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AREA CHAMBER  
of COMMERCE

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# 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Education Report Card

2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

Submitted February 2010  
by the Chamber Education  
Report Card Committee

Co-Chairs:  
Dr. Christon Arthur & Cabot Pyle

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# Executive Summary

Each February, when the Chamber Report Card Committee releases its findings and recommendations, the preceding school year serves as our unit of analysis. In nearly any given year, this approach makes sense. There is enough distance from the end of the previous school year to allow us to examine the final student achievement results, and each school year tends to have its own unique flow and feel. We say all this as we recognize that 2008-2009 was a very different kind of year—one that began in turmoil and finished in turnaround.

In fall 2008, we would have been hard-pressed to predict a positive assessment of the school year. The school board was engaged in a national search for a director of schools, with very little community participation or public confidence of success. There were tensions between the board and the mayor over community discussions about governance. And there were media reports chronicling disagreements between the school system and the Tennessee Department of Education over what the state was telling the system to do, and how those directives impacted the school system budget.

In January, the board completed its search and hired Dr. Jesse Register as Metro Nashville Public Schools' (MNPS) third permanent director over the past decade. Dr. Register began by engaging community partners and the mayor and reorganizing a school system central office accustomed



to working in silos. In areas in which he felt the district lacked the necessary capacity for improvement, he has brought in outside expertise. The year was capped by the launching of MNPS Achieves, a broad effort engaging more than 100 school staff and community members through nine Transformational Leadership Groups, charged with mapping out the system's reform strategy over the next several years. The school board has become more focused on the business of student achievement and has unified around a new mission and vision for the district that includes the goal of Metro Schools being "the first choice for families."

Due to these improvements, the 2008-2009 school year leaves this committee with a sense of **cautious optimism**. The optimism comes from observing a bold but collaborative district leadership, the possibility of making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for a second consecutive year that would move the district into Good Standing under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and the unique window of opportunity for dramatic education reform at the local and state level. The caution comes from student achievement that remains below the state average, just as Tennessee's K-12 standards become more rigorous. It also comes from recognition that a complete turnaround of the system will not take place in one year, but will instead take three to five years of annual, measurable progress.

Our school system's diversity is currently its greatest competitive

advantage and, at the same time, one of its most significant challenges. The special student populations of economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners (ELL), and special education are all groups of students who have struggled to meet the proficiency requirements of NCLB. Strong community partnerships and clear expectations for parental involvement are critical to meeting the needs of these students. For students learning English and students with disabilities, an instructional approach that begins with the most inclusive setting possible sends a clear message about how we value and leverage our diversity, and encourages the same high expectations for all students.

School funding is directly related to school system performance. While we recognize this is a difficult economic time for families, businesses and government, the mayor and Metro Council should protect the school budget from any budget reduction that sets back recent progress or inhibits our potential for improvement in the immediate future. In turn, it is the school system's obligation to prove to the public and elected officials during the 2010 budget process that it is operating effectively and efficiently. The first step would be to fully implement and accelerate the 102 recommendations made by a business consulting firm, CSS International, designed to transform MNPS business practices and allow our schools to accurately handle and track all funds, including federal monies.





## Recommendations

To their great credit, each year the school board and administration carefully consider the Report Card's findings and recommendations. The school district's response to last year's Report Card recommendations can be found in Appendix F. In looking back at the 2008-2009 school year, the committee hopes MNPS and the broader community will give each of these 10 recommendations careful thought and consideration.



## School System Performance

- i. Implement fully the CSS recommendations to transform Metro Schools' business processes.
- ii. Leverage the resources of Metro government to improve the quality of our schools by creating or expanding strong partnerships with the city library, parks, police, and health departments.
- iii. Develop a district-level expectation for parental involvement that supports and reinforces each child's learning outside of school, in partnership with city officials, business leaders, and community nonprofits.

## Education Funding

- iv. Complete the promised state funding for English Language Learners (ELL) to meet the class size ratio of 1:20.
- v. Call a constitutional convention early in the next governor's term for the purpose of designing an education funding and delivery system capable of achieving the new Tennessee Diploma Project standards.
- vi. Report annually the amount of funding each Metro school receives, in total and by category of funds (teacher salaries, Title I, private support, etc).

## Special Student Populations

- vii. Educate students in the most inclusive setting possible, with appropriate training and supports for general education teachers.
- viii. Develop a system-wide strategy to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population that includes recruiting multilingual teachers and principals, providing ongoing cultural competency and diversity training for all school staff, and staffing translation services adequately.
- ix. Create a spectrum of programs to meet the wide range of student special needs: from a Metro school or a charter school focused solely on supporting older special education students who are ready to transition from school to work, to an expansion of services that challenge gifted students to reach their full potential.
- x. Connect Supplemental Education Services (SES) provided through the federal Title I program to the city's after-school initiatives, with the mayor taking a leadership role in promotion, coordination, and quality assurance.



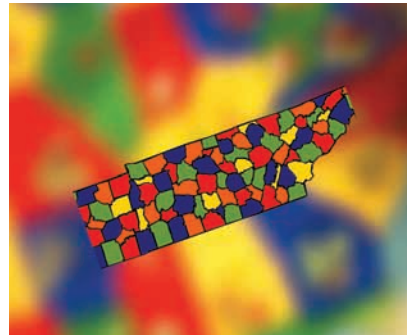
# School System Performance

For the 17th consecutive year, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce has organized a diverse and committed group of Nashvillians to assess the progress of MNPS. The 23 members of the Education Report Card Committee began their work in September 2009 and conducted interviews with state, city and school system leaders, as well as principals, teachers, parents, and students. The committee also collected data and visited schools before developing findings and recommendations. This report represents our consensus view of the 2008-2009 school year.

## Key Student Performance Data in Tennessee

Each year the committee considers the overall performance of the school system, with student achievement as the most significant factor. Before providing a brief explanation of the kinds of data we examined, it is important to note that the state has changed the grading scale on the 2009 state report card in anticipation of the more rigorous K-12 standards being implemented in the 2009-2010 school year. Future years will now be compared to the average statewide achievement and growth that students made in 2008-2009, instead of the previous benchmark year, which was 1997-1998. Because student achievement in Tennessee has risen considerably since 1998, the new base year has a much higher benchmark, causing letter grades to drop. While comparisons of current letter grades with previous years will no longer be valid, we have included the previous letter grades in this report simply as historical reference.

