Education failed to approve the school's application.

## TENNESSEE APPEALS PROCESS

If a local board of education denies a charter application, the applicant has an opportunity to submit a revised application to the school board for approval. If the application is denied again, the applicant can appeal the denial to the Tennessee State Board of Education. If the state board decides to overturn the local school board's denial of a charter application, they remand the decision back to the local board with instructions to approve the application. An applicant can also appeal to the state treasurer if one of the reasons for denial was a substantial negative fiscal impact.

Up until 2012, the State Board of Education had received a total of about 30 appeals and sent fewer than 10 back to local boards with a directive to approve. This year, the state received 17 appeals from Memphis alone. In Nashville, four appeals have been granted by the state board: KIPP Academy in 2004; Nashville Academy of Science and Engineering in 2005 (did not open); Drexel Preparatory Academy in 2010; and Great Hearts Academy in 2012. On two separate occasions, the MNPS chose not to take action on the state's directive to approve Great Hearts' application, and the Tennessee Department of Education subsequently withheld \$3.4 million in BEP funding from the district.

This situation has brought to light a procedural weakness in Tennessee's charter appeals process. The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), the leading national authority on charter school authorization, recommends against forcing a charter authorizer to approve an application they originally denied, citing the dysfunctional relationship this creates between the authorizer and the charter

operator. Instead, NACSA recommends that, in the case of a successful appeal, the state provide for another competent and capable entity to assume chartering responsibility, so that accountability for charter appeals resides with the ultimate decision maker in the appeals process.

## CHARTER SCHOOL LANDSCAPE IN MNPS

The first charter school in Nashville, Smithson-Craighead Academy, opened in 2003, followed by KIPP Academy in 2005 and LEAD Academy in 2007. Initially, these schools were required to serve students zoned to failing schools under NCLB.

When the state charter school law was amended in 2009 to increase the cap on charter schools and expand enrollment eligibility, MNPS formed a new position to manage the charter school application process and act as the liaison between charter schools and the district. Today that responsibility lies with the Office of Innovation, which also oversees magnet schools and the district's Innovation Zone.

In December 2010 MNPS was one of nine U.S. school systems recognized by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for its collaborative work with charters. That month, the school district, charter operators, and a number of city and community stakeholders, including the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, signed a compact outlining ways the district and charter schools would work together to build a countywide system of high-performing public schools. One direct outcome of the district-charter compact was the May 2012 Shared Practices Summit held at Lipscomb University, which highlighted efforts to bring district and charter teachers together through Lipscomb's Shared Practices Fellows Program. Another tangible outcome of the compact

is the recently released MNPS Scorecard, an interactive online tool that allows parents, families and community members to compare performance data across both charter and district schools.

Until 2009-2010, charter school enrollment in MNPS was fewer than 1,000 students. For the past few years, charter school enrollment has been steadily growing, moving from 1,328 in 2010-2011, to 2,278 in 2011-2012, to 3,368 in 2012-2013, a growth of more than 250 percent over two years. Currently, charter schools serve 4 percent of all MNPS students.

There were 11 total charter schools in the 2011-2012 school year, and three more opened in the fall of 2012. Of these, the majority serve elementary or middle school grades, with only one — LEAD Academy High School — serving high school grades. Two of Nashville's charter schools are conversion schools, representing a unique partnership between MNPS and LEAD Public Schools. Cameron College Prep was the first conversion school in the state, and Brick Church College Prep — a partnership among MNPS, LEAD Public Schools and the Achievement School District — was approved by the ASD in 2011.

The ASD announced in June 2012 the approval of three charter management organizations to convert or open schools in Nashville to serve students in schools identified as the bottom 5 percent in the state. LEAD Public Schools has been authorized to convert an MNPS school that falls under the ASD beginning in the fall of 2013. KIPP Nashville and Rocketship Education, a national CMO expanding to Tennessee, will open new schools in the fall of 2013 and 2014, respectively, which will serve MNPS students zoned for schools in the ASD.



## Charter School Demographics (2011-2012)

School	Largest Racial Group (%)	Economically Disadvantaged (%)
Cameron College Prep	40.1% (H)	---
Drexel Prep	---	>95.0%
East End Prep	87.2% (B)	>95.0%
KIPP Academy	89.5% (B)	88.4%
LEAD Academy	89.6% (B)	90.5%
Liberty Collegiate	72.9% (B)	90.7%
Nashville Prep	92.6% (B)	85.6%
New Vision Academy	78.9% (B)	84.2%
Smithson Craighead Academy	---	>95.0%
Smithson Craighead Middle	95.8% (B)	93.1%
STEM Prep	56.9% (H)	92.6%

--- Information not available on State's 2012 Report Card.

## Charter Enrollment History

Previous School for Charter Enrollments	Enrollment		
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Previously in Charter	711 (54%)	870 (38%)	1,690 (50%)
New to MNPS & Charter	85 (6%)	199 (9%)	202 (6%)
From MNPS to Charter	532 (40%)	1,209 (53%)	1,476 (44%)
Total Charter Enrollment	1,328	2,278	3,368

## Charter School Mobility

Charter Students	2010-2011	2011-2012
Enrolled	1,328	2,278
Changed to Different Charter	4 (0.30%)	10 (0.44%)
Changed to MNPS School	62 (4.67%)	161 (7.07%)
Left MNPS	17 (1.28%)	26 (1.14%)
Total Change	83 (6.25%)	197 (8.65%)

## MNPS AUTHORIZING PROCESS

As authorizer for the district's charter schools, the MNPS Board of Education's role is to ensure that charter schools are meeting the needs of students. They do this through a rigorous authorization process, ongoing monitoring of academic and financial performance, and revocation or closure of non-performing schools. This authority also gives the school board an opportunity to leverage the innovative approaches of charter schools to address some of the district's greatest needs.

MNPS was one of four school districts nationwide selected by NACSA as a Performance Management, Replication and Closure Demonstration Site in 2011. Through this grant, NACSA has helped MNPS develop a replication supplement for applicants already operating a charter school, has provided training on application evaluation and applicant interviews, and is in the process of helping MNPS develop a performance framework that can be applied to both charter and district schools to measure academic, financial and organizational outcomes.

The school board relies heavily on MNPS' Office of innovation to make recommendations on charter school approval, denial, revocation and closure. Every year, the Office of Innovation appoints teams of reviewers – district experts and community screeners – who go through an in-depth training session before reviewing each charter application.

MNPS is now helping to train review teams and boards of education in other state systems. In fact, in an effort to ensure that Tennessee has high-quality charter schools, MNPS has taken the lead in forming the Tennessee Association of Charter School Authorizers, inviting other school districts across the state to join efforts to better align Tennessee's processes with NACSA's Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing. MNPS' own charter school review policy is guided by NACSA's core principles: maintaining high standards, upholding school autonomy, and protecting student and public interests.

Following changes in Tennessee's charter school law, MNPS made specific improvements to its charter review policy: charter school review teams now have 90 days instead of 60 to review applications; MNPS now accepts applications that propose to operate multiple schools; there is a new \$500 application fee, which will allow MNPS to professionalize its application review process; the district has added a public comment process to the review cycle; and the district has embedded NACSA's principles and standards into its charter review guidance.

## APPLICATION REVIEW CYCLE

**September:** Outline charter priorities with MNPS board; produce RFP that includes priorities

**September-January:** Assemble review teams

**January 30:** Letters of intent due

**March:** Committee training

**April 1:** Applications due

**April-May:** First round of interviews

**May:** Public comment; review team consensus rubrics due

**June:** Second-round interviews; consensus rubrics due; final recommendations to MNPS board for action

**July:** Amended applications due

**August:** MNPS board acts on amended applications; if denied again, sponsor can appeal to the state board within 10 days; state board has 60 days to make a decision



A Nashville Prep student guides a tour of the school (listening, L-R: Report Card Committee member Brian Shaw and committee Co-Chair Ron Corbin).

## CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

A number of community stakeholders play an important role in the creation and cultivation of quality charter schools in Nashville. Two of these organizations deserve specific mention.

### TENNESSEE CHARTER SCHOOL INCUBATOR:

Launched by Mayor Karl Dean in 2009, the Tennessee Charter School Incubator (TCSI) works to develop talented, skillful founding charter school leaders through partnerships with programs like Building Excellent Schools. With a goal of increasing the college-going rate of low-income and minority students, TCSI has developed an aggressive plan to start up to 10 charter schools in Nashville through 2015. In partnership with the ASD, TCSI recently launched the Education Entrepreneurs Fellowship, which provides experienced school leaders the training and support necessary to run a turnaround school in the ASD.

To ensure widespread impact across the public education system, training will also be available to other school turnaround leaders in the ASD or local innovation zones. This initiative is a strong example of charter and district collaboration around a crucial element in improving student achievement: investing in school leaders. It also ties directly to a comment that MNPS Director of Innovation Alan Coverstone made during his presentation to the committee: to really make a difference, we must focus on “great schools, regardless of type.” TCSI’s first incubated schools, Nashville Preparatory Academy and Liberty Collegiate Academy, opened in August 2011. Both demonstrated impressive gains during their first year, ranking as two of the top MNPS schools for improved reading and math proficiency.

*“Great schools, regardless of type”*

### TENNESSEE CHARTER SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION:

Founded in 1998, the Tennessee Charter Schools Association (TCSA) provides advocacy and support services for charter schools, including training and group purchasing opportunities. TCSA also engages in state and local advocacy efforts through the Voice, a grassroots communications platform for supporters of quality charter schools. The policy issues TCSA supports include strong accountability measures to ensure high-quality charter schools, an objective authorization process, and transparency of performance data.

### MEASURING RESULTS

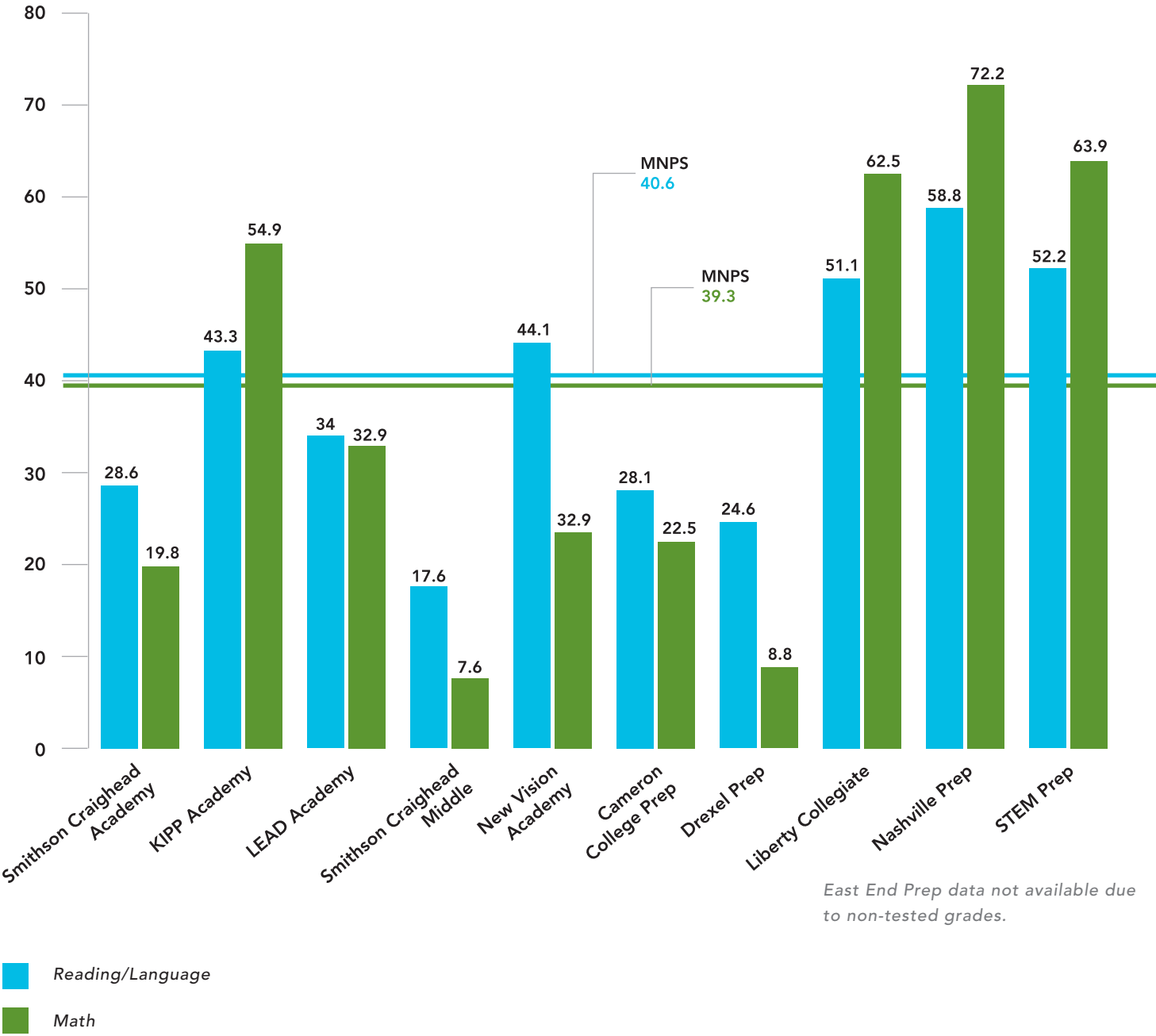
Many states that passed charter school laws in the 1990s lacked performance frameworks to monitor progress and failed to implement strict revocation and closure policies. Not surprisingly, a 2009 study of charter schools in 16 states by Stanford

University’s Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) found wide variation in the quality of the country’s charter schools. Only 17 percent of the charter schools reported academic gains significantly better than students in their zoned schools. Thirty-seven percent produced significantly worse results; the remaining 46 percent were about the same. CREDO cites differences in the quality of the legislation passed in each state as the determining factor in a state’s charter school performance. The group points to

weak authorizing processes, caps on the number of charter schools, and the presence of multiple charter school authorizers as reasons for lower performance.

The same organization studied 35 Tennessee charter schools during the 2011-2012 school year. The report showed that 43 percent of charter schools in the study outpaced their district school counterparts, 37 percent produced worse results, and 20 percent were about the same.

Percent of Students in Grades 3-8 Scoring Proficient or Advanced (2011-2012)



## OBSERVATIONS

### MNPS NEEDS A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS

With the change in state charter school laws, the number of yearly applications is growing rapidly, putting the MNPS board of education in a reactive posture. The school board needs to flip this trend by becoming more proactive about the types of charter schools most needed. A great opportunity exists for the school board and district to articulate how additional charters can improve the overall performance of Metro Schools. For this reason, the committee recommends that MNPS create and implement a comprehensive strategy for integrating charter schools into the district, as a step toward creating an overall strategic plan that clearly connects all reform efforts.

While the school board, as the authorizing body, is the natural owner of this plan, the initial step in creating this strategy should be engaging all stakeholders – including local and state education leaders, elected officials and community partners – in an open discussion about the best way to move forward as a district, working intentionally and collaboratively with charter school operators. By ensuring community input in the process, the implementation of the strategy will be much easier. If necessary, the school board and MNPS should engage experienced outside facilitators with expertise in working with school boards and charter schools.

Topics that MNPS' charter school strategy could address include the identification of choice gaps, where the district has specific needs that could be filled around areas

such as geographic location, academic focus or special student populations. The school board can target high-performing operators to address these needs. Other areas MNPS' strategy should address include pacing charter school growth in the district, particularly as it relates to capacity and ability of charter schools to operate sustainably. A formal process for offering shared services, including a facilities plan, could help with some of these needs. Considerations may also have to be made around zoning requirements as enrollment numbers shift. Finally, the plan should make clear the performance framework used to monitor charter schools and ensure that they are meeting the requirements of their charter agreements.