For grades 3-8, students take a state test that measures student proficiency in reading, mathematics, social studies and science. Each fall, the Tennessee Department of Education reports the results of these tests on its annual report card ([www.tennessee.gov/education](http://www.tennessee.gov/education)) and assigns a letter grade to schools and



districts for each of these subjects. The federal NCLB Act is not a separate test, but requires a certain percentage of all students and a percentage of each significant

demographic group of students to be at least “proficient” on state tests for reading and math. Every few years, the required percentage of students who must be proficient rises, until 2014, when 100 percent of students must reach proficiency.

The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) is a statistical analysis of the state test data that estimates the growth in each student’s learning in a given year. Because this analysis tracks the progress the student makes in a school year (the “value added” by the teacher), even students who may start the year significantly below grade level can show dramatic TVAAS gains if they are learning more than a typical year’s worth of growth. The state also assigns letter grades on the state report card for TVAAS results, with a “C” awarded to districts and elementary and middle schools for matching the average statewide gain made in 2009.



At the high-school level, the on-time graduation rate is a key NCLB measure, requiring the vast majority of students to graduate in four years plus a summer school, or essentially be counted as a dropout. Student proficiency in reading and math under NCLB is measured by the English II and Algebra gateway exams. Not related to NCLB, but very important to measuring college readiness is the ACT, which provides a composite score up to a perfect 36, as well as individual scores for English, math, reading, and science. In addition, MNPS students take the Explore exam in 8th grade and the PLAN exam in 10th grade. These standardized tests help project future ACT performance, allowing for early academic interventions to make sure students are on course to graduate prepared for postsecondary education.

The committee also examined areas of performance outside academics, such as fiscal management and business practices, parent and community engagement, and school facilities, as these all impact the effectiveness of a \$620 million organization with more than 10,000 employees.

## A Tale of Two Semesters

In reflecting upon our five months of research, we would best characterize the 2008-2009 school year as one that has left us with **cautious optimism** for the future. This hopeful outlook is the result of a 180-degree change in direction in the middle of the school year. In fall 2008, outside of being inspired by the hard work of individual teachers and staff, it would have been difficult for an observer of the system to be optimistic at all. News reports described the poor administration of federal funds, uncertainties over governance issues clouded relations between the school system and the city, the Tennessee Department of Education continued to chastise the system, and the school board had isolated itself from the community during a long search for a new director of schools.

A year later, in fall 2009, we found a new sense of urgency, a willingness to lead boldly, and a sharpened focus in Metro Schools. We trace this change to Dr. Jesse Register becoming director of schools in January. Upon his appointment, Dr. Register moved quickly to improve the infrastructure of the district. He reorganized the central office, created 310 new school-based instructional coaches by reassigning staff, recruited top principal and executive-level talent to the district, and brought in outside expertise to help the district in areas needing dramatic improvement.

Even though most of Dr. Register's moves were made late in the school year or during the summer, the announcement in July 2009 that MNPS had made AYP on the annual state tests indicated the district was getting on track. Subsequent events have further reinforced our optimism. The school board adopted a new and more focused mission and vision statement for the district, with the goal of making Metro Schools "the first choice for families." Dr. Register and Mayor Dean have formed a positive and visible working relationship on key issues such as truancy, special education, and teacher compensation reform. In addition, Dr. Register's positive working relationship with the teachers' union, MNEA, has helped create a collaborative spirit in the district.

The last 18 months have served as an extraordinary window of opportunity for education reform at both the local and state level. In Nashville, we've seen the arrival of national education nonprofits in our city, the opening of additional innovative high school programs, and a complete turnaround in district attitude toward embracing charter schools. At the state level, the 2009 legislative session produced significant revisions to the charter school law, allowing more charter schools to open and many more students to be eligible to attend them. This





## We found a new sense of urgency, a willingness to lead boldly, and a sharpened focus in Metro Schools

flurry of reform activity was capped by the January 2010 special legislative session called by Governor Bredesen, resulting in legislation that ties 50 percent of a teacher's annual evaluation to student performance.

Our growing optimism is tempered by continued low academic achievement in the face of rising standards. Perhaps the most important element of the state's education reform efforts during this time has been the Tennessee Diploma Project, the governor's successful push to raise Tennessee's K-12 academic standards and requirements for high school graduation. Due to this, the standards in place for the 2009-2010 school year have moved from being among the nation's weakest to becoming one of the most rigorous in order to adequately prepare our graduates for college and career. Put simply, the district has struggled to meet the requirements of low standards, and now the bar has been raised.

We are also cautious in our assessment because improving Metro Schools is not a one-year endeavor. Lasting improvement of our schools will build over a three- to five-year period and will be marked by measurable increases in student achievement every year. We must also acknowledge that recent history has shown brief flashes of progress, followed by several years of disappointing results. Back in the years when this Report Card Committee issued a single letter grade to the school system, MNPS was awarded its highest marks by the Chamber follow-

ing the excitement generated by a mayoral and council election that made education the top campaign issue. But the "B-" awarded for 1999 was followed by a "C" in 2000 and a "U" (for "unacceptable") in 2001. And while the previous director of schools made good on his promise to kiss a pig if the district increased test scores by 7 percent in 2002, unfortunately for Nashville's schoolchildren, the pig was spared further embarrassment for the next five years.

The committee has every reason to believe that the 2008-2009 school year can represent a turning point in the history of Metro Schools. The pieces are in place to make this happen: strong district leadership; a supportive mayor, Metro Council and state government; and an engaged community. As important as this past year was, next year's committee will have the task of evaluating a year of monumental significance. We look forward to the prospect of chronicling the growth from this single year of improvement to a two-year trend of increased success for all Nashville's students.

### Commendations

As in previous years, the committee would first like to praise the areas in which MNPS has made significant improvement during the 2008-2009 school year:

**Metro Schools have moved into "improving" status.** For the first time since the 2004-2005 school year and for the second time in seven years, MNPS satisfied the requirement to make AYP under the state's accountability system. A school system meets AYP by the required percentage of students reaching proficiency, or by making enough progress to qualify for "safe harbor." As implemented in Tennessee, the federal No Child Left Behind law requires systems and schools to make AYP each year, or face a continuum of sanctions. MNPS is in the fourth level of sanctions,

“Restructuring 1,” on the state’s high-priority list. A system must make AYP two consecutive years to move off the state list into “Good Standing.” Making AYP the first year means the system is “improving” and remains at the “Restructuring 1” level. A chart showing how the safe harbor determination is made can be found on page 45.