One overarching theme from the committee's research was that MNPS currently lacks a strategic plan that connects all reform efforts. While a number of the reform activities are beginning to show results, education and community leaders struggle to see how they all fit together. Creating a plan for integrating charter schools could be a first step toward creating an overall strategic plan that incorporates all reform initiatives.

### TIME TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT THE COMPACT

The district-charter collaboration compact recommends that signees "consider revisions and updates that will ensure collaboration remains relevant, timely and effective." It seems an opportune time to revisit the language and update the agreements. The overarching goals of the compact include working together to improve all schools; replicating high-performing models of both district and charter schools and improving or closing those not

serving students well; and addressing perceived inequity issues that lead to tensions between district and charter schools. Two years after the district-charter compact was created, there are new and exciting ways to collaborate, including through the district's system of network lead principals and through the Tennessee Charter School Incubator's leadership development initiatives. The compact should be revised in tandem with the development of a comprehensive charter school strategy.

*Two years after the district-charter compact was created, there are new and exciting ways to collaborate, including through the district's system of network lead principals and through the Tennessee Charter School Incubator's leadership development initiatives.*

## OPPORTUNITY FOR INCREASED EFFICIENCIES THROUGH SHARED SERVICES

MNPS has an opportunity to provide valuable, efficient central office services to charter school operators. Many charter school leaders the committee interviewed mentioned the frustrations they faced during the startup phase. Eager to make a difference in students' academic progress, they were challenged by having to build from scratch plans for acquiring student-ready facilities; planning for county-wide transportation; and contracting for federally approved meals. Metro Schools already has an infrastructure to provide these services, in addition to IT, professional development and curriculum resources. Offering shared services to charter schools would provide revenue to the district, helping offset the shift of funds created as more charters open, and would allow charter leaders to focus more attention on their instructional programs. In this area, the committee sees a great opportunity for MNPS to make a difference relatively quickly. That is why the committee recommends MNPS develop a system to offer shared services for charter schools as a way to increase efficiencies and cost savings.

## QUALITIES OF HIGH-PERFORMING CHARTER SCHOOLS

The committee visited several high-performing charter schools in Nashville and observed the following:

- **Culture and climate are paramount to success.** At the schools we visited, students were polite and attentive to their teachers at all times. Some charter schools implement culture audits to ensure students are engaged and alert in class and provide productive feedback to teachers

if this is not the case. Both charter and district teachers can fill out MNPS' survey on school climate at [TellMNPS.org](http://TellMNPS.org).

- **A relentless use of data and setting high expectations are critical in moving student outcomes.** The committee witnessed a persistent use of data and high expectations in the schools we visited. School goals and values were posted on the walls in every classroom, and all teachers and students were aware of the goals they were expected to attain. At STEM Prep, the school's performance targets are two years of growth in reading and math every academic year. At Knowledge Academies, students are incentivized to meet higher expectations so they can be part of the "KA Leaderboard," a student leadership group within the school.

- **Parental engagement is key.** Some schools have agreements with parents that require a certain level of parental involvement. In addition, many charter school teachers make frequent home visits and provide cell phone numbers for parents to call well into the evening.

- **It's about people – recruiting and retaining top talent.** Without doubt, a strong pipeline of highly effective teachers makes a big difference. A large percentage of teachers at area charter schools come from programs like Teach for America (TFA) or the New Teacher Project. While there are legitimate concerns about teacher turnover from these programs, data shows that TFA teachers are significantly outperforming their counterparts in their first year of teaching.

- **Longer instructional periods can accelerate performance gains.** At Nashville Prep, the school day lasts from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the school year is longer than the district's school calendar, with 190 total instructional days. Adding instruction-

al hours alone does not guarantee better learning; it is the content of the additional hours that is most important. Nashville Prep includes two hours of literacy and more than two hours of math instruction every day.

- **Differentiated instruction works.** Charter school teachers who spoke with the committee emphasized the need for constant reassessment of students' progress. This will be even more critical as schools move to the common core standards. Understanding where students are and knowing the specific skills students need to work on to get to the next level allows teachers to improve achievement in a real, measurable way.

- **"Demographics don't determine destiny."** This was a direct quote from Ravi Gupta, founder and school director at Nashville Prep. Looking at the first-year results from Nashville Prep and STEM Prep, it is obvious that schools can no longer use the excuse that their scores are low because of a higher percentage of certain subgroups. We now live in a "no-excuses" educational environment.



## CLOSING UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS DIFFICULT, BUT NECESSARY

Holding charter schools accountable for performance requires a willingness to close underperforming schools. NACSA points out that charter schools rarely close outside of their charter renewal process. That's why NACSA recommends a five-year renewal cycle; Tennessee's renewal cycle, however, is 10 years.

In 2010, Nashville Global Academy relinquished its charter voluntarily due to financial and administrative problems. In November 2012, the MNPS board of education voted to close Smithson-Craighead Middle School at the end of the 2012-2013 school year based on the school's failure to meet performance benchmarks and its status as a "priority school," which means it is in the bottom 5 percent of all Tennessee schools.



*Committee members hear from Nashville Prep Founder and School Director Ravi Gupta during their visit to the school.*

Charter operators understand the consequences of underperformance, and the limited number of years to show improvement on the front end, because academic performance is included in their charter agreements. However, once a school is open, it is very disruptive, and sometimes politically difficult, to close. That's why the committee recommends that the Tennessee General Assembly amend state law to implement a default closure mandate for charter schools that are placed on the state's priority schools list for not meeting performance standards. This mandate would mean that if a charter school is on the state's priority list for failing to meet performance benchmarks, it would automatically close at the end of the school year, and the students attending that school would either attend their zoned school or choose to attend another charter or district school.

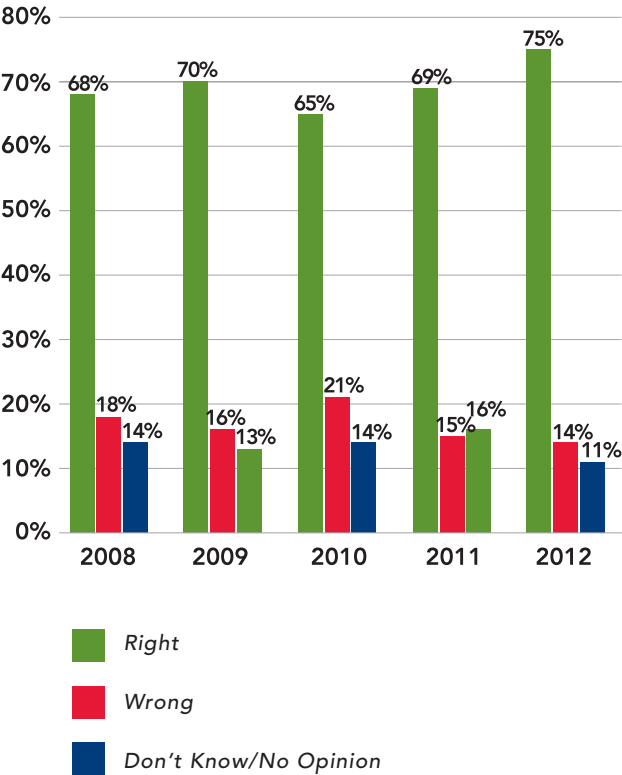
Targeting the lowest-performing schools as measured by the state accountability system would not preclude the school board from closing other charters that are not meeting the performance benchmarks in their charter agreements; it simply makes the closure process easier, quicker and more predictable. Default closure laws in other states (Louisiana, North Carolina and Florida, for example) allow authorizers to override automatic closure if keeping the school open is in the best interests of the students and the public.

We have an opportunity in Nashville to open and expand high-quality schools, but we must also insist on closing or implementing aggressive turnaround strategies in poor-performing charter and district schools. By holding schools accountable for performance, the school board can help ensure that the entire school system continues to improve until every student is given what MNPS promises in its vision statement: the foundation of knowledge, skills and character necessary to excel in higher education, work and life.

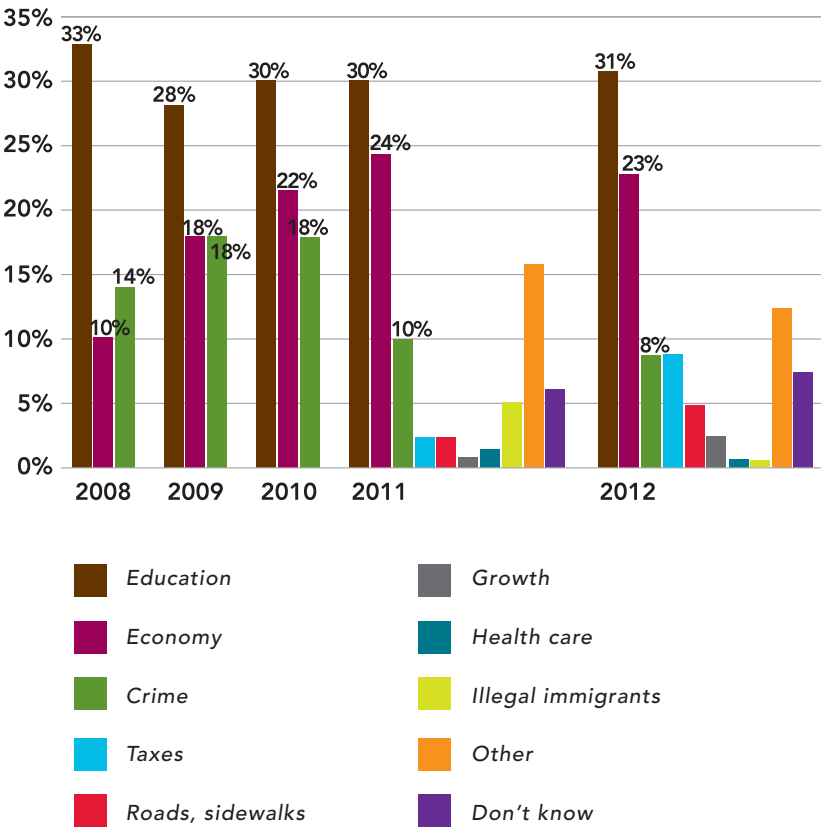
**APPENDIX A:**  
NASHVILLE  
PUBLIC  
OPINION ON  
EDUCATION  
*may 2012*

The following graphs represent results from a telephone survey commissioned by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. The survey was designed, written and analyzed by McNeely Pigott & Fox Public Relations in Nashville. The Parker Consulting Group of Birmingham, Ala., randomly surveyed 545 Davidson County registered voters May 8-9 and 13-14, 2012. The survey has a margin of error of approximately plus or minus 4.2 percent for the total sample.

**In general, do you think Nashville is heading in the right direction or the wrong direction?**

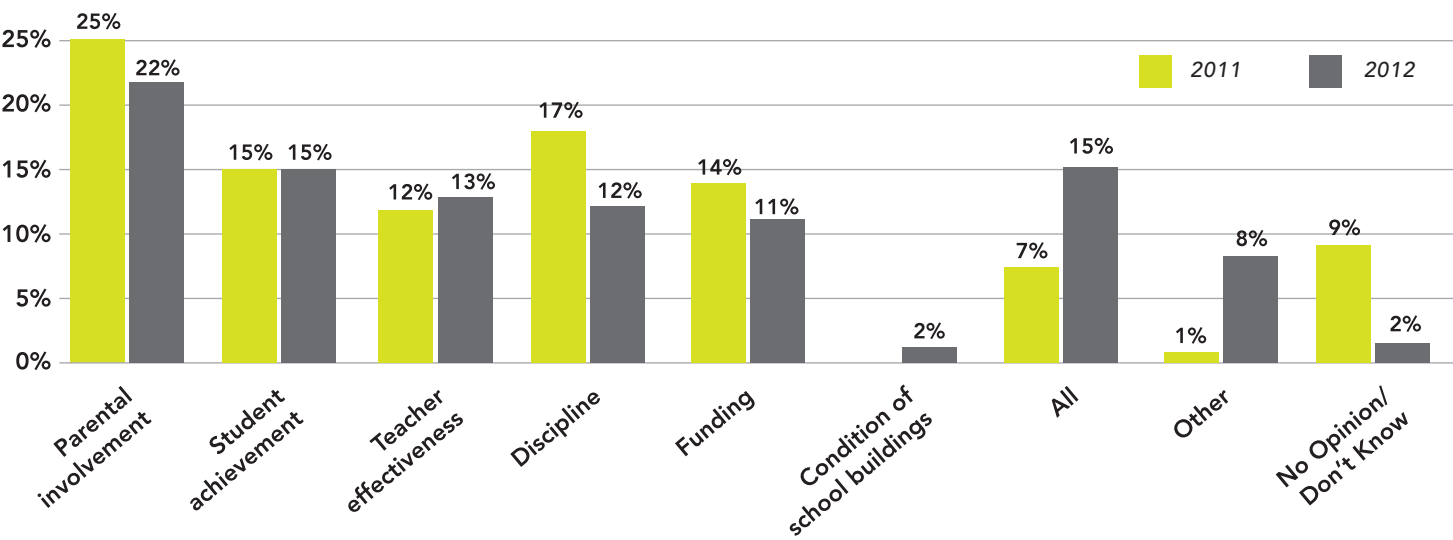


**In your opinion, what is the most important issue or problem facing Nashville?**

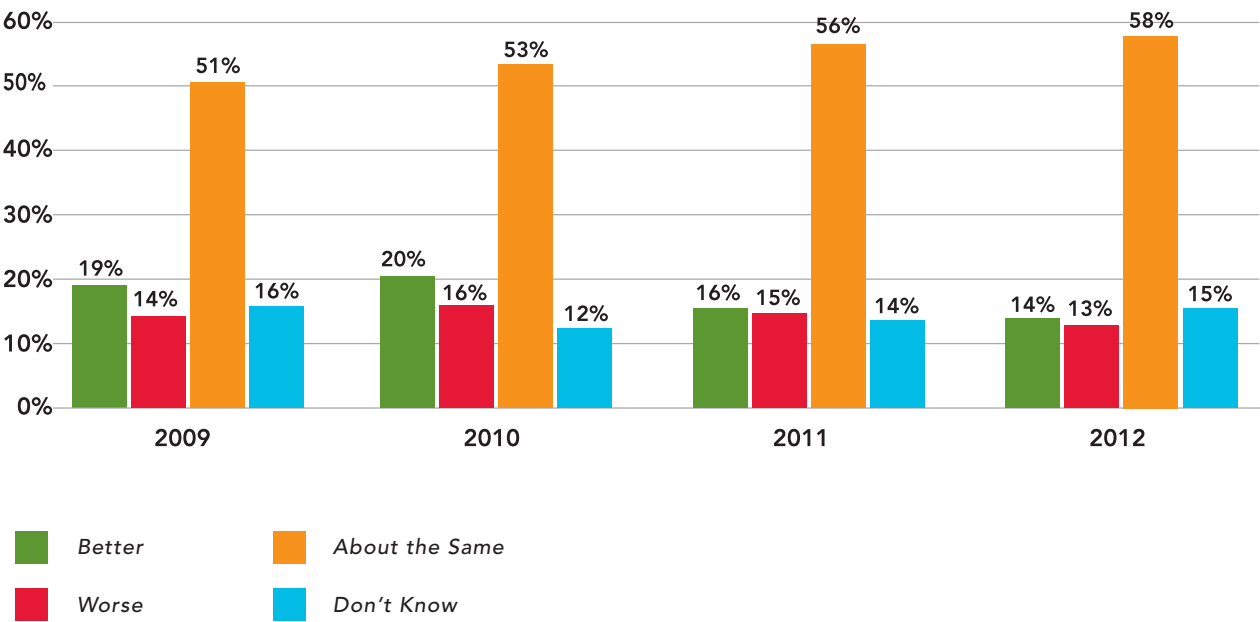




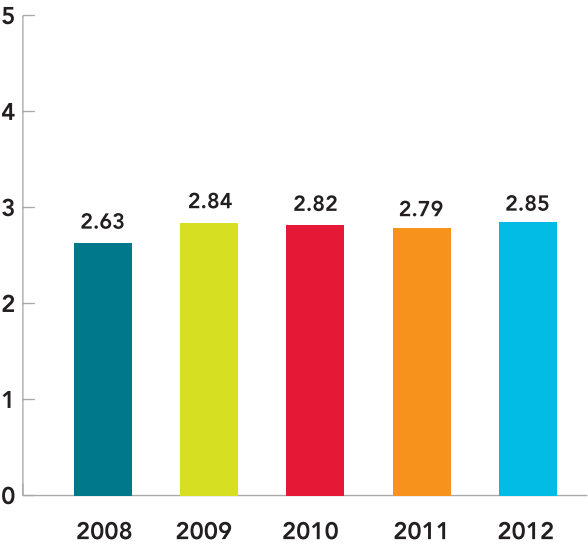
When it comes to education, what do you think is the most important issue facing Metro Public Schools today?