**High school redesign efforts are showing early signs of success.**

At the school system level, a district must make AYP in grades K-8 or in grades 9-12 in order for the entire district to make AYP. MNPS made AYP in grades 9-12 for the first time and was the only large urban school district in the state to make AYP in the high school years. In addition, the high school graduation rate moved up slightly to 73 percent, capping a 15 percentage point increase over the last six years. The district’s move to engage students in smaller learning communities shows promise, as the percentage of students dropping out in a given year (4.4 percent) continues to fall.

**There have been gains in 9-12 reading and K-8 math.** High school proficiency on the English II Gateway exam improved across all subgroups, with the biggest jumps for the special student populations of ELL (+8 percent) and students with disabilities (+7 percent). Grades 3-8 met the 2009 proficiency target for math and all student subgroups showed improvement, with ELL students making a 7 percentage-point gain.

**Three MNPS high schools have received national recognition.**

Hume Fogg Academic Magnet, Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet, and Hillsboro High School were recognized by *Newsweek* magazine as being among the top 1,300 high schools in the country for the fourth consecutive year. In addition, Hume Fogg and MLK were the only Tennessee high schools in the state to make the top 100, charting at 28 and 29, respectively.

**The city’s focus on truancy is paying off.** High school attendance increased significantly from 87.4 percent to 91.4 percent, moving within range of the state goal of 93 percent. In addition, the number of out-of-school suspensions dropped from 12,390 and 17 percent of all students enrolled in 2007-2008 to 10,930 and 14.7 percent of all students enrolled in 2008-2009.

**Strong district leadership is bringing in new talent and expertise.**

The school board, once mired in divisive debates over issues unrelated to student achievement, has become visibly focused and unified. New Director of Schools Dr. Jesse Register has reorganized staffing and shifted resources to the classroom. He has also set in motion a collaborative long-term reform strategy called MNPS Achieves, consisting of nine issue-specific Transformational Leadership Groups. Dr. Register has also recruited veteran high school principals from Irving, Texas, and Chattanooga, Tenn., to lead McGavock and East Literature High Schools, as well as hired a new chief operating officer, associate superintendent of high schools, and assistant superintendent of instructional support. The district has also shown a new willingness to bring in expertise from the outside, such as the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, to perform a meta-analysis of district audits and reports, and CSS, a private firm that is helping the district transform its business practices.

**Public perception of the district is improving.**

Nashvillians responded favorably to the district turnaround in the first half of 2009, with a May 2009 Chamber public opinion poll showing increased ratings on a five-point scale for the district overall and for each of the grade-level tiers: elementary, middle, and high school. Even more Nashvillians believe it is important to improve education, moving from 85 percent in 2008 to 87 percent in 2009. Education remains the most important issue for the city (28 percent), with the economy and crime each

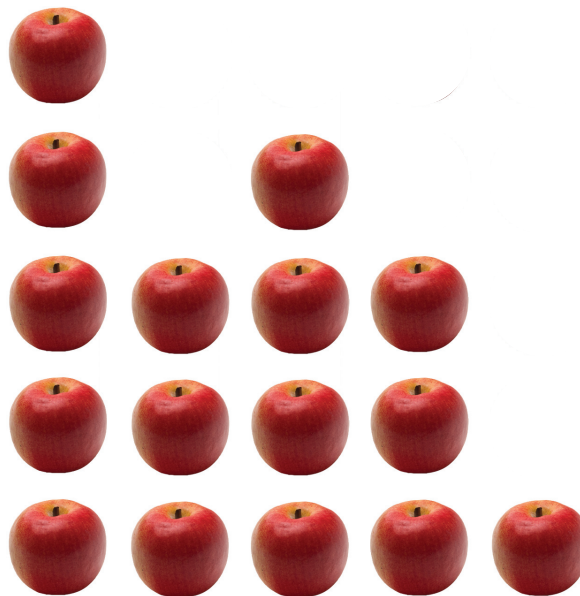




coming in second at 18 percent.

**Important strides have been made in teacher recruitment and quality.** Mayor Karl Dean took the lead in recruiting two national teaching nonprofits to Nashville, and worked with Metro Schools and private funders to get the programs in place. The New Teacher Project began working with the Metro Schools Human Resources Department in 2009 to improve HR practices and recruit career changers to teaching in hard-to-staff subjects. Teach For America, a program that selects the top college graduates from across the country to teach for at least two years in urban school districts, began training its first class in the summer of 2009, with 51 teachers now placed in 22 Nashville schools.

**Metro Schools are going green.** The renovation and expansion of Julia Green Elementary School became the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) silver certification in the district, reflecting best practices around energy conservation, emissions reduction, and indoor air quality. MNPS is also pursuing LEED certification for the Harpeth Valley Elementary expansion and the renovation of Wharton Elementary.



The district's move to engage students in smaller learning communities shows promise, as the percentage of students dropping out in a given year (4.4 percent) continues to fall.

## Challenges

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

**2010 is a big year for Metro Schools under NCLB.** While MNPS made AYP this past year, the NCLB results to be released later in 2010 promise to be a defining moment for our school district, as this year's results could well set the tone for the next five years. Make AYP and the district will move into "Good Standing." If MNPS misses AYP, it will be in "Restructuring 2," facing a possible placement into the newly created Achievement School District, in which the state commissioner of education has the authority to run the school system or contract the day-to-day management to another entity.

**ACT composite scores continue to drop.** While the change may not be dramatic, ACT scores are difficult to move, and it is clearly a trend in the wrong direction. Nine zoned high schools have an average composite score below 19, the minimum needed to get into a public university in Tennessee. In addition, Nashville students are leaving lottery scholarship dollars on the table by not scoring a 21. In 2009, 948 MNPS students scored at least a 21 on the ACT—only 33 percent of the total taking the test. The future competitiveness of our city depends on graduates who are prepared for both college and career.

**Metro Schools experience grade deflation.** With the new state grading scale employing a more recent benchmark year in anticipation of the Diploma Project standards, Metro earns straight "Ds" in grades 3-8 achievement, with a "B" representing the state average. On TVAAS, MNPS gets straight "Cs" in grades 3-8 after making all "As" and "Bs" last year.

**There are warning signs in grades 3-8.** In 2008, just one MNPS subgroup missed the NCLB target in the elementary and middle

school grades. In 2009, Metro had three subgroups miss AYP, despite the state targets remaining constant. Also, reading scores for grades 3-8 declined after two consecutive years of growth.

**A school funding crisis is on the horizon.** With a national recession fueling negative tax revenue growth, two legislative sessions without progress on implementing the state education funding formula improvements, depleted local reserves, and the school board cutting \$22 million and 150 teaching positions out of last year's budget, this year doesn't look to get any easier. Metro Schools will need \$30 to \$35 million in 2010-2011 just to stay even, and must learn how to make a compelling case to the public that it is using its resources effectively.