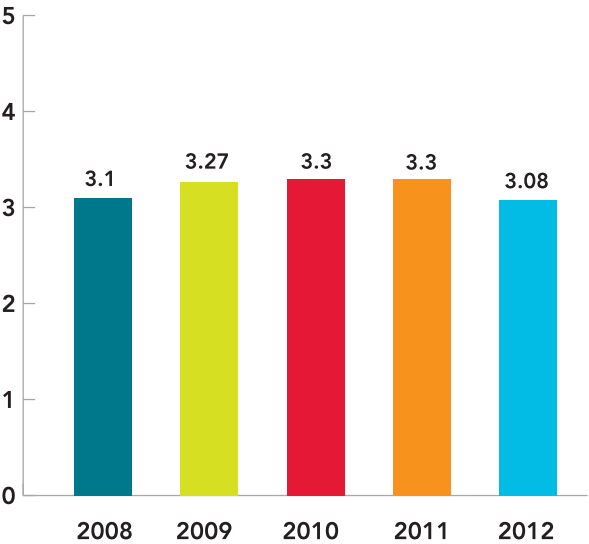
What is your perception of K-12 public education in Nashville compared to one year ago?



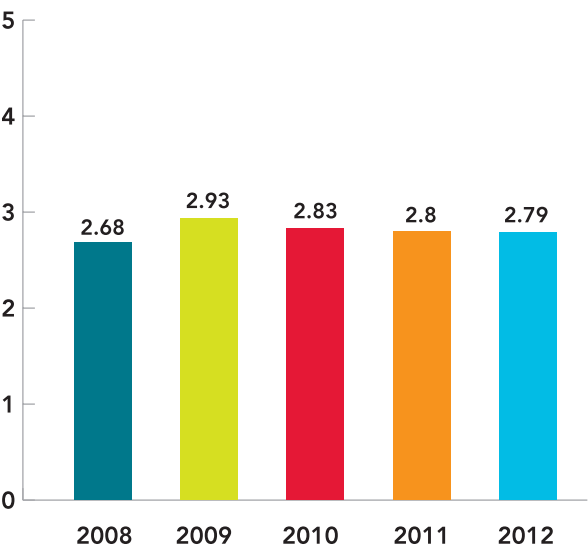
Overall performance of Nashville’s public school system, rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average and 5 being excellent



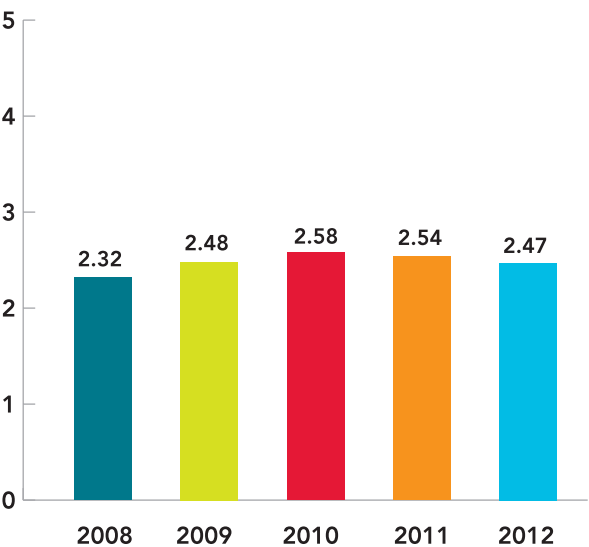
Rating of elementary schools in Nashville, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average and 5 being excellent



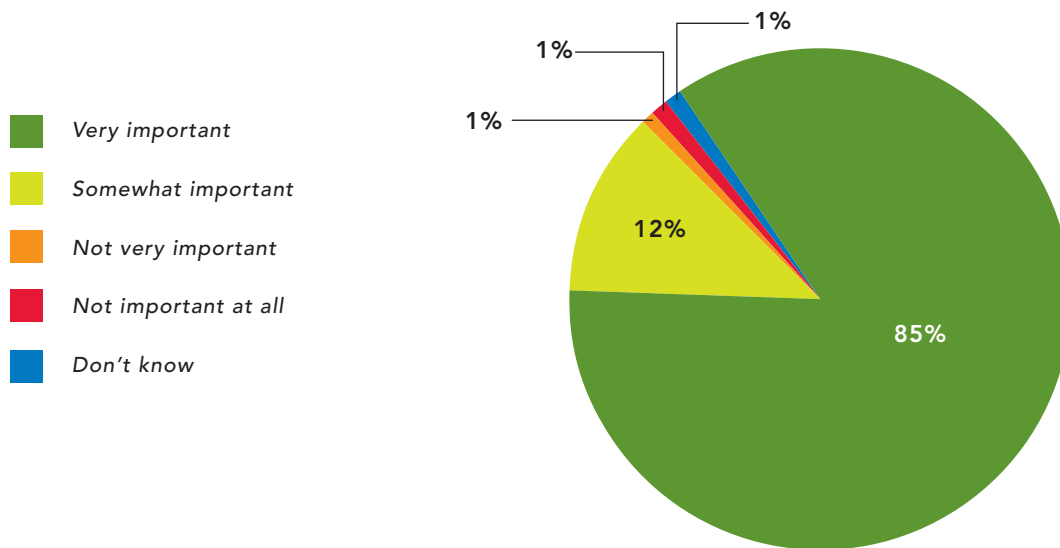
Rating of middle schools in Nashville, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average and 5 being excellent



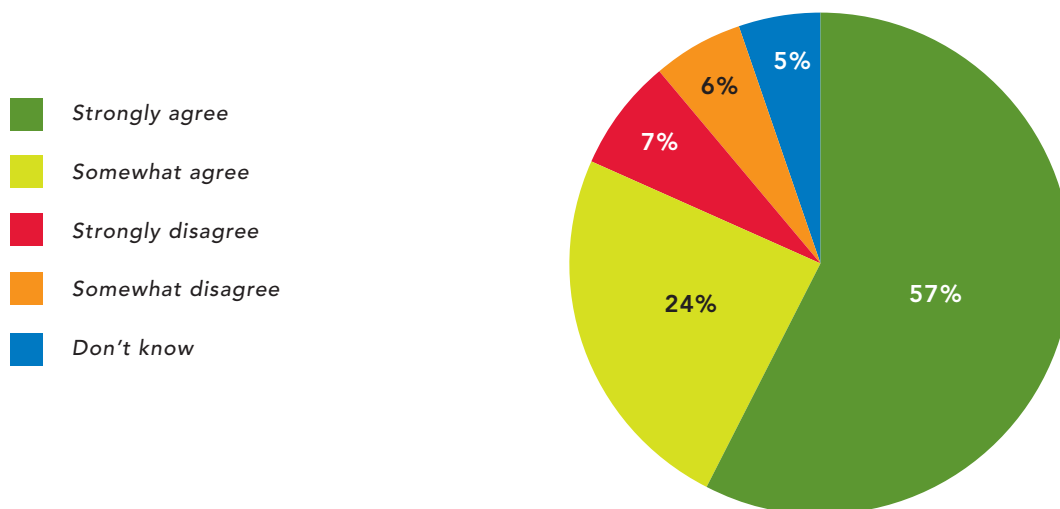
Rating of high schools in Nashville, on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average and 5 being excellent



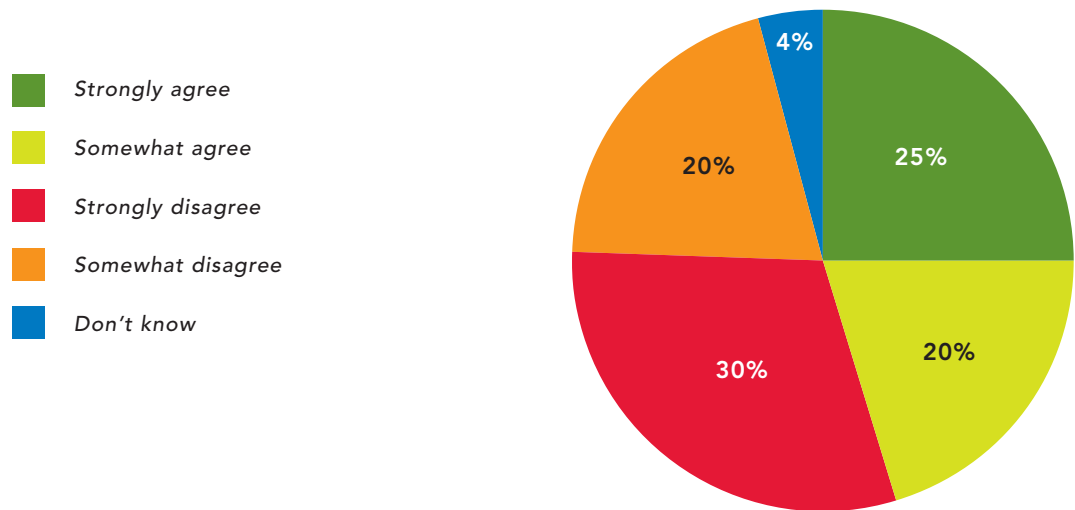
How important is it to you personally for Metro to improve public education?



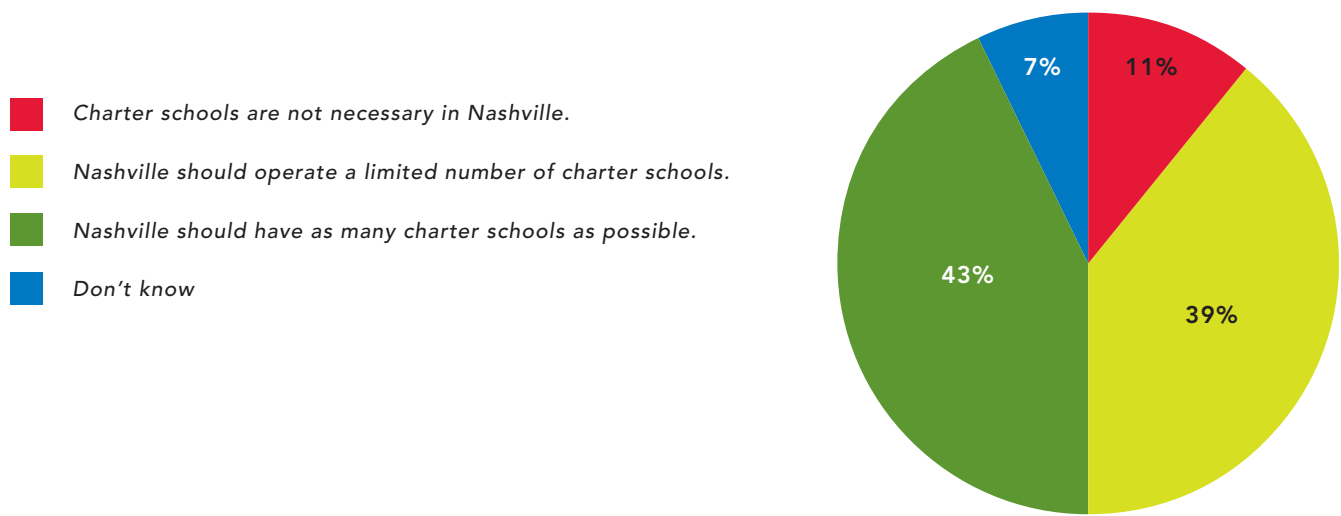
Metro should provide more funding for the public school system in order to meet the challenges the schools face.



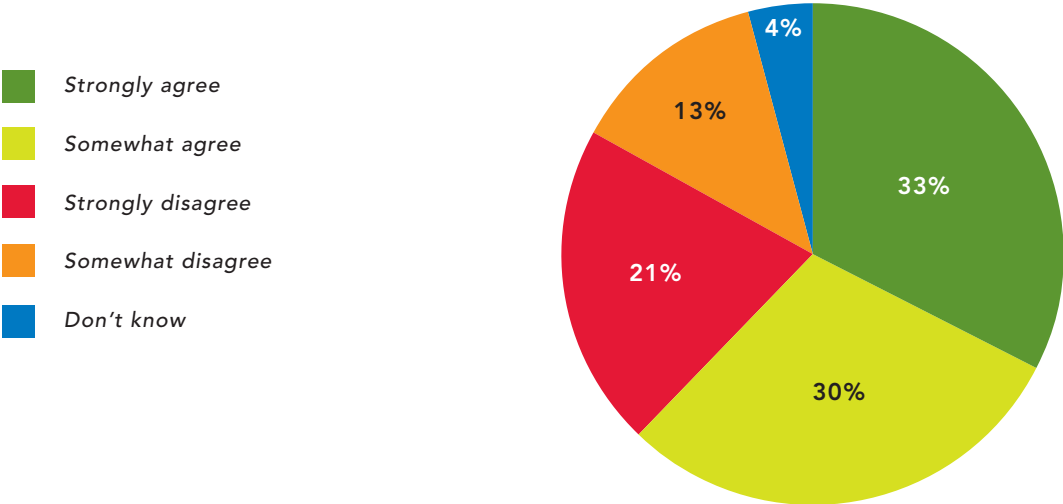
Government should provide vouchers, or tuition assistance, to low-income students so they can attend a private school.



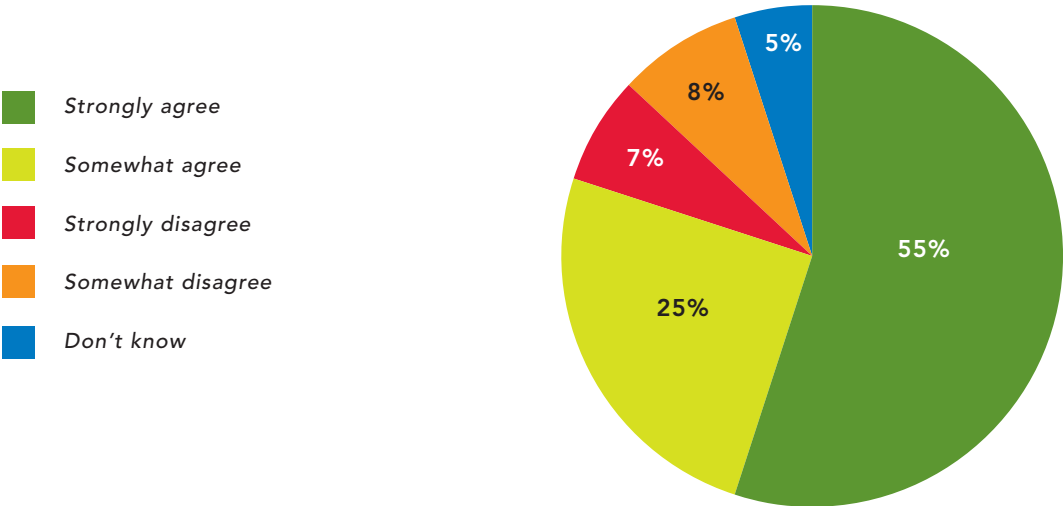
The legislature changed state law last year to allow public school districts to have an unlimited number of charter schools. Which of the following statements most closely matches your opinion of charter schools?