**MNPS business practices need a complete overhaul.** MNPS continues to be a "high-risk subgrantee" due to poor business practices involving federal funds. A national consulting firm, CSS International, has initiated the Magellan Project to turn things around. For example, items that took three to four months to be purchased and received should only take two weeks after the project is fully implemented. The CSS report contains 102 recommendations, each of which must be fully implemented.

**MNPS needs to better leverage the resources of Metro government.** The committee believes the completion of a partnership between the Nashville Public Library and school libraries is especially important and will serve as an assurance to the public that both city government and Metro Schools are committed to working together to increase efficiency and maximize resources. Also important are opportunities to strengthen the connection between parks, schools, and after-school programs, much like the Metro Public Health department is working with MNPS. Doing so is imperative in a challenging economy with declining tax revenues, and would serve as evidence of MNPS maximizing existing resources.



**Expectations for parental involvement need to be clearer.**

Parent participation is a key ingredient to student academic success, and is especially important in meeting the challenges of educating special student populations. In the committee’s conversation with parents at the Martha O’Bryan Center, we found parents wanted communication with their school, but not just when their child was in trouble. In addition, many felt they were not given an accurate picture of their child’s academic progress. Clear expectations for parental participation in the city’s successful charter schools provide a best practice model that could be applied to the district’s choice schools. In addition, each school should have a regularly communicated and easily understood set of expectations for parents, which includes how they can best support their child’s education and ways in which they can support the overall success of their child’s school. It is important that MNPS track and report parental involvement at the school level to incentivize a parent-friendly school culture. In addition, in an economic climate where many employees are not receiving salary raises, businesses can revise their paid time off policies to encourage more parents to be involved with their children’s schools throughout the year.

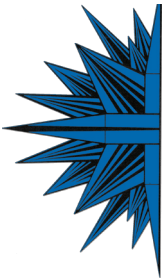
**Diversity is a challenge and a strength.** The sheer diversity of our ELL population tests MNPS’s ability to make AYP under NCLB. Students in this subgroup come to America with different experiences with formal education, speaking 120 different languages. However, these successful graduates will be incred-

ibly attractive to colleges and businesses and give Nashville a unique competitive advantage.

**High-achieving students need attention, too.** There needs to be a strategy to challenge high-achieving students outside of participating in the three academic magnet schools. NCLB encourages a focus on minimum proficiency, without adequate incentives to move students from proficient to advanced. High-achieving students who aren’t being challenged in MNPS will go to school elsewhere.

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

	Davidson	Memphis	Knox	Hamilton
NCLB status	RS1-improving	Target	Target	Good Standing
2009 graduation rate	73.1 %	62.1 %	81.4 %	70.9 %
Student enrollment	70,378	104,829	54,109	39,247
Schools in "Good Standing"	80 out of 136 schools (59 %)	99 out of 199 school (50 %)	53 out of 87 school (61 %)	49 out of 75 schools (65 %)
Grades 3-8 achievement state letter grades (Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science)	DDDD	DDFF	BBBB	CCCC
Grades 3-8 "value-added" state letter grades (Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science)	CCCC	CDCC	CBBB	CCCC
2009 ACT composite	19.0	17.5	21.9	19.5
Economically disadvantaged students	75.9 %	85.8 %	44.0 %	59.0 %
Special education	12.2 %	15.2 %	11.0 %	16.3 %
Limited English Proficient	12.6 %	5.5 %	2.5 %	2.7 %
Per-pupil expenditure	\$10,495	\$10,394	\$8,339	\$9,334



In an economic climate where many employees are not receiving salary raises, businesses can revise their paid time off policies to encourage more parents to be involved with their children’s schools throughout the year.



# Special Student Populations

The last reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act was signed into law in 2002 by then-President George W. Bush. Known universally as “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB), it required a rising percentage of students to be proficient in reading and math until all students reached proficiency by the year 2014. The law was different from previous accountability systems, including Tennessee’s, in that it not only set a timeline and minimum goal for all students, it also required progress with smaller demographic groups of students. No longer could a school or system mask the underperformance of a particular group of students by hiding behind averages and large numbers.

NCLB requires the reporting of student groups by ethnicity and for three special student populations that have unique academic needs: economically disadvantaged, ELL, and special education. While we believe firmly that Metro Schools must succeed in meeting the needs of all children, it is clear that MNPS has particularly struggled to meet the needs of these three groups of students. Success with these students is crucial to MNPS making AYP each year, and, with the exception of a declining special education enrollment, this is increasingly the population served by most of our public schools.

## Economically Disadvantaged Students

As a student subgroup under NCLB, economically disadvantaged students qualify for free or reduced-price meals in schools. Also sometimes referred to as the “poverty rate” or “FARM” (free and reduced meals), the percentage of students in this group has steadily risen over the years, from 45 percent in 2000 to 76 percent in 2009. When MNPS is said to have a 76 percent poverty

rate, it is important to note that the maximum income eligibility for free meals is set above the federal poverty line. To illustrate this difference, a young child from a family of four is only eligible for the federally funded Head Start early childhood program if the family is below the poverty rate, making less than \$22,050 a year. To be counted as economically disadvantaged in the school system, that family must make less than \$40,793 annually, the income limit for qualifying for reduced-price meals.



More than 50,000 of the district’s students are classified as economically disadvantaged.

It should also be noted that MNPS and the state have slightly different methods for calculating the percent of students who are economically disadvantaged, and that in past years this has led to public disagreements with the state on this issue. While the district simply divides the number of students receiving free or reduced meals by the total student enrollment (average daily membership), the state does not include pre-K enrollment in one part of the calculation and uses average daily attendance instead of membership, which tends to be a lower number. Thus, the state report card reflects a 76 percent rate, while the district’s calculation is 66 percent.

Regardless of which calculation is used, the fact remains

MNPS TITLE I RE-RANKING  
10.9.09 FARM AND ENROLMENT DATA  
FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND GRANTS  
November 5, 2009

	K-12 ENROL	K-12 FARM	K-12 FRM%	TITLE I
Wharton Elementary School (K-4)	267	263	98.50%	\$ 134,193
Glenview Elementary School (PK-4)	595	586	98.49%	\$ 298,957
John Early Pladeia Magnet Middle School (5-8)	348	336	96.55%	\$ 168,046
Hattie Cotton Elementary School (PK-4)	346	332	95.95%	\$ 165,017
Shwab Elementary School (PK-4)	313	298	95.21%	\$ 146,966
Warner Enhanced Option School (PK-4)	359	341	94.99%	\$ 167,781
Tom Joy Elementary School (PK-4)	574	544	94.77%	\$ 267,064
Napier Enhanced Option School (PK-4)	389	367	94.34%	\$ 179,355
Park Avenue Enhanced Option School (PK-5)	678	638	94.10%	\$ 310,966
Glenn Elementary Enhanced Option School	232	218	93.97%	\$ 106,110
Paragon Mills Elementary School (PK-4)	657	615	93.61%	\$ 298,205
Bailey Middle School (5-8)	538	503	93.49%	\$ 243,603
Nashville Global Academy (K-4)	197	184	93.40%	\$ 89,022
Kirkpatrick Enhanced Option School (PK-4)	266	248	93.23%	\$ 119,771
Ross Elementary School (PK-4)	179	166	92.74%	\$ 79,743
Haywood Elementary School (PK-4)	713	661	92.71%	\$ 317,426
Cockrill Elementary School (PK-5)	504	467	92.66%	\$ 224,147
Smithson-Craighead Academy (K-4)	242	223	92.15%	\$ 106,445
McMurray Middle School (5-8)	699	642	91.85%	\$ 305,438
Caldwell Enhanced Option School (PK-4)	213	194	91.08%	\$ 91,528
Buena Vista Enhanced Option School (PK-5)	407	370	90.91%	\$ 174,236
W A Bass Middle School (6-8)	377	342	90.72%	\$ 160,709
Bordeaux Enhanced Option School (PK-4)	351	318	90.60%	\$ 149,237
McCann Alternative Learning Center (K-8)	41	37	90.24%	\$ 17,296
John B Whitlitt Elementary School (PK-4)	419	378	90.21%	\$ 176,644
Amqui Elementary School (PK-4)	679	608	89.54%	\$ 282,012
Cameron Middle School (5-8)	617	552	89.47%	\$ 255,813
Brick Church Middle School (5-8)	377	337	89.39%	\$ 156,044
Glengary Elementary School (PK-4)	418	372	89.00%	\$ 171,490
Jere Baxter Middle School (5-8)	501	445	88.82%	\$ 204,744
Inglewood Elementary School (PK-4)	372	330	88.71%	\$ 151,640
Gra-Mar Middle School (5-8)	532	471	88.53%	\$ 216,003
Tusculum Elementary School (PK-4)	535	469	87.66%	\$ 212,972
Smithson-Craighead Academy Middle School	285	249	87.37%	\$ 112,690
Apollo Middle School (5-8)	459	401	87.36%	\$ 181,470
Bellshire Elementary Design Center (PK-4)	354	309	87.29%	\$ 139,715
KIPP Academy (5-8)	263	220	86.96%	\$ 99,096
Alex Green Elementary School (PK-4)	259	233	86.62%	\$ 104,542
Fall-Hamilton Enhanced Option School (PK-4)	223	193	86.55%	\$ 86,525
LEAD Academy (5-8)	227	196	86.34%	\$ 87,663
J E Moss Elementary School (K-4)	802	691	86.16%	\$ 308,398
Madison Middle School (5-7)	362	311	85.91%	\$ 138,402
McGavock Elementary School (K-4)	266	227	85.34%	\$ 100,346
Chadwell Elementary School (PK-4)	245	209	85.31%	\$ 92,354
Neelys Bend Middle School (5-8)	739	630	85.25%	\$ 278,206
Rosebank Elementary School (PK-4)	298	253	84.90%	\$ 111,264
Norman Binkley Elementary School (PK-4)	415	351	84.58%	\$ 153,779
Neelys Bend Elementary School (K-4)	457	386	84.46%	\$ 168,884
Glenciff Elementary School (K-4)	464	391	84.27%	\$ 170,673
Taylor Stratton Elementary School (PK-4)	583	490	84.05%	\$ 213,331
Cole Elementary School (K-4)	769	641	83.36%	\$ 276,770
Cumberland Elementary School (PK-4)	342	283	82.75%	\$ 121,304
Pearl-Cohn Comprehensive Magnet High School (9-12)	825	680	82.42%	\$ 290,331
Charlotte Park Elementary School (PK-4)	395	324	82.03%	\$ 137,665
Antioch Middle School (5-8)	472	387	81.99%	\$ 164,365
Cohn Alternative Learning Center (9-12)	109	89	81.65%	\$ 37,643
Joelton Middle School (5-8)	367	315	81.40%	\$ 132,813
Isaac Litton Middle School (5-8)	371	300	80.86%	\$ 125,660
Wright Middle School (5-8)	861	694	80.60%	\$ 289,765
Jere Baxter Alternative Center (7-12)	168	134	79.76%	\$ 55,364
Margaret Allen Montessori Magnet Middle School (5-8)	447	352	78.75%	\$ 143,585
Una Elementary School (K-4)	822	647	78.71%	\$ 263,795
Haynes Middle Health/Medical Science Design Center (5-8)	386	303	78.50%	\$ 123,205
Goodlettsville Middle School (5-8)	487	380	78.03%	\$ 153,592
Carter-Lawrence Magnet Elementary School	440	343	77.95%	\$ 138,505
Maplewood Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1091	839	76.90%	\$ 334,217
Stratford Comprehensive High School (9-12)	774	586	75.71%	\$ 229,818
Nashville Diploma Plus High School (9-10)	57	43	75.44%	\$ 16,803