Public school students should be allowed to take certain courses online through the Internet and receive credit for them as long as standards are maintained.



Tennessee should allow public high school students to take as many dual-enrollment classes as they are capable of without having to pay for textbooks or tuition.

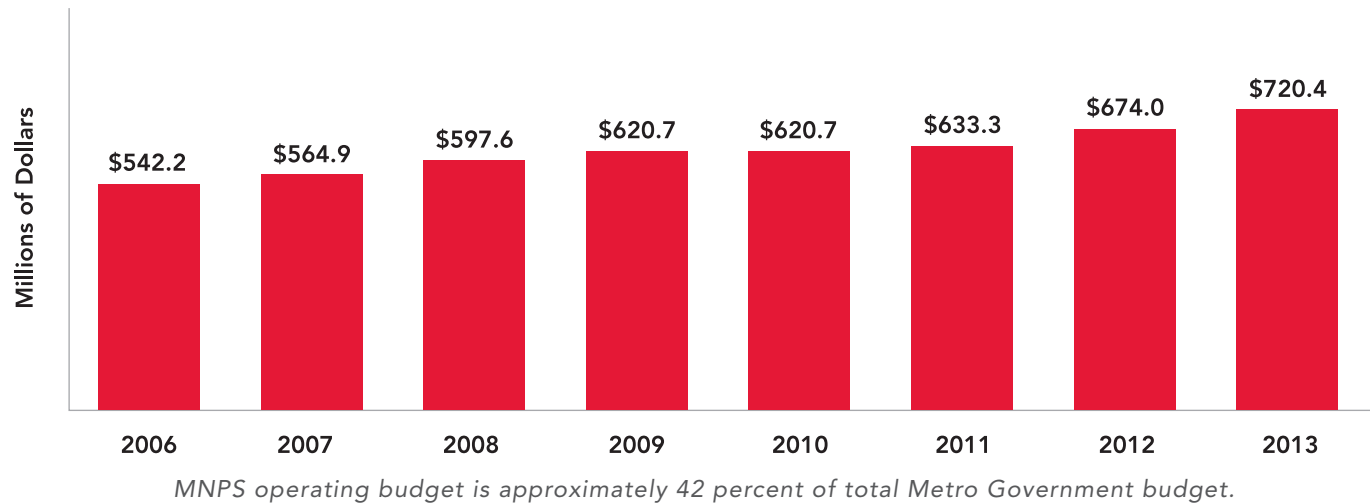


APPENDIX B:  
MNPS  
OPERATING  
BUDGET

MNPS receives state education funding based on the Basic Education Program (BEP) formula. This formula determines the funding level required for each school system in order to provide a common, basic level of service for all students.

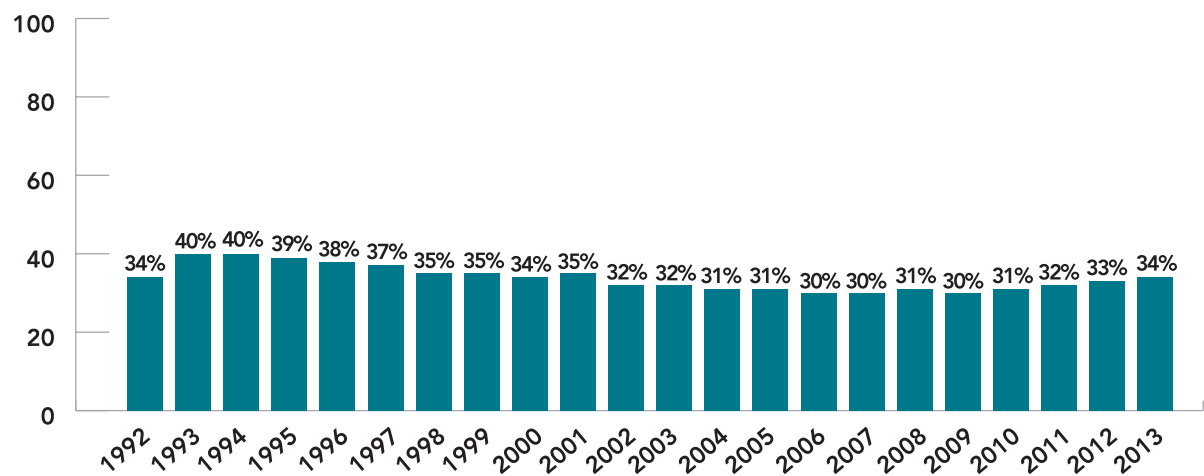
Funding for Metro Schools Operating Budget

Average increase = 4.69% per year (2006 to 2013)



MNPS Operating Budget

State BEP funds as percentage of total MNPS operating revenues, 1992-2013

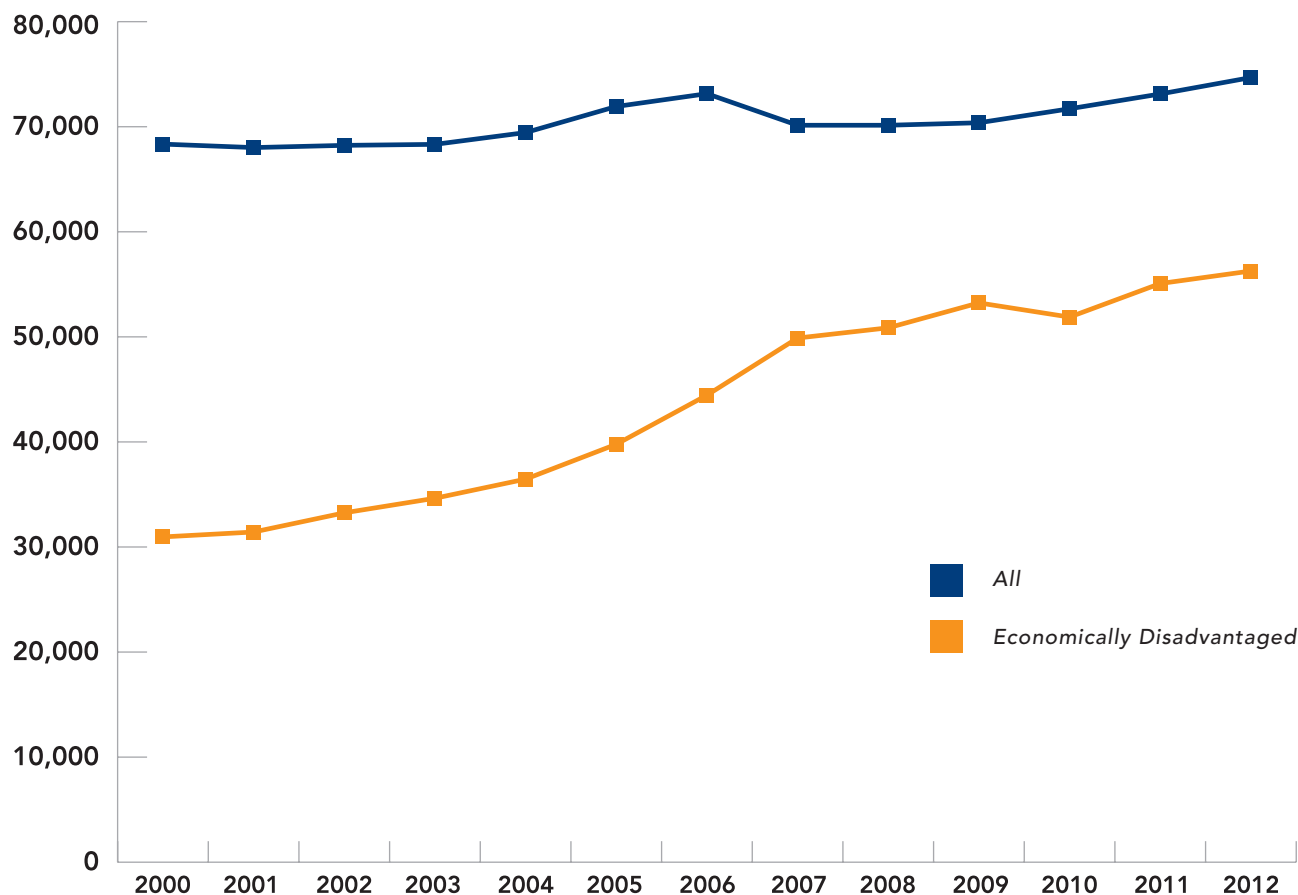


This section represents a summary and analysis of data about MNPS. The most recent data included in the report are from the 2011-2012 school year. Unless otherwise noted, the source of the data for this report is the 2012 Tennessee Department of Education State Report Card, accessible at [www.state.tn.us/education/reportcard](http://www.state.tn.us/education/reportcard).

## DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Overall student enrollment increased for the fifth year in a row, to 74,680. Note that these enrollment figures from the state report card do not reflect pre-K students or students receiving full-time special education services.

### Metro Schools Enrollment 2000-2012



## Demographic Subgroup Data

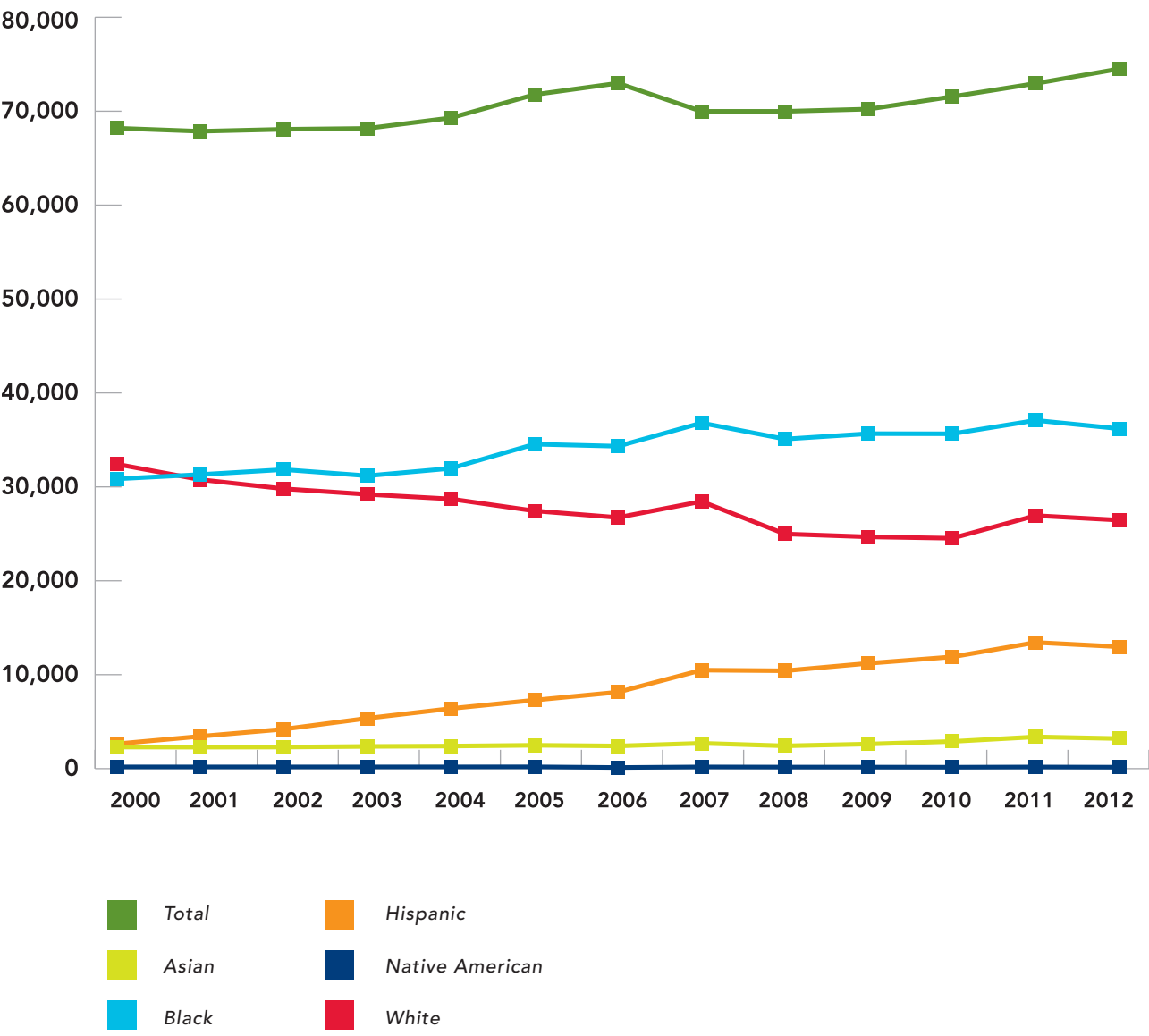
All			Economically Disadvantaged		Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
Year	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
2012	100%	74,680	72%	56,268	13%	9,396	14%	11,287
2011	100%	73,117	75%	55,076	12%	9,001	14%	11,010
2010	100%	71,708	72%	51,882	12%	8,746	14%	10,489
2009	100%	70,378	76%	53,233	12%	8,615	13%	9,374
2008	100%	70,140	73%	50,861	12%	8,658	11%	7,934
2007	100%	70,140	72%	49,889	13%	9,324	9%	7,230
2006	100%	73,144	61%	44,449	14%	9,773	7%	5,128
2005	100%	71,926	55%	39,775	13%	9,710	6%	4,603
2004	100%	69,445	52%	36,459	15%	10,347	7%	5,069
2003	100%	68,321	51%	34,638	15%	9,975	6%	3,825
2002	100%	68,227	49%	33,251	15%	10,583	7%	4,643
2001	100%	68,016	46%	31,426	9%	5,892	6%	4,012
2000	100%	68,345	45%	30,960	15%	10,593	5%	3,212

## Racial Subgroup Data

Asian			Black		Hispanic		Native American		White	
Year	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
2012	4%	3,162	46%	36,252	16%	12,965	0.1%	107	34%	26,489
2011	4%	3,343	46%	37,138	17%	13,422	0.2%	128	33%	26,972
2010	4%	2,853	48%	35,706	16%	11,882	0.1%	105	33%	24,554
2009	3%	2,577	48%	35,719	15%	11,196	0.2%	115	33%	24,701
2008	3%	2,383	48%	35,144	14%	10,399	0.2%	119	34%	25,012
2007	3%	2,659	47%	36,864	13%	10,467	0.2%	134	36%	28,483
2006	3%	2,370	47%	34,378	11%	8,119	0.1%	73	37%	26,770
2005	3%	2,445	48%	34,596	10%	7,264	0.2%	144	38%	27,476
2004	3%	2,361	46%	32,014	9%	6,369	0.2%	139	41%	28,750
2003	3%	2,323	46%	31,222	8%	5,329	0.2%	136	43%	29,241
2002	3%	2,253	47%	31,885	6%	4,164	0.2%	136	44%	29,837
2001	3%	2,244	46%	31,355	5%	3,401	0.2%	136	45%	30,811
2000	3%	2,255	45%	30,892	4%	2,597	0.2%	137	47%	32,464



Subgroup Enrollment 2000-2012



### Withdrawals and Returns

The following table reflects the number of students withdrawing from MNPS and enrolling in another Tennessee public school system or a private school. These numbers are based on a student’s latest withdrawal. They do not reflect: students leaving MNPS to enroll in public school outside of Tennessee; students in private or home school who have never enrolled in MNPS; or students enrolling in MNPS from private school or other Tennessee public school systems.