	K-12 ENROL	K-12 FARM	K-12 FRM%	TITLE I
Goodlettsville Elementary School (K-4)	437	327	74.83%	\$ 126,749
Gateway Elementary School (K-4)	166	122	73.49%	\$ 46,445
Dupont Elementary School (PK-4)	311	228	73.31%	\$ 86,584
Robert E. Lillard Elementary (K-4)	405	293	72.35%	\$ 109,802
Henry Maxwell Elementary School (K-4)	585	415	70.94%	\$ 152,500
Old Center Elementary School (PK-4)	262	185	70.61%	\$ 67,666
Glenciff Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1414	987	69.80%	\$ 356,874
H G Hill Middle School (5-8)	529	363	68.62%	\$ 129,029
Den Mills Elementary School (PK-4)	376	258	68.62%	\$ 91,703
Thurgood Marshall Middle School (5-8)	946	649	68.60%	\$ 230,636
Hull-Jackson Montessori Magnet Elementary School (PS-4)	323	219	67.80%	\$ 76,916
Lakeview Elementary Design Center (K-5)	828	557	67.27%	\$ 194,093
Harris-Hillman Special Education School (PK-12)	122	82	67.21%	\$ 28,549
Hermitage Elementary School (K-4)	232	155	66.81%	\$ 53,642
Dodson Elementary School (PK-4)	528	343	64.96%	\$ 115,421
Cora Howe School (K-12)	71	46	64.79%	\$ 15,438
Whites Creek Comprehensive High School (9-12)	961	622	64.72%	\$ 208,539
Mt. View Elementary (K-5)	885	569	64.29%	\$ 189,501
Hunters Lane Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1777	1125	63.31%	\$ 368,933
A. Z. Kelley Elementary (K-4)	681	431	63.29%	\$ 141,298
Dupont Tyler Middle School (5-8)	683	427	62.52%	\$ 138,282
Two Rivers Middle School (5-8)	582	362	62.20%	\$ 116,634
Isaiah T. Crewell Middle Arts Magnet (5-8)	483	297	61.49%	\$ 94,601
J. F. Kennedy Middle School (6-8)	905	553	61.10%	\$ 175,038
Antioch Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1684	1012	60.10%	\$ 315,028
Hickman Elementary School (K-4)	517	308	59.57%	\$ 95,047
Thomas A. Edison Elementary School (PK-5)	642	381	59.35%	\$ 117,124
John Overton Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1668	981	58.81%	\$ 298,863
Dupont Hadley Middle School (5-8)	609	357	58.62%	\$ 108,405
Rose Park Middle Math/Science Magnet (5-8)	413	239	57.87%	\$ 71,643
Jones Paideia Magnet School (K-4)	371	213	57.41%	\$ 63,345
Donelson Middle School (5-8)	745	426	57.18%	\$ 126,181
East Literature Magnet School (5-12)	1282	732	57.10%	\$ 216,503
Tulip Grove Elementary School (K-4)	489	279	57.06%	\$ 82,457
Cane Ridge Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1272	717	56.37%	\$ 209,354
Croft Middle Design Center (5-8)	724	408	56.35%	\$ 119,100
Nashville Big Picture High (9-11)	183	98	53.55%	\$ 27,185
Hillwood Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1127	599	53.15%	\$ 164,915
Joelton Elementary School (K-4)	235	123	52.34%	\$ 33,348
Ruby Major Elementary School (K-4)	548	283	51.64%	\$ 75,705
Pennington Elementary School (K-4)	277	143	51.62%	\$ 38,240
William Henry Oliver Middle School (5-8)	621	318	51.21%	\$ 84,351
The Academy at Old Cockrill (11-12)	97	47	48.45%	\$ 11,797
McGavock Comprehensive High School (9-12)	2416	1169	48.39%	\$ 292,996
West End Middle School (5-8)	424	194	45.75%	\$ 45,980
May Wetheran Shayne Elementary School (PK-4)	584	266	45.55%	\$ 62,760
Gower Elementary School (PK-4)	610	272	44.59%	\$ 62,826
The Academy at Opry Mills (11-12)	87	38	43.68%	\$ 8,598
Head Magnet Middle School (5-8)	591	257	43.49%	\$ 57,891
MNPS Middle College High School (10-12)	93	39	41.94%	\$ 8,472
Hillsboro Comprehensive High School (9-12)	1238	519	41.92%	\$ 112,705
Westmeade Elementary School (PK-4)	395	158	40.00%	\$ 32,738
Andrew Jackson Elementary School (K-4)	528	203	38.45%	\$ -
Sylvan Park Elementary Paideia Design Center	398	153	38.44%	\$ -
Crieve Hall Elementary School (K-4)	329	126	38.30%	\$ -
J T Moore Middle School (5-8)	593	202	34.06%	\$ 35,643
Stanford Montessori Elementary School (PS-4)	295	99	33.56%	\$ -
Eakin Elementary School (K-4)	564	183	32.45%	\$ -
Bellevue Middle School (5-8)	645	199	30.85%	\$ -
Nashville School of the Arts (9-12)	705	206	29.22%	\$ -
Granbery Elementary School (K-4)	626	175	27.96%	\$ -
Lockeland Elementary Design Center (PK-4)	300	70	23.33%	\$ -
Marlin Luther King, Jr. Magnet at Pearl High School (7-12)	1189	271	22.79%	\$ -
Harper Valley Elementary School (K-4)	742	154	20.75%	\$ -
Julia Green Elementary School (K-4)	495	100	20.20%	\$ -
Meigs Magnet Middle School (5-8)	735	146	19.86%	\$ -
Hume-Fogg Magnet High School (9-12)	915	157	17.16%	\$ -
Glendale Elementary Spanish Immersion School (PK-4)	307	33	10.75%	\$ -
Percy Priest Elementary School (K-4)	491	37	7.54%	\$ -
<b>TOTAL for all schools</b>	<b>29,839</b>	<b>25,935</b>	<b>86.92%</b>	<b>\$11,731,183</b>

that more than 50,000 of the district's students are classified as economically disadvantaged. Looked at another way, 110 of the 136 MNPS schools have a student population that is more than 50 percent economically disadvantaged, and 25 of those schools have a 90 percent rate. These students often face multiple barriers to learning, including transportation challenges, transitory housing, and a single or surrogate parent at home trying to make ends meet.

Federal and state resources

Because of these challenges, economically disadvantaged students are allocated additional resources. Federal Title I dollars are allocated to the state and are distributed to local school districts based on the number of students who qualify for free and reduced meals, with MNPS receiving \$29 million, or 11 percent of the state total, in 2009. About \$18 million of these funds were distributed to 121 Metro schools that had at least 40 percent economically disadvantaged students, with the amounts given to each school dependent on the number of students receiving free or reduced meals. Each school determines how to spend these funds as part of the annual school improvement planning process, which includes the entire school staff, parents, and members of the community. Generally, the funds

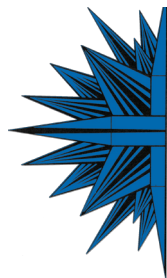


must be used for staff professional development, parent involvement, and interventions for students who are at risk academically.

NCLB also requires districts to hold a portion of their Title I funds in reserve in order to support two programs for students in low-performing schools: student choice and Supplemental Education Services (SES). In Nashville, there are currently 27 Title I schools on the state's high-priority list offering these programs. Under NCLB school choice in the fall of 2009, 341 students in these schools took the opportunity to attend one of two choice schools, with the district using Title I dollars to provide bus transportation.

Students who are economically disadvantaged in these 27 schools are also offered SES tutoring in math or reading outside of the regular school day from a list of for-profit and non-profit providers. Parents make the choice of which provider to use, and each eligible student has an allowance of \$1,451 that can be applied toward SES services during the school year. More than \$2.5 million in SES services was provided to MNPS students during the 2008-2009 school year. Services are typically provided several times a week for one to two hours at a time. The eleven for-profit companies operating in Nashville generally charge between \$40 and \$60 an hour, with nonprofits Martha O'Bryan and Westwood Baptist Church costing \$27 and \$45 an hour, respectively.

The state is responsible for evaluating the impact of the tutoring on student achievement and reporting the satisfaction of parents and school system personnel. The provider list on the state website lists "insufficient data" in the vast majority of cases when it comes to assessing a provider's impact on student learning, although three providers are listed as "below standards" in math. Schools and districts can also become SES providers, but not when they are designated "high priority" by the state for



It is highly debatable whether \$509 in additional resources is enough to redress the academic challenges that can arise from living in poverty.

failing to make AYP for two consecutive years. Metro Schools lost its ability to be an SES provider in 2003, and its high-risk status with federal funds has prevented the district from successfully pursuing an exception to this restriction.

The State of Tennessee, through the Basic Education Program (BEP) funding formula, also provides extra support for students who are economically disadvantaged. Unlike the federal dollars, funds generated by the state formula allow for a great deal of local flexibility. Commonly referred to as the "at-risk" component of the formula, it is intended to provide districts with the additional resources necessary to educate these students. It is calculated simply by providing the funds necessary to reduce the class size for this group of students to 1:15, generating about \$509 per student. In addition to the fact that this number is split into a state and local share and then reduced much further in Nashville's case because of the district's fiscal capacity, it is highly debatable whether \$509 in additional resources is enough to redress the academic challenges that can arise from living in poverty. The need to undertake a study to determine how the BEP "at-risk" component should be calculated was acknowledged during the revision of the funding formula in 2007, but that effort has yet to occur.



## Community support

The challenges facing disadvantaged youth are, by definition, largely generated by living in poverty. So while it is important to provide academic support during the 20 percent of the day these students are in school, strong partnerships with nonprofits and city agencies provide essential support for the students' families outside of the school environment. Schools cannot and should not do it all. The Disadvantaged Youth Transformational Leadership Group (TLG), appointed by Dr. Register to design strategies for helping these students become successful, is exploring a "community school" partnership model. Locally, Glenduff High School is moving in this direction by hosting a United Neighborhood Health Services clinic, a swimming pool managed by the YMCA, and the Live It! healthy lifestyle program sponsored by Vanderbilt Children's Hospital.

In addition to needing academic interventions beyond the school day, disadvantaged youth often lack opportunities for enrichment and safe places for recreation after school. Recognizing this, Mayor Dean has launched the Nashville After-Zones Alliance, focused on creating after-school opportunities in geographical sections of the city, starting with the Maplewood and Stratford clusters. Nearly all of Nashville's elementary schools have after-school programs located onsite, so the After-Zones Alliance initiative is focused on meeting the needs of middle and high school students. Currently, about 9 percent of MNPS middle school students are engaged in structured after-school programs, and the initiative aims to double that by serving 1,500 more students. The Martha O'Bryan Center in East Nashville serves as the coordinator for this initial zone, with the Mayor's Office working to broker solutions to such challenges as student transportation and data sharing between participating nonprofits and schools.

## Removing barriers to learning

Other than eligibility for free and reduced meals, perhaps no other statistic is indicative of student poverty than the student mobility rate. The mobility rate is expressed as the number of student entries or exits at a school, divided by the total school enrollment. Moving residences several times a year is a regular occurrence for many families in poverty who go through times when it is difficult to pay rent. The total district mobility rate in 2008-2009 was 35 percent and 11 zoned schools had rates above 50 percent, with Maplewood and Stratford High Schools having the highest rates, at 79 percent and 63 percent, respectively. Among the significant subgroups of students in the system, the special student populations examined in this report have the highest mobility rates: Economically disadvantaged, ELL and special education all have rates around 44 percent.

It's extremely difficult to teach and build relationships with students who move from school to school. Furthermore, for high school students moving between schools with different types of class schedules, the consequences can be serious, resulting in lost credits, retention, and failure to graduate on time. In fact, data show that MNPS students who move between high schools within a school year, on average, earn a full credit less than students who are able to remain at the same school. In 2008, the Report Card Committee made a recommendation to create a unified class schedule among all Metro's zoned high schools. We're pleased to acknowledge that, just as we complete our work on this report, MNPS has determined that all 12 zoned high schools will move to an A/B Block schedule for the 2010-2011 school year, a decision that is long overdue for our students.

## English Language Learners

Though it was nearly unimaginable even 20 years ago, Nashville is becoming one of the most cosmopolitan and diverse cities in the South, and nowhere is this more apparent than in our public school system. Over the past decade, the number of students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) in Metro Schools has nearly tripled – from 3,201 and 4.7 percent of the total student population in 2000, to 9,374 and 12.6 percent of all students in 2009. In addition, five elementary schools in the southeastern part of our city have student populations that are more than 50 percent LEP. And while Hispanic students, at 15 percent, comprise the single largest ethnic group after white and African-American students, Nashville's strong economy and status as a refugee relocation center has resulted in thousands of students coming to our schools from every point of the globe. It is the sheer diversity of our ELL population—120 different languages from 80 different countries—that makes educating these children such an exciting but daunting challenge.

All children who have a non-English language background (NELB) have the opportunity to receive ELL services. When a family registers for school and indicates that English is not the native language, the student is required to take a 25-minute, four-part test at the International Student Registration Center to measure English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. If the student is not proficient in any of those four



Teachers see a critical need for more adequate translation services, as they contend with students who speak a wide variety of languages.

domains, that student is offered ELL services. The family can refuse ELL services, and 791 students had done so halfway through the 2009-2010 school year. If the student accepts ELL services and is zoned to one of the 48 schools that offer it onsite, the registration process is complete. Otherwise, the student is assigned to one of 22 schools serving as regional ELL centers.

Some students, particularly children arriving from refugee camps, come to Metro Schools with little or no formal education in their native language, much less any knowledge of English. To assist this group of ELL students, MNPS created the Newcomers' Academy in November 2007. In this placement, about 45 students receive intensive numeracy and literacy instruction, as well as an orientation to the entire notion of schooling. These students can spend a maximum of one year in the Newcomers' Academy before moving into a school with ELL services.