### MNPS Student Withdrawals and Returns

Year	Other TN Public School Systems		Private Schools	
	Withdrawals	Returns	Withdrawals	Returns
2011-2012	3,740	401	1,173	165
2010-2011	3,697	359	827	59
2009-2010	2,625	300	618	45
2008-2009	3,653	---	779	---
2007-2008	4,027	---	822	---
2006-2007	3,918	---	771	---
2005-2006	3,942	---	752	---
2004-2005	3,748	---	796	---

*Report Card Committee Co-Chair Todd Vandawater speaks with a student at Knowledge Academies during the committee’s tour of the school.*



**Achievement Data**

The Tennessee Department of Education uses the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement test (TCAP) criterion-referenced scores to examine student achievement compared to a predetermined set of standards. Under the Tennessee Diploma Project, in 2009-2010 students took new tests, which measured whether students were proficient on much more rigorous standards. A grade of “C” or below in the following chart means a school district or school has a three-year average achievement level on the grades 3-8 TCAP criterion-referenced tests equal to or below the state average.

The Tennessee Department of Education uses TCAP value-added scores to measure student progress within a grade and subject to demonstrate the influence the school has on students’ performance. Value-added scores measure individual growth from year to year, regardless of proficiency. A grade of “C” means a school district or school has a three-year average gain equal to the state average.

**State Report Card K-8 Letter Grades  
MNPS Achievement Grades K-8**

Subject	2010	2011	2012
Math	D	C	C
Reading/Language	D	D	C
Social Studies	D	C	C
Science	D	D	D

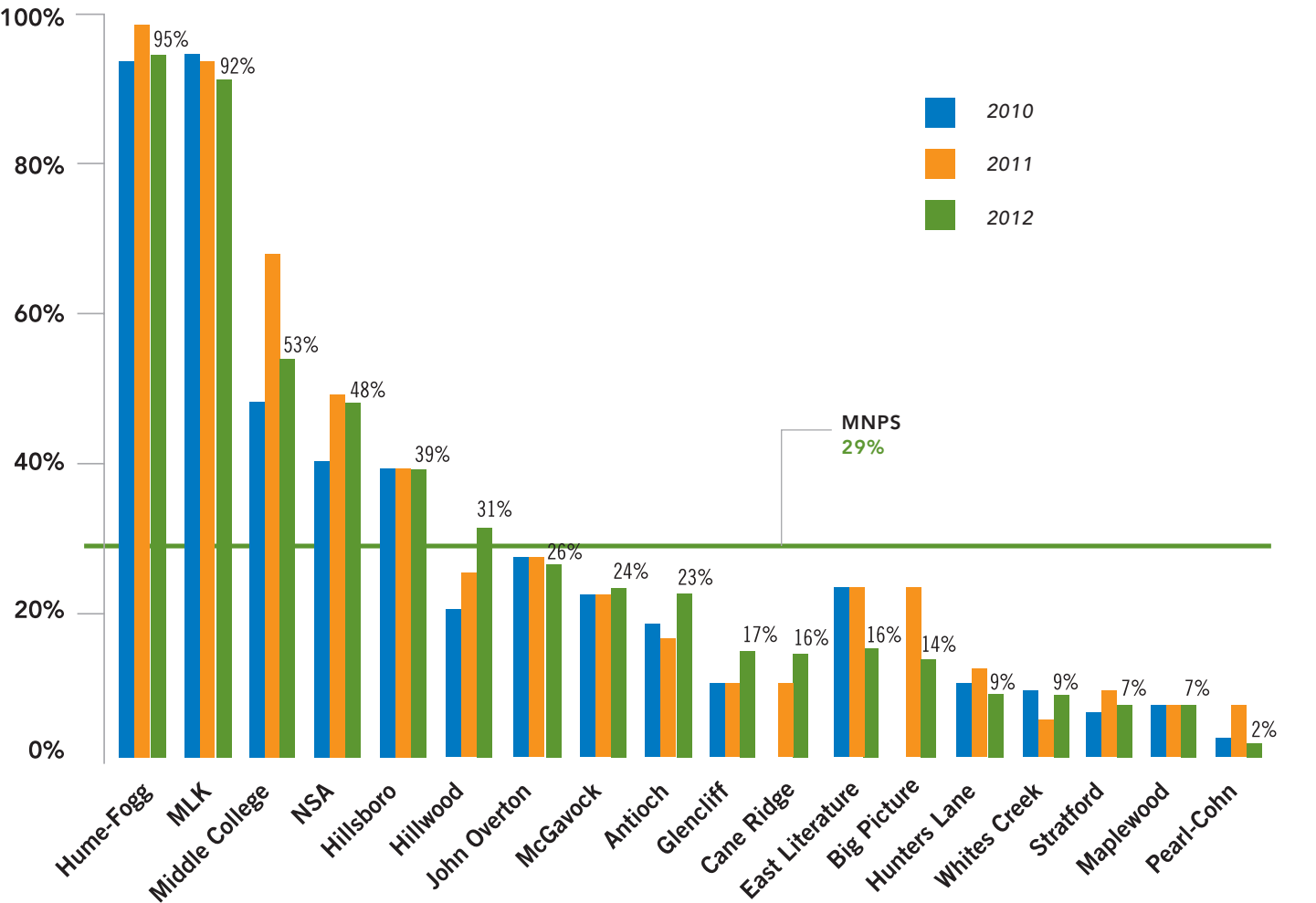
**State Report Card Letter Grades  
MNPS Value-Added Grades K-8**

Subject	2010	2011	2012
Math	D	C	B
Reading/Language	D	D	C
Social Studies	C	C	C
Science	D	D	D

**ACT scores**

Another achievement measure reported by the state is the ACT test. An ACT composite score equal to or greater than 21 is the minimum necessary to qualify for a lottery-funded HOPE scholarship. A minimum score of 19 is the entrance requirement for state colleges and universities.

**Percent of MNPS class of 2012 Scoring 21+ on ACT**



## Average ACT Composite Scores by High School

School	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	≥ 21?
Antioch	17.9	18.1	17.6	17.9	18.1	17.8	17.9	17.1	17.0	17.8	No
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	16.4	16.8	No
East Literature	18.7	19.2	19.9	19.1	18.8	18.3	18.7	17.9	17.7	17.8	No
Glenclyff	17.7	17.3	17.1	16.8	17	17.1	17.2	15.9	16.3	16.8	No
Hillsboro	20.3	19.5	21.1	20.3	20.5	19.9	19.5	19.7	19.4	19.6	No
Hillwood	20.5	20.5	19.9	19.2	19.3	18.9	18.9	17.5	17.8	18.6	No
Hume-Fogg	26.4	26.3	26.7	26.4	26.8	26.7	26.7	26.3	26.9	26.8	Yes
Hunters Lane	17.6	17.9	17.5	17.5	17	17.7	16.9	16.1	16.4	15.7	No
John Overton	19.1	19.3	18.7	18.9	19.4	18.8	19.1	18.2	17.9	18.0	No
Maplewood	15.8	15.8	15.6	16.7	16.3	15.9	15.9	15.3	15.3	15.4	No
Martin Luther King, Jr.	25.4	26.1	25.9	26.2	26.5	27.0	26.7	26.6	25.9	26.5	Yes
McGavock	18.6	18.9	18.3	18.4	18.7	18.3	18.3	17.6	17.5	17.8	No
Middle College	---	---	---	---	23.0	20.0	22.5	21.2	21.8	21.2	Yes
Nashville Big Picture	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	17.3	16.2	No
Nashville School of the Arts	18.2	18.7	19.2	18.6	20	20.2	20.4	19.6	20.5	20.8	No
Pearl-Cohn	16.3	16.2	16.9	16.6	16.2	16.2	16.0	15.4	15.0	14.7	No
Stratford	15.3	16.3	16.6	16.7	16.7	16.1	15.7	15.1	15.4	15.4	No
Whites Creek	16.9	16.7	16.5	15.8	16	16.3	16.3	15.8	15.3	15.8	No
MNPS Average	19.2	19.1	19.3	19.1	19.2	19.1	19.0	18.1	18.1	18.4	No

**Percent of MNPS Students Scoring Above ACT Composite Benchmarks: Classes of 2010, 2011 and 2012**

School	Class of 2010				Class of 2011				Class of 2012			
	21 +		19 +		21 +		19 +		21 +		19 +	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Antioch	86	18%	152	32%	41	16%	84	33%	62	23%	105	39%
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	43	13%	82	25%	52	16%	91	28%
East Literature	41	23%	74	42%	43	23%	71	38%	31	16%	72	37%
Glenclyff	27	10%	60	22%	23	10%	57	24%	33	17%	59	30%
Hillsboro	96	39%	129	52%	105	39%	137	51%	76	39%	104	53%
Hillwood	44	21%	75	36%	59	25%	95	40%	63	31%	92	45%
Hume-Fogg	185	94%	190	97%	219	99%	221	99%	217	95%	229	100%
Hunters Lane	32	10%	66	21%	35	12%	73	25%	27	9%	56	19%
John Overton	83	27%	134	44%	91	27%	131	39%	83	26%	133	42%
Maplewood	12	7%	29	17%	12	7%	25	14%	10	7%	24	16%
Martin Luther King, Jr.	164	95%	170	99%	181	94%	187	99%	166	92%	176	98%
McGavock	112	22%	191	37%	103	22%	165	35%	105	24%	177	40%
Middle College	16	48%	22	67%	23	68%	29	85%	27	53%	39	76%
Nashville Big Picture	---	---	---	---	12	23%	16	31%	6	14%	8	19%
Nashville School of the Arts	61	40%	89	59%	84	49%	117	68%	77	48%	104	65%
Pearl-Cohn	3	3%	18	18%	10	7%	19	13%	3	2%	14	11%
Stratford	8	6%	17	13%	12	9%	23	17%	9	7%	29	12%
Whites Creek	17	10%	35	20%	9	5%	23	12%	14	9%	27	17%
Total	988	27%	1,453	40%	1,105	28%	1,561	39%	1,067	29%	1,545	41%

Accountability Data

Tennessee uses accountability data to determine a school or district’s accountability status under the state’s waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Accountability data include gains on student assessments, gap closure between groups of students and graduation rate. The overall percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced on accountability data may differ from achievement data because of federal requirements related to students with disabilities and English Language Learners. For this reason, the numbers below may be different than those presented in the Chamber’s previous Education Report Cards.

Achievement Measures

MNPS met the majority of its achievement goals. Safe Harbor provisions are applied to achievement targets only, and include TVAAS student growth results and reduction in the percent of students scoring below proficient by 10 percent from the previous year, 19 percent from two years previously, or 27 percent from three years previously.

I Improved  
D Declined

Achievement	3rd-Grade Math	7th-Grade Math	3rd-Grade Reading/ Language	7th-Grade Reading/ Language	3-8 Reading/ Language	3-8 Math	Algebra I	English II	Grad Rate
Goal Met	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Improvement	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	D

**Gap Closure Measures:** MNPS did not meet the majority of its Gap Closure goals, but did test at least 95 percent of students for all individual subgroups and did not have any individual subgroups decline in a majority of measures.

Gap Closure Goal Met	All Students v. African Am., Hispanic, Native Am.	Economically Disadvantaged (ED) v. Non-ED	Limited English Proficient (LEP) v. Non-LEP	Students with Disabilities (SWD) v. Non-SWD
Algebra I (9-12)	N	Y	N	N
English II (9-12)	Y	Y	N	N
Math (3-8)	N	N	N	N
Reading/Language (3-8)	N	N	N	N

Subgroup Improvement	African American	Asian	Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	White	ED	LEP	SWD
Algebra I (9-12)	I	I	---	I	---	I	I	I	I
English II (9-12)	I	D	---	D	---	I	I	I	I
Math (3-8)	I	I	---	I	---	I	I	I	I
Reading/Language (3-8)	I	I	---	I	---	I	I	I	I

### MNPS 3-8: Reading/Language Arts and Math proficiency

Under the new accountability system, the State of Tennessee sets Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) based on increases in the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced and decreases in achievement gaps. In grades 3-8 TCAP tests, students are measured based on their scores in Reading/Language Arts and Math. Students are classified as Below Basic, Basic, Proficient or Advanced.

#### Percent of MNPS Students in Grades 3-8 Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Reading/Language Arts by Subgroup

Year	All	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2012	41%	56%	31%	32%	57%	32%	33%	17%
2011	38%	54%	29%	29%	53%	30%	31%	14%
2010	35%	52%	25%	25%	52%	25%	25%	11%

#### Percent of MNPS Students in Grades 3-8 Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Math by Subgroup

Year	All	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2012	39%	62%	29%	35%	54%	32%	32%	26%
2011	33%	56%	23%	28%	47%	26%	30%	20%
2010	28%	52%	18%	22%	42%	20%	20%	17%

### MNPS 9-12: Reading/Language/Writing and Math proficiency

High schools are measured by whether they meet Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) in end-of-course exams (English II and Algebra I) and for meeting a specific on-time graduation rate (77.5 percent in 2011-2012). English III and Algebra II will be included at a later date.

#### Percent of MNPS Students in Grades 9-12 Scoring Proficient or Advanced in English II by Subgroup

Year	All	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2012	49%	53%	40%	37%	68%	39%	28%	16%
2011	47%	59%	36%	37%	67%	37%	26%	13%
2010	47%	71%	37%	36%	66%	36%	22%	21%



## Percentage of Proficient or Advanced in English II

High Schools	2010		2011		2012		All Students Target for 2012 Accountability (% Growth Target from Previous Year)
	All	Econ. Dis.	All	Econ. Dis.	All	Econ. Dis.	
Antioch	45.4%	42.0%	43.0%	40.8%	43.5%	42.9%	45.6% (2.6%)
Cane Ridge	42.5%	37.1%	31.9%	29.3%	49.5%	41.1%	34.5% (2.6%)
East Literature Magnet	56.6%	49.6%	48.7%	43.1%	52.0%	47.8%	51.3% (2.6%)
Glencliff	30.8%	26.2%	31.8%	31.3%	35.4%	33.6%	34.4% (2.6%)
Hillsboro	58.9%	43.2%	46.7%	25.5%	60.5%	46.3%	49.3% (2.6%)
Hillwood	51.2%	38.4%	53.6%	39.4%	48.4%	38.1%	56.2% (2.6%)
Hume-Fogg	99.2%	96.2%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	102.2% (2.6%)
Hunters Lane	28.7%	26.1%	35.8%	33.0%	30.8%	28.8%	38.4% (2.6%)
John Overton	50.3%	41.0%	46.8%	37.5%	44.3%	34.7%	49.4% (2.6%)
Maplewood	23.0%	19.9%	24.5%	24.5%	24.5%	23.3%	27.1% (2.6%)
Martin Luther King, Jr.	99.0%	97.0%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	101.0% (2.6%)
McGavock	48.5%	38.4%	53.3%	44.0%	49.5%	40.4%	55.9% (2.6%)
Middle College	84.0%	80.0%	77.3%	75.0%	94.4%	100%	---
Nashville Big Picture	38.7%	28.6%	34.0%	25.0%	65.8%	64.7%	36.6% (2.6%)
Nashville School of the Arts	77.3%	71.4%	73.9%	69.0%	83.9%	79.1%	76.5% (2.6%)
Pearl-Cohn	15.6%	14.6%	21.5%	21.2%	21.8%	20.3%	26.1% (4.6%)
Stratford	30.0%	26.6%	32.5%	29.6%	36.2%	34.4%	35.1% (2.6%)
Whites Creek	31.4%	29.8%	29.3%	28.1%	25.7%	24.5%	31.9% (2.6%)
MNPS	47.0%	36.0%	46.6%	36.6%	48.7%	38.6%	49.2% (2.6%)

Percent of MNPS Students in Grades 9-12 Scoring Proficient or Advanced in Algebra I by Subgroup

Year	All	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2012	42%	49%	36%	41%	52%	38%	22%	28%
2011	38%	43%	34%	33%	47%	34%	22%	26%
2010	29%	44%	23%	27%	40%	23%	20%	21%



A student ambassador from the Academies at Hillwood High School led a touring group in September 2012 that included Education Report Card Committee members Evelyn Davidson and Brian Fesler, and committee Co-Chair Ron Corbin.

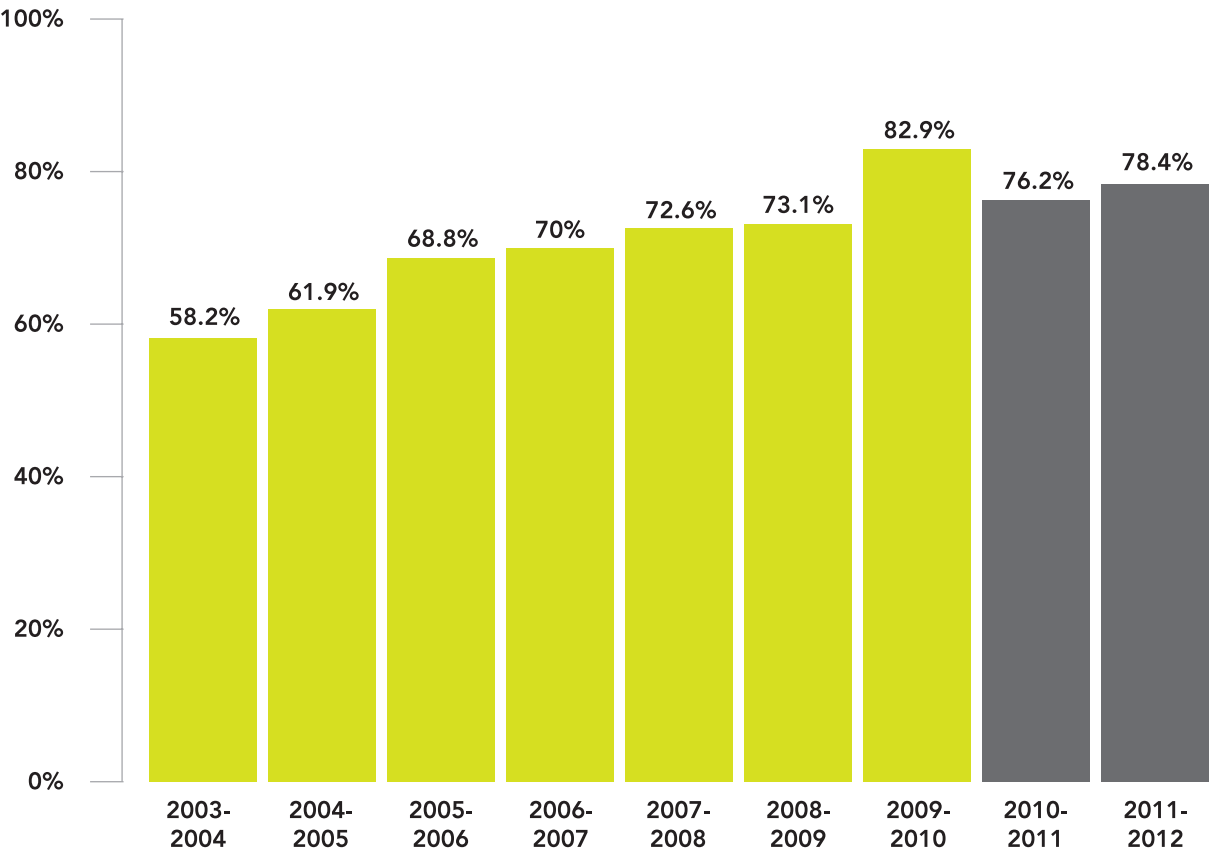
## Percentage of Proficient or Advanced in Algebra I

High Schools	2010		2011		2012		All Students Target for 2012 Accountability (% Growth Target from Previous Year)
	All	Econ. Dis.	All	Econ. Dis.	All	Econ. Dis.	
Antioch	30.7%	31.8%	34.7%	33.5%	44.1%	42.4%	37.7% (3.0%)
Cane Ridge	20.3%	16.4%	46.1%	42.1%	53.2%	52.8%	49.1% (3.0%)
East Literature Magnet	29.8%	23.9%	9.0%	8.4%	36.0%	34.1%	12.0% (3.0%)
Glencliff	24.1%	23.0%	39.8%	39.1%	40.8%	40.6%	42.8% (3.0%)
Hillsboro	22.2%	15.5%	22.5%	17.2%	27.7%	22.9%	25.5% (3.0%)
Hillwood	24.9%	19.9%	20.6%	16.1%	27.7%	20.2%	23.6% (3.0%)
Hume-Fogg	98.0%	100.0%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	102.1% (3.0%)
Hunters Lane	17.1%	17.9%	19.2%	17.5%	23.6%	23.8%	22.2% (3.0%)
John Overton	29.7%	25.2%	31.6%	29.5%	30.3%	27.4%	34.6% (3.0%)
Maplewood	24.1%	21.7%	34.6%	34.5%	40.3%	39.1%	37.6% (3.0%)
Martin Luther King, Jr.	93.1%	96.7%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	102.0% (3.0%)
McGavock	31.5%	26.7%	48.6%	44.9%	58.3%	53.5%	51.6% (3.0%)
Middle College	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Nashville Big Picture	12.3%	9.4%	17.1%	17.9%	34.0%	33.3%	20.1% (3.0%)
Nashville School of the Arts	57.4%	40.5%	46.3%	44.4%	60.2%	64.5%	49.3% (3.0%)
Pearl-Cohn	20.3%	19.6%	31.4%	31.0%	31.5%	29.6%	34.4% (3.0%)
Stratford	30.5%	28.0%	38.4%	38.8%	30.5%	29.2%	42.6% (4.2%)
Whites Creek	17.1%	13.8%	27.4%	27.6%	26.3%	25.2%	30.4% (3.0%)
MNPS	29.0%	23.0%	37.6%	33.5%	41.8%	37.3%	40.6% (3.0%)

**Graduation Rates**

As part of the state’s new accountability system under the ESEA waiver, MNPS had to achieve a graduation rate of 77.5 percent in 2010-2011 in order to meet its 2012 target. The district fell short due to the change in the state’s calculation method, achieving a graduation rate of 76.2 percent. The accountability target for 2013 is 77.7 percent during the 2011-2012 school year, so MNPS has already met one of its targets for next year by achieving a graduation rate of 78.4 percent in 2011-2012. The goal of the new accountability system is to reduce the number of non-graduates by 6.25 percent annually, which would cut the number in half over eight years.

**MNPS Graduation Rates\***



\* The 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 graduation rates were calculated based on a four-year graduation rate for all students. Prior to 2010-2011, ELL and special education students were given a fifth year to complete a regular diploma.

## Graduation Rates by High School

School	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2012 target (for 2013 accountability)
Antioch	63.8	66.5	66.9	75.3	71.5	74.7	82.2	72.2	69.8	73.9
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	81.6	82.1	82.8
East Literature	56.1	97.3	97.8	99.2	99.3	97.3	98.4	94.1	96.1	94.5
Glenclyff	50.1	53.3	63.4	68.4	66.6	73.3	81.1	69.7	71.6	71.6
Hillsboro	67.3	63.6	74.4	70.9	81.0	81.6	82.7	79.8	80.3	81.1
Hillwood	61.5	63.3	68.7	75.8	75.8	67.7	86.0	82.4	84.0	83.5
Hume-Fogg	99	99	98.5	99.5	98.5	100.0	99.5	100.0	99.6	100.0
Hunters Lane	64.7	69.4	72.7	78.3	77.7	76.5	80.7	71.1	77.8	72.9
John Overton	69.8	72	75.1	79.6	79.1	77.9	87.3	77.9	78.8	79.3
Maplewood	42.8	41.2	42.6	58.2	69.3	69.5	87.4	68.2	68.4	70.2
Martin Luther King, Jr.	100	99.4	98	99.3	99.4	99.3	99.4	100.0	99.4	100.0
McGavock	51.4	56.1	68.5	74.3	76.3	75.8	81.6	72.3	77.6	74.0
Middle College	---	---	---	---	---	97.0	95.3	97.3	94.1	97.5
Nashville Big Picture	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	95.7	94.6	96.0
Nashville School of the Arts	89.7	89.7	90.9	95.2	96.5	98.1	95.1	91.8	94.5	92.3
Pearl-Cohn	50.6	46.2	65.1	67.7	66.1	68.0	80.5	77.7	69.3	79.1
Stratford	38.1	50.5	54.5	73	64.6	67.6	79.6	64.9	64.4	67.1
Whites Creek	57.2	53.7	65.8	64.5	64.7	67.5	78.5	68.2	71.0	70.2
MNPS	58.2	61.9	68.8	70	72.6	73.1	82.9	76.2	78.4	77.7

 Met target

 Did not meet target

**Attendance**

Under No Child Left Behind, the state had an attendance goal of 93 percent for grades K-12. The new accountability system under the ESEA waiver no longer includes an attendance target.

**Attendance by Grade Tier**

Year	K - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12
2012	95.5		91.9
2011	95.2		91.3
2010	95.2		91.8
2009	95.4		91.4
2008	94.1		87.4
2007	94.9		90.2
2006	95.2	94.5	89.5
2005	95.2	95.1	88.9
2004	95.9	94.8	91.5
2003	95.9	94.8	91.9
2002	95.8	94.7	92.2
2001	95.9	94.2	90.8

## Attendance Rate (%) by High School

School	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Antioch	92.6	91.5	88.7	90.8	95.7	90.6	91.5	92.7	92.7	93.3
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	---	94.7	93.9	91.5	92.2
East Literature	93	95.6	94.9	95.1	95.8	95.8	95.6	95.0	95.7	95.5
Glencliff	89	87.8	86.5	86.7	88.1	89.2	92.3	91.3	90.8	91.0
Hillsboro	91.1	90.1	91	90.3	91.4	91.6	90.8	91.5	90.7	92.5
Hillwood	90.2	89.2	87.9	88.3	88.4	90.7	89.8	92.3	92.5	92.2
Hume-Fogg	92.2	95.3	95.5	95.5	95.6	96.5	96.3	96.6	95.1	96.9
Hunters Lane	92	91.6	91.3	89.5	89.7	89.8	90.9	90.4	91.2	91.3
John Overton	91.5	91.4	90.1	91.2	91.8	92.1	92.0	92.9	92.2	92.0
Maplewood	88.4	87.3	85.4	86.1	85.4	89.7	88.5	89.3	88.7	90.2
Martin Luther King, Jr.	97.3	97.3	95.3	94.9	96.1	96.5	96.6	96.5	94.8	96.9
McGavock	88.5	90.5	88.7	87.6	88.8	88.8	90.4	91.0	90.7	91.3
Middle College	---	---	---	---	---	---	96.0	95.6	95.6	95.2
Nashville Big Picture	---	---	---	---	---	---	95.8	93.9	92.0	93.2
Nashville School of the Arts	NA	93.6	93.1	93.9	94.0	94.1	94.0	94.2	93.7	93.4
Pearl-Cohn	87.3	86.6	84.6	88.5	91.2	91.7	89.7	90.4	90.1	89.4
Stratford	87.6	86.6	82.3	83.2	89.2	84.6	88.3	87.9	87.2	88.4
Whites Creek	89	89.4	89.1	89.9	88.9	88.9	89.8	91.4	90.7	87.0
MNPS Average	NA	NA	91.1	89.3	90.2	87.4	91.4	91.8	91.3	91.9

## Suspensions as a Percentage of the Number of Students in Each Subgroup

Year	% Total	% Asian	% Black	% Hispanic	% White
2012	15.9%	4.8%	21.2%	9.3%	8.5%
2011	12.8%	4.0%	18.6%	8.8%	8.0%
2010	12.9%	4.4%	18.7%	8.6%	7.6%
2009	14.7%	5.0%	20.7%	9.9%	9.3%
2008	17.0%	6.1%	23.4%	12.3%	10.9%
2007	17.3%	6.4%	25.0%	11.6%	10.6%
2006	17.5%	5.6%	23.4%	10.9%	9.9%
2005	15.9%	5.8%	22.8%	11.0%	10.1%
2004	14.8%	6.7%	21.4%	9.0%	9.4%
2003	14.7%	6.7%	21.2%	9.3%	9.4%
2002	15.6%	7.2%	20.9%	10.9%	10.7%
2001	17.2%	8.6%	23.3%	12.3%	11.7%

### Suspensions

The percentage of students suspended increased in 2012. African-American students continue to be significantly overrepresented compared to other demographic groups.



## Davidson County Compared to Peer Systems in Tennessee

Compared to the other three large urban school systems in Tennessee, MNPS ranks below Knox and Hamilton counties, but above Memphis in terms of graduation rate, number of schools in good standing under NCLB, state achievement letter grades and ACT scores. MNPS also has a larger percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged than Knox and Hamilton counties and a larger percentage of Limited English Proficient students than all three.

## Comparison of the Four Large Urban School Systems in Tennessee

	Davidson	Memphis	Knox	Hamilton
Accountability Status	Intermediate	In Need of Subgroup Improvement	Intermediate	Intermediate
Achievement Measures	Met majority of achievement goals.	Met majority of achievement goals.	Met majority of achievement goals.	Met majority of achievement goals.
Gap Closure Measures	Did not meet the majority of Gap Closure goals; did not have any individual subgroups decline in a majority of measures.	Did not meet the majority of Gap Closure goals; at least one subgroup declined in majority of measures.	Did not meet the majority of Gap Closure goals; did not have any individual subgroups decline in a majority of measures.	Did not meet the majority of Gap Closure goals; did not have any individual subgroups decline in a majority of measures.
Reward Schools	14 out of 167 Reward Schools (8%)	20 out of 167 Reward Schools (12%)	10 out of 167 Reward Schools (6%)	6 out of 167 Reward Schools (4%)
Priority Schools	6 out of 83 Priority Schools (7%)	69 out of 83 Priority Schools (83%)	1 out of 83 Priority Schools (1%)	6 out of 83 Priority Schools (7%)
Focus Schools	13 out of 169 Focus Schools (8%)	5 out of 169 Focus Schools (3%)	5 out of 169 Focus Schools (3%)	4 out of 169 Focus Schools (2%)
2012 Graduation Rate	78.4%	70.3%	90.3%	81.2%
Student Enrollment	74,680	101,696	55,160	41,214
Grades 3-8 achievement state letter grades (Math, reading, social studies, science)	CCCD	DFFF	BBAB	BCBC
Grades 3-8 "value-added" state letter grades (Math, reading, social studies, science)	BCCD	BDBC	BCAC	BDBD
2012 ACT Composite	18.4	16.4	20.6	18.9
Economically disadvantaged students	72.4%	85.1%	47.3%	56.0%
Students with Disabilities	12.6%	16.0%	12.9%	16.9%
Limited English Proficient	14.3%	6.9%	3.5%	4.3%
Per-pupil expenditure	\$11,012	\$11,250	\$8,479	\$9,277

The Education Report Card Committee is sincerely grateful to the teachers, administrators, students, parents, elected officials and experts who took time to meet or talk with us. The following individuals were kind enough to lend us their candid opinions and insight, as well as provide us with information we needed to complete our report.

## **METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**

The Honorable Karl Dean, Mayor

## **METROPOLITAN BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION**

The Honorable Cheryl Mayes, Chair, District 6

The Honorable Will Pinkston, Member, District 7

## **MNPS CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF**

Dr. Jesse Register, Director of Schools

Fred Carr, Chief Operating Officer

Dr. Paul Changas, Executive Director of Research, Assessment and Evaluation

Alan Coverstone, Executive Director of Innovation

Dr. Lora Hall, Associate Superintendent of Middle Schools

Laura Hansen, Director, Information Management and Decision Support

Chris Henson, Chief Financial Officer

Dr. Julie McCargar, Executive Director of Federal Programs

Brenda Steele, Associate Superintendent of Elementary Schools

Jay Steele, Associate Superintendent of High Schools

Carol Swann, Coordinator of Charter Schools

## **CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATORS**

Randy Dowell, Founder and Executive Director, KIPP Academy Nashville

Jeremy Kane, Founder and CEO, LEAD Public Schools

## **TEACHERS**

Jared Humm, Computer Teacher, Jere Baxter Middle

Machel Lucas, Literacy Coach, Thurgood Marshall Middle

Jennifer Neuville, Administrator/Seventh-Grade Math Teacher, LEAD Academy Middle

Jake Ramsey, Eighth-Grade Team Leader/Algebra I Teacher, KIPP Academy

## **METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

Stephen Henry, President

## **STATE OF TENNESSEE**

Chris Barbic, Superintendent, Tennessee's Achievement School District  
Kevin Huffman, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Education  
Dr. Gary Nixon, Executive Director, Tennessee State Board of Education

## **CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS**

Whitney Spalding Spencer, Director of Authorizer Development, National Association of Charter School Authorizers  
Justin Testerman, Tennessee Charter School Incubator  
Matt Throckmorton, Tennessee Charter Schools Association

## **COMMUNITY**

Bill DeLoache, Trustee, Joe C. Davis Foundation  
Eric Dewey, President and CEO, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville  
Margaret Dolan, Vice President of Community Relations, Ingram Industries Inc.; Chair, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville; and Chair, Nashville Public Education Foundation  
Freddie O'Connell, Former Board Member, Nashville Global Academy  
Cabot Pyle, Director of Charitable Giving, Turner Family Foundation

## **CONSULTANTS**

Roger Shirley, Editorial Director, McNeely Pigott & Fox Public Relations

## **SCHOOLS VISITED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Hillwood High School, Dr. Steve Chauncy, Executive Principal  
Knowledge Academies, Art Fuller, Founder and Executive Director  
Nashville Prep, Ravi Gupta, Founder and School Director  
STEM Prep, Dr. Kristin McGraner, Founder and Executive Director

## **MNPS LIAISON TO THE COMMITTEE**

Fred Carr, Chief Operating Officer

## APPENDIX E: STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT CARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2011 REPORT

### **1. Create a professional development curriculum for educators on how to communicate and work with culturally diverse parents and families, and incentivize teachers to take the training.**

*Partially implemented.* In 2012, the district hired an executive director of professional development to create a comprehensive plan for professional development offerings. Under her direction, ongoing opportunities for professional development are delivered in new ways as well as in traditional sessions.

The Office of English Learners launched sessions on working with English Learners specifically designed for support staff, including front office personnel. The department also offers a series of workshops on working with families from specific cultures that are open to all employees. Attendees have included employees in Professional Development, Leadership and Learning, Communications, and Customer Service, as well as school-based personnel. Getting school-based support personnel to attend training on a school day continues to be a challenge.

The restructuring of the Department of Family and Community Partnerships addresses the need to bridge the gap between schools and diverse families. Bicultural and bilingual employees have been added to this staff. This department began offering The Poverty Simulation, a nationally recognized role-play training program. It offers participants a typical month of living in poverty by playing the roles of family members, agencies and businesses that serve families. The program aims to help educators understand what families in poverty experience and help them develop policies and practices that are sensitive to these families' needs. The department has also hosted a Parent

Engagement Summit and has family engagement workshops available to all school personnel. At this point, financial incentives have not been created for individual teachers to take training. Principals are using these staff development sessions to build the culture of diversity and caring within each building. (MNPS)

### **2. Set ambitious goals for parental usage of GradeSpeed, the district's online portal for student progress and assignments, and ensure ease of use with cell phones and other mobile devices.**

*In progress.* GradeSpeed has been implemented and is now available at every school, and allows parents to see attendance, grades and assignments. GradeSpeed can also be set to send alerts to parents when attendance or grades fall below a threshold determined by the parent. In addition to having information sent from schools at the beginning of the year, the district has reached out to parents to offer information and assistance in setting up access to this valuable tool through a variety of existing mechanisms such as Parent University, PTAs/PTOs and community/parent education providers. GradeSpeed is accessible from cell phones and mobile devices that connect to the Internet.

Some parents' lack of home access to the Internet is a barrier. It is estimated that 56 percent of MNPS families have broadband Internet access at home. The district is developing an initiative called Anytime Access for All, and is working with multiple partners with a goal of all Metro Schools families having home Internet access and the opportunity to own a technology device. (MNPS)

**3. Ensure a welcoming, customer-service-oriented culture toward parents and community by raising the expectations, accountability and compensation for front desk staff in each of our schools.**

*Partially implemented.* The Communications Office regularly offers a four-hour Customer Care training program for all employees. To date, nearly 3,000 Metro Schools employees have completed the training. The district also began a mystery shopper program using employee and parent volunteer shoppers to evaluate customer service skills in action. Individuals with particularly high scores are awarded a token of appreciation and recognized in the district newsletter. As with other training, getting school-based personnel to step away from their duties to attend is a challenge. The district is now scheduling cluster-level training in schools in an effort to address this issue. (MNPS)

**4. Use the MNPS data warehouse to help determine the effectiveness of resource allocation to drive improvement in the classroom.**

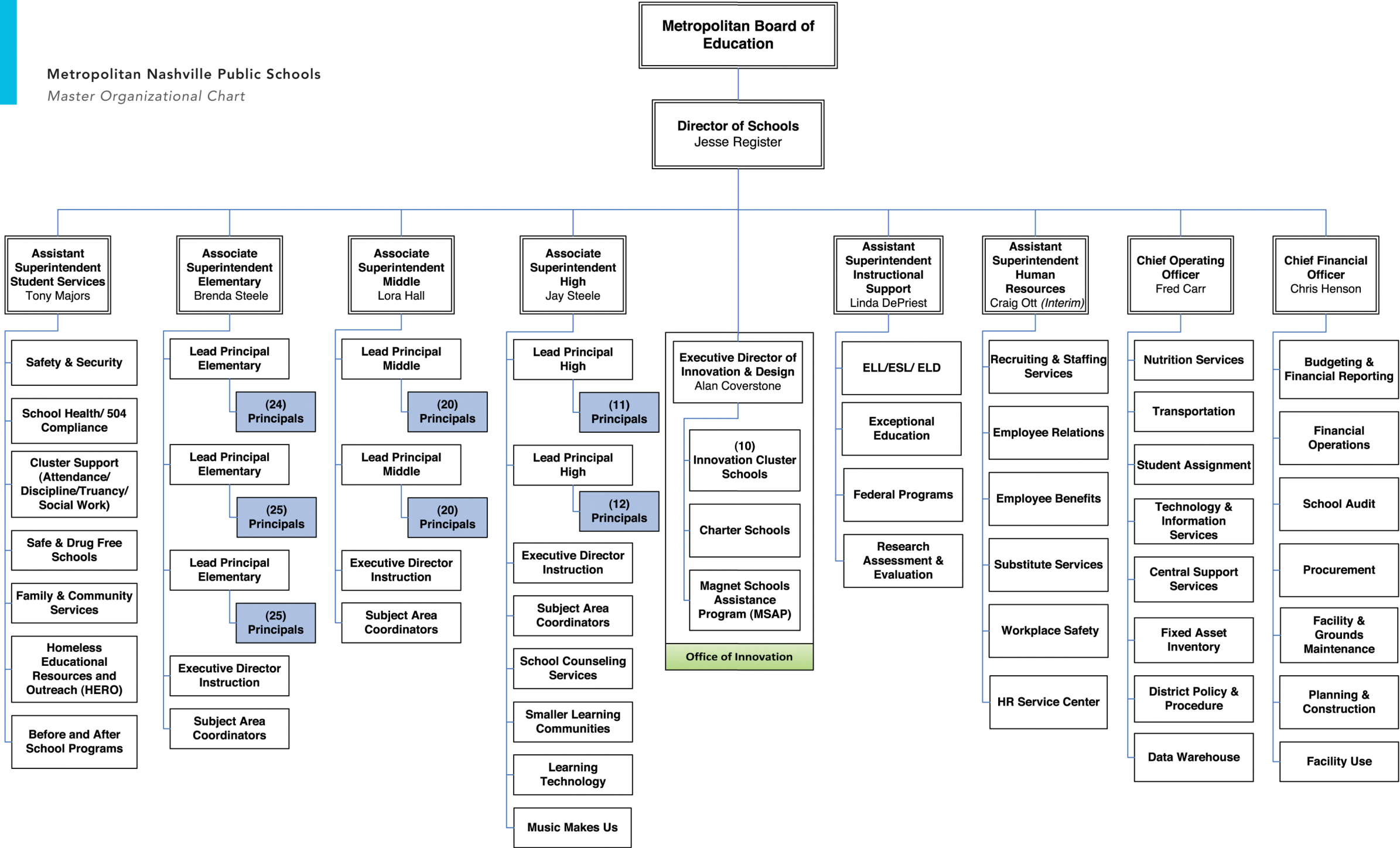
*In progress.* The data warehouse is fully accessible to school staffs and is being used to identify early warning signs in student performance/behaviors. These data are also used to facilitate instruction designed for the needs of individual students. Data warehouse reports with teacher time in service, education and staff development, to name a few, are used to assess teacher effectiveness and how these factors affect student success. This will allow new opportunities for accountability and research into best practices for hiring, training and recruiting teachers. Financial data are currently being entered into the data warehouse so financial resources and programs can be linked to student performance. (MNPS)

**5. The State of Tennessee should make growth on ACT performance a factor in determining whether high schools and systems meet the state's annual accountability targets.**

*Not implemented.* The State of Tennessee recently implemented a new accountability system based on our waiver from certain provisions from No Child Left Behind. The new system is based on many conversations with district leaders and stakeholder groups around the state. It has helped focus districts and schools around the goals of growth and improvement for all students, and closing gaps by ensuring faster progress for the students who are furthest behind. The Tennessee Department of Education looks forward to continuing to refine the state's accountability system in the future. However, the department anticipates that it will be at least two years before substantial changes are made to the accountability framework, since at that point the state will also be transitioning to a new assessment system aligned to Common Core State Standards. (TN Department of Education)

The district recognizes that ACT is one important indicator of a student's preparation for college. ACT scores are a lagging indicator of changes in student performance. MNPS supports the recommendation that the state use ACT as one factor in accountability. In order to use this as a measure, the state will need to engage with ACT and districts to determine growth levels that are ambitious, but achievable. (MNPS)

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools  
*Master Organizational Chart*



### **ACADEMIES OF NASHVILLE**

MNPS high school transformation strategy initiated in 2006, in which the district's 12 zoned high schools have been reorganized into freshman academies for ninth-grade students and career and thematic academies for grades 10-12. [www.myacademyblog.com](http://www.myacademyblog.com)

### **ACT | AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING**

The ACT is a standardized test for high school achievement and college admissions in the United States. [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

### **ALIGNMENT NASHVILLE**

A nonprofit created in 2004 to coordinate the resources and efforts of Nashville's nonprofit community to support Metro Schools. In 2007, this focus was broadened to include children's health. [www.alignmentnashville.org](http://www.alignmentnashville.org)

### **AMOs | ANNUAL MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES**

New state performance targets that provide rigorous, but realistic, college- and career-readiness goals and a new basis for Tennessee's accountability system. The new accountability system has two overriding objectives: growth for all students every year and closing achievement gaps by ensuring faster growth for those students who are furthest behind.

### **BEP | BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The funding formula through which state education dollars are generated and distributed to Tennessee school systems.

### **CHARTER SCHOOL**

A public school governed and operated independently of the local school board, often with a curriculum and educational philosophy different from other schools in the district. First authorized by the Tennessee state legislature in 2002, charter schools have a contract, or charter, with their local school board to operate within that district.

### **ELL | ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

Students who have been assessed and identified as needing ELL instruction, and are actively receiving ELL services.

### **ESEA FLEXIBILITY**

States now have the option of requesting flexibility in the form of a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education regarding specific requirements of No Child Left Behind in exchange for rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction. [www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility](http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility)

### **FOCUS SCHOOLS**

Under Tennessee's new accountability system, focus schools are the 10 percent of schools across the state with the largest achievement gaps, subgroup performance below a 5 percent proficiency threshold, or high schools with graduation rates less than 60 percent that are not already identified as priority schools. This designation does not necessarily indicate low achievement overall.

### **GRADESPEED**

An online platform provided by MNPS that allows teachers to post assignments and grades for parent and student review.

### **LEADS | LONGITUDINAL EDUCATION AND ANALYSIS DECISION SUPPORT**

The technical name for MNPS' data warehouse.

### **LEP | LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT**

Students who are actively receiving ELL services, as well as students who are less than two years removed from exiting the ELL program.

### **MNPS | METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS** [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org)

### **MNPS ACHIEVES**

Dr. Register's education reform and strategic planning process, composed of nine committees, or Transformational Leadership Groups (TLGs).

## **NACSA | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZERS**

NACSA is a national organization that provides training, consulting and policy guidance to authorizers and education leaders across the country with a goal of increasing the number of high-quality charter schools and improving student outcomes nationally. [www.qualitycharters.org](http://www.qualitycharters.org)

## **NAEP | NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS**

Also known as the “nation’s report card,” it is given to a sample of students across the country, allowing for comparisons across states in fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math. [www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard](http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard)

## **NCLB | NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT**

The 2001 reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, meant to hold primary and secondary schools measurably accountable to higher standards. Requires 100 percent of students (including all significant demographic groups of students) within a school or school system to make AYP and reach the same set of state standards in math and reading by 2014.

## **NPEF | NATIONAL PUBLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION**

Formerly called the Nashville Alliance for Public Education, this nonprofit raises private donations to support public education in Nashville. [www.nashvillepef.org](http://www.nashvillepef.org)

## **ONE NASHVILLE**

A public campaign and website launched in September 2010 as an initiative of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce to encourage all Nashvillians to support Metro Schools by volunteering, donating or being advocates. Founding partners include MNPS, PENCIL Foundation, NPEF, Stand for Children, Alignment Nashville, and the Mayor’s Office. [www.onenashville.org](http://www.onenashville.org)

## **PARENT UNIVERSITY**

A partnership between MNPS and Alignment Nashville in which the school system and area nonprofits provide free training and educational programs to MNPS parents.

## **PENCIL FOUNDATION**

A nonprofit formed in 1982 that coordinates volunteers in Metro Schools and supports partnerships between business and community organizations and individual schools. [www.pencilfd.org](http://www.pencilfd.org)

## **PRIORITY SCHOOLS**

Under Tennessee’s new accountability system, priority schools are schools in the bottom 5 percent of overall performance across tested grades and subjects.

## **REWARD SCHOOLS**

Under Tennessee’s new accountability system, reward schools are schools in the top 5 percent of schools in the state for performance, as measured by overall student achievement levels, and the top 5 percent for year-over-year progress, as measured by gains in student achievement – a total of 10 percent of schools in all.

## **STEM | SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATH**

## **TCAP | TENNESSEE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

The annual assessment in Tennessee given to grades 3-8 in math, reading, social studies and science.

## **TFA | TEACH FOR AMERICA**

A national program implemented in Nashville in 2009 that selectively recruits college graduates from around the country to teach for at least two years in high-poverty, high-need K-12 public schools. [www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org)

## **TVAAS | TENNESSEE VALUE-ADDED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

A statistical analysis performed by Dr. William Sanders at SAS Institute Inc. estimating the academic progress or growth of individual students. TVAAS summary data are reported at the school and school system level.

## **TITLE 1**

Federal funds aimed to bridge the gap between low-income students and other students. The U.S. Department of Education provides supplemental funding to local school districts through states to meet the needs of at-risk and low-income students.



**APPENDIX H:**  
**TWENTY YEARS**  
**OF EDUCATION**  
**REPORT CARD**  
**COMMITTEE**  
**MEMBERS:**  
**1993-2012**

Alfonzo Alexander, Inroads, Inc.: 2001  
Celeste Anderson, American General Insurance: 1997  
Alene Arnold, Parent: 2007, 2008  
Christon Arthur, Tennessee State University: 2007, 2008, 2009 (Co-Chair)  
Mebenin Awipi, Tennessee State University: 2002  
Paige Baker, League of Women Voters: 1997  
William Beaird, B&M Marketing: 2004  
Fabian Bedne, Hart Freeland Roberts: 2004, 2005, 2006  
Price Bell, Jr., DZL Management Company: 2008, 2009, 2010  
Luz Belleza, Metropolitan Social Services: 2009, 2010, 2011  
Keith Belton, Fisk University; Matthew Walker Comprehensive Health Center: 2008, 2009, 2010 (Co-Chair)  
Bob Birdsong, SMS Holdings: 2012  
Mimi Bliss, Bliss Communications: 1998, 1999  
Al Bodie, Bodie & Associates: 1994  
Ray Bowman, Spruce Street Baptist Church: 2008, 2009, 2010  
William Braddy, Bank of America: 2007  
Jim Brooks, Watkins College of Art and Design: 2001, 2002  
Mark Cappellino, Primary Leadership, LLC: 2010, 2011, 2012  
Thomas G. Cigarran, American Healthcorp: 1994  
Roberta Ciuffro, Tennessee Performing Arts Center: 2002  
Dawn Cole, Waste Management, Inc. of TN: 2012  
Stephanie Coleman, Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce: 2012  
Ron Corbin, RBBC Holdings: 2011 (Co-Chair), 2012 (Co-Chair)  
Patricia Crotwell, Richard Braun & Associates: 1998  
Yuri Cunza, Nashville Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce: 2005, 2006, 2007  
Pam Daly, DK Brand Strategy: 2009, 2010, 2011 (Co-Chair)  
Evelyn Davidson, Retired MNPS Teacher: 2011, 2012  
Rosetta Davis, Edgehill Community Center: 1994  
Ron Dickson, FastSigns: 1998  
Andrea Dillenburg, Nashville Ballet: 2007, 2008, 2009

P. Rodger Dinwiddie, Students Taking A Right Stand: 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006

V.H. (Sonnye) Dixon, Capitol Realty; Hobson United Methodist Church: 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 (Chair), 2000 (Chair), 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006

Jacobia Dowell, Healthways: 2007, 2008, 2009

Buck Dozier, Tennessee State Fair: 2008

Robert Duthie, Duthie Associates, Inc.: 1993

Jeffrey Edwards, Robert Baird & Co. Inc: 2001

Karen Edwards, HERO'S Inc: 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006

J.D. Elliott, Memorial Foundation: 1995, 1996

Laura Ellis, Ericson Marketing & Communications: 1994

Brian Fesler, Church of Scientology: 2010, 2011, 2012

Billy Fields, Tornado Recovery Board: 1999

Alice Forrester, Parent: 1993

Matthew Foster, Harwell, Howard, Hyne, Gabbert & Manner: 2007

Derrick Free, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network: 2011, 2012

Elois Freeman, The Parent Leadership Institute: 2005, 2006

Mary (Kaki) Friskics-Warren, Dan and Margaret Maddox Charitable Fund: 2010, 2011, 2012

Marcy Singer Gabella, Vanderbilt University: 2003

Debby Gould, Nashville Public Education Foundation: 2003, 2004, 2005 (Co-Chair), 2006 (Co-Chair)

Catrina Haley, Highwoods Properties, Inc.: 2009, 2010

Pat Halper, Tying Nashville Together: 2006, 2007, 2008

Jon Hastings, Boulton Cummings Connors & Berry: 1997

Michael Hayes, C.B. Ragland: 2007, 2008 (Co-Chair), 2009

Harold Hazelip, David Lipscomb University: 1993

Michael Head, Ingram Industries: 1995

Ted Helm, Modular Designs: 2000, 2001 (Chair), 2002 (Chair), 2003 (Co-Chair), 2004 (Co-Chair), 2005, 2006

Marc Everett Hill, Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011

John Hilley, NMG Advisers; Patmos LLC: 2008, 2009, 2010

Derrick Hines, Tennessee Technology Center at Nashville: 2012

Emil Holloway, The Nashville Network: 1995, 1996, 1997

Bill Hook, Vanderbilt Divinity Library: 1998, 1999, 2000

Lisa Hunt, St. Ann's Episcopal Church: 2001

Brenda Hunter, Arrival, Inc.: 1993

Tahir Hussain, Nashville Kurdish Forum: 2004, 2005, 2006

Betty Johnson, Goodwill Industries: 2001, 2002

Tristan Johnson, MNPS Student: 2002

Jim Jose, Corporate Lodging, Inc.: 1995, 1996

Becky Kantz, The Leading Edge: 2010, 2011, 2012

Howard Kastrinsky, King & Ballow: 2000, 2001, 2002

Laura Kelley, Vanderbilt Medical Center: 1997

Patty Kelley, Nashville Area Jr. Chamber of Commerce: 1997

Elizabeth Knox, Bank of America: 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 (Co-Chair)

Roberta Kramer, Catholic Charities of Tennessee, Inc.: 1994

Julia Landstreet, Nashville Civic Design Center: 2011

Cate Lewandowski, Educational Services of America: 2010, 2011

Clint Lewis, Mount Hopewell Baptist Church: 2005, 2006, 2007

Sara Longhini, Fannie Battle Day Home for Children: 2012

Bobby Lovett, Tennessee State University: 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998

Deirdre Macnab, H.O.P.E.: 1997

Candy Markman, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville: 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005

Lonnell Matthews, Member, Metropolitan Council: 2008, 2009

Dianne McDerman, Barge Waggoner Sumner & Cannon: 2011, 2012

Rita McDonald, Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce: 2004, 2005, 2006

Keri McInnis, First Union Bank; Union Planters Bank: 1999, 2000

Robert E. McNeilly, Jr., First American Trust: 1993 (Chair), 2007 (Co-Chair)

Catherine McTamaney, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University: 2008

Danielle Mezera, Vanderbilt University: 1996

Jackson Miller, Bizen: 2012

Sandra Moore, Member, Metropolitan Council: 2010, 2011, 2012

Susan Moriarty, YMCA Center for Civic Engagement: 2011, 2012

Gwen Moritz, Nashville Bar Association: 1998

Louis Morris, BellSouth Business: 2001

LaSonia Moss, Emdeon: 2005, 2006, 2007

Ramona Muldrow, Martha O'Bryan Center: 1993

Bill Nelson, Little Planet Learning, Inc.: 2011, 2012

Kathy Nevill, Innovative Funding: 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996

Ande Gerth Nickell, The Bank of Green Hills; Hemophilia Health Services: 1995, 1996, 1997

Jane Norris, League of Women Voters: 2000, 2001

Ginger Hausser Pepper, Tennessee State University: 2007, 2008, 2009

David Peters, Universal Robotics: 2010, 2011, 2012

Philip M. Pfeffer, Ingram Distribution Group Inc.: 1993

Bonnie Pilon, St. Thomas Hospital: 1995, 1996 (Chair), 1997

Virginia Pirkle, Conexion Americas: 2009

Avi Poster, Chi Cuz Music: 2002, 2003 (Co-Chair), 2004 (Co-Chair), 2005 (Co-Chair), 2006 (Co-Chair)

Jason Powell, Forest Hills Realtors: 2010, 2011, 2012

Patricia Pugh, Parent: 1993

Cabot Pyle, The James Stephen Turner Family Foundation: 2009 (Co-Chair); 2010 (Co-Chair)  
 Jonah Rabinowitz, W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School: 2005, 2006  
 Mario Ramos, Attorney: 1994, 1995, 1996  
 Dale Randels, Heery International: 2001  
 Elisha Richardson, Orthodontist: 2004, 2005, 2006  
 Erin Richardson, ARC of Davidson County: 2007, 2008  
 Mark Robertson, Change, Learning & Leadership; Satori Leadership: 1999, 2000, 2001  
 Trey Rochford, Rochford Construction & Realty: 2001, 2002  
 Khaled Sakalla, International Academy of Design & Technology: 2007, 2008, 2009  
 Vicente Saminiego, Meharry Medical College: 2008  
 Phil Schoggen, Retired Professor: 1998, 1999, 2000  
 Joyce Searcy, Bethlehem Centers of Nashville: 2007, 2008 (Co-Chair)  
 Sharon Secor, Freelance Journalist: 2000  
 Brian Shaw, Reliant Bank: 2012  
 Jacqueline Shrago, ThinkLink Learning, Inc.: 2003  
 Bob Simmons, HCA: 1996, 1997  
 Benjamin Smith, Youth Speaks Nashville: 2008, 2009, 2010  
 Bobby Lee Smith, Boys & Girls Club of Middle Tennessee: 2008, 2009, 2010  
 Jill Smythe, McCann Steel: 1999, 2000  
 Lynn Stewart, United Neighborhood Healthcare: 2004, 2005, 2006  
 Mike Stewart, Waller Lansden Dortch & Davis: 1998  
 Patricia Stokes, Urban League of Middle Tennessee: 2011, 2012  
 Norman Tenenbaum, ARC of Davidson County: 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006  
 Jeff Themm, Church Street Centre; Themm Enterprises: 1996, 1997, 1998  
 Carol Thigpen, NashvilleREAD: 1994, 1995, 1996  
 Ann Thomas, Safety Kleen: 1998  
 Johniene Thomas, Meharry Medical College: 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002  
 Kim Bradley Thomason, First American Corporation; ClientLogic; Thomason Financial Resources: 1998, 1999, 2000, 2007  
 James Threalkill, 100 Black Men: 1993  
 Jay Tift, ALOC Group: 2009  
 Joseph Towner, Minorico, L.P.: 1993  
 Phil M. Trella, Bryan Pendleton Swats & McAllister: 1995 (Chair), 1996, 1997  
 Scott Tucker, Nashville Association of Sales Professionals: 1999  
 Cindy Tyler, Norman Gillis & Associates; Jack, Lyon & Jones: 1996, 1997 (Chair), 1998  
 Victor C. Tyler, Sr., University of Tennessee: 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003  
 Alison Vai, Benton Hall Academy: 2010  
 Todd Vandawater, Fifth Third Bank: 2010, 2011, 2012 (Co-Chair)  
 Tony Vaughn, Vaughn-Taylor-Greene Real Estate: 1994

Dawana Wade, YMCA of Middle Tennessee: 2010  
Jerry Warren, Belmont University: 1994  
Rita Weekes, Vanderbilt University: 1999  
Colleen Conway-Welch, Vanderbilt University School of Nursing: 1993, 1994 (Chair), 1995  
Dick Wells, The Aerostructures Corporation: 1996  
Holley Stein West, Katcher Vaughn & Bailey Public Relations: 2011, 2012  
Susan West, Belmont University: 2011, 2012  
Margaret Whitfield, Retired MNPS Teacher: 2007, 2008, 2009  
Cynthia Wiel, Hubbard, Berry, and Harris PLLC: 2009, 2010, 2011  
Samantha Wigand, United Way: 2006, 2007  
Anderson Williams, Oasis Center: 2006, 2007, 2008  
Doug Williams, Middle Tennessee State University: 2009, 2010, 2011  
Randy Wilmore, The Frist Clinic; Clarksville Surgical Associates; Nashville Medical Group: 1997, 1998 (Chair), 1999, 2000  
Joe B. Wyatt, Vanderbilt University: 1995  
Allyson Young, Young Motivation Group: 2012  
Eva Young, DeVry University: 2007

***The purpose of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce is to facilitate community leadership to create economic prosperity.***

As we invest in strategies to help improve public education in our city, we depend greatly on our dedicated volunteers, such as the 25 community leaders who serve on the Report Card Committee. Meeting nearly every Friday morning from August through December, these members give their time, energy and best thinking to the successful completion of this report.

Those who serve for three consecutive years rotate off the committee to give others an opportunity to serve, and we would especially like to thank Co-chair Todd Vandawater, Mark Cappellino, Brian Fesler, Kaki Friskics-Warren, Becky Kantz, Sandra Moore, David Peters and Jason Powell for their commitment to this work over the past three years.

We would like to thank all of our presenters and panelists for taking time to share their expertise and viewpoints with us. It is only through their candor and insights that we are able to accurately report the successes and challenges related to our city's educational system, as well as search for creative solutions. We would especially like to thank Hillwood High School, STEM Prep, Knowledge Academies and Nashville Prep for taking the time to host us, allowing the committee to see firsthand some of the excellent work taking place every day in MNPS' district and charter schools.

In addition, we take this opportunity to thank Metro Schools for their full support of our work. The staff at MNPS make time to visit with our committee, supply us with information and data when we need it, and are incredibly gracious when confronted with the inevitable last-minute request. In particular, we'd like to recognize the invaluable assistance of the committee's district liaison, MNPS Chief Operating Officer Fred Carr, who attended every meeting and provided valuable information and feedback throughout the process.

In addition, the committee enjoyed the excellent hospitality of the YMCA of Middle Tennessee, which hosted our weekly meetings at their downtown location. Finally, we would like to thank the Chamber staff who provided exceptional support for the committee's work. We recognize the logistical support of the Chamber's Program Manager Etta Bell, who helped ensure our meetings were productive, as well as the feedback and expertise of the Chamber's Chief Policy Officer Marc Hill, whose knowledge of Nashville's education landscape provided context and guidance for the committee's work. This report is the collective work of so many. It is our hope that it will continue to inform educators, businesspeople, parents and citizens, and that it will generate ongoing community discussion regarding the progress of our public schools.



2009 AWARDS FOR COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE  
16th Annual Education Report Card | American Chamber of Commerce Executives  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin | August 5, 2010



2010 AWARDS FOR COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE  
17th Annual Education Report Card | American Chamber of Commerce Executives  
Los Angeles, California | August 4, 2011



2011 AWARDS FOR COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE  
18th Annual Education Report Card | American Chamber of Commerce Executives  
Louisville, Kentucky | August 2, 2012



211 Commerce Street, Suite 100 | Nashville, TN 37201  
615-743-3000 | [nashvillechamber.com](http://nashvillechamber.com)