### How ELL services are delivered

There are three main ways that ELL instruction is delivered in Metro Schools: self-contained classrooms, a pull-out model, and a newer approach—integration.

Found at the elementary school level, the self-contained classroom approach consists of ELL students spending most, if not all, of the instructional day together in one classroom with an ELL teacher. There are a total of about 250 self-contained classrooms in the system, with the greatest number assigned for kindergarten students and each succeeding grade level having fewer isolated classrooms.

The pull-out/push-in model is considered close to full “immersion,” as ELL students receive instruction in the regular classroom with their English-speaking peers for most or all of



the school day. The name of the model comes from the student being “pulled out” for brief but intensive language instruction with an ELL teacher, or that ELL teacher being “pushed in” to the regular classroom for specialized instruction for that student. Currently, the only elementary schools using this model for all students are Cockrill and Eakin. The committee was able to visit Cockrill Elementary during the course of our research and found the ELL services to be nearly undetectable among the teaching and learning happening in the school, which is an intended outcome of the immersion model.

The integration model is a third approach currently being considered by the district, in which a licensed ELL teacher is assigned to a class of ELL and English-speaking students. ELL students are not pulled out of the classroom under this model, but instead receive differentiated instruction to meet their English development needs.

These models are found largely in Metro elementary schools, as at the middle and high-school levels, students shift classes with multiple teachers. ELL students tend to receive language instruction from ELL teachers, and other content, such as math and science, from general education teachers. At this age level, it is important that ELL students receive what is called “sheltered instruction,” which involves giving regular education teachers who have a mix of ELL and English-speaking students the support they need to effectively teach ELL children. While the teachers we interviewed believed the great diversity of our student population was a strong advantage for the district, several were frustrated with the lack of training provided to regular educators on how to effectively teach ELL students in their classroom. In addition, these teachers see a critical need for more adequate translation services, as they contend with students who speak a wide variety of languages.

## Outside expertise and assistance

There are a number of nonprofit and government agencies that offer assistance and support to ELL students and their families, such as Conexión Américas and Metropolitan Social Services. In addition, Alignment Nashville, a nonprofit charged with aligning community resources to support education and health, has formed a new committee focused on coordinating support for refugee and immigrant children. While challenges are often couched as “opportunities,” in the case of engaging parents of ELL children, both terms are right on the mark. Refugee and immigrant parents are sometimes intimidated, and in some cases fearful, of government institutions. Other parents may come from a culture where it is not customary for a parent to interact with a teacher. Still others feel their lack of English is a barrier to successfully interacting with the school. Community organizations have strong networks and have built years of trust that can be a tremendous advantage in helping MNPS to effectively engage these parents. It is important for the school system to take full advantage of the expertise found throughout our community.

The growth and incredible diversity of the ELL student population and the lower levels of academic achievement posted by this group of students have created an urgency for reform. Dr. Register is quickly building a reputation for bringing in outside expertise to help MNPS solve some of its most vexing issues. The State of Tennessee, the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) and the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (CEEE) at George Washington University are conducting an evaluation of Metro’s ELL program. They are collecting data, visiting classrooms and surveying teachers, staff and parents. The goal is to make recommendations on how to improve ELL services in the district by the spring of 2010.

## Special Education

Congress first passed the law creating educational rights for students with disabilities in 1975. The cornerstone of that law and subsequent reauthorizations is that every student identified as needing special education services is entitled to a “free and appropriate education in the least restrictive learning environment.” Students aged 3 to 22 receive services according to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that is created by a team composed of the parent(s) and school staff, such as the principal, school counselor and teacher. The IEP includes special modifications for the child based on the disability, additional services and annual learning goals. Persistent disagreements between the parent(s) and the school district over whether the child’s IEP is being implemented can result in the parent(s) taking legal action. For the past three years, only 11 to 12 due process filings have taken place against MNPS each year out of more than 8,000 students, with the majority of them being dismissed by the court.

Although federal law drives the provision of special education services, only about 17 percent of the funding for these services originates from the federal government. These funds flow through the Tennessee Department of Education, which adds state dollars generated for special-education services through the state BEP funding formula. Special-education services are guaranteed to all eligible children, so these funds also follow eligible students who enroll in private school or are receiving home-bound services.

The state Report Card and the MNPS special-education department report special-education enrollment at different times of the year, so their numbers tend to differ. The most recent count

from MNPS (Dec. 1, 2009) shows a total of 8,895 total students receiving special education, about 12 percent of the general student population, down from more than 10,000 in 2002. The largest categories by far are learning disabled and speech/language disability.

Children who are identified as intellectually gifted are not recognized under the federal special-education law, but are provided services under the Tennessee special-education statute. In MNPS, gifted children in pre-K through 8th grade are served by the ENCORE program, which serves about 2,400 students at 81 school sites. Key challenges for making ENCORE more effective are the lack of a defined strategy for serving high school-age students and the underrepresentation of African-American (19 percent) and Hispanic (3 percent) children in the program.

Each year, the Report Card Committee includes the viewpoints of advocates and parents of special-education students in our work, often as members of the committee or among the stakeholders we interview. It is fair to say that, over the years, there has been a tremendous amount of tension, distrust and even anger about how MNPS and the special-education community interact. Mayor Dean recalled running for office in 2007 and finding that the most dissatisfied group of citizens



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were parents of special-education students. We mention this to say that we have seen a perceptible improvement over the past two years, as the department came under new leadership beginning in July 2008. While advocates and MNPS staff alike are quick to note there is still plenty to improve, we found a refreshing sense of optimism in our discussion with special-education parents and advocates. This turnaround is further illustrated by the recent name change of the department from “special education” to “exceptional education,” in order to more appropriately reflect the inclusion of gifted services within the department’s scope.

Also emblematic of this positive change is a new focus on key outcomes for these students. One such measure is the percentage of special-education students graduating with a regular high-school diploma, as opposed to a special-education diploma—a distinction especially important for any graduate contemplating postsecondary education. In 2006, 38 percent of special-education students graduated with a regular diploma. In 2007 and 2008, that rate rose to 55 percent. In addition, the number of out-of-school suspensions lasting more than 10 days for special-education students has declined dramatically over the last three years, from 567 in 2006-2007 to 158 in 2008-2009. A renewed push to educate children in the most inclusive setting possible has the district tracking the percentage of students who spend at least 80 percent of their school day in the general-education environment. That number was 39 percent in 2007 and has risen steadily to 48 percent in 2009. The committee visited Charlotte Park Elementary, a model school for integrating special-education students into the general-education environment, and saw evidence that this approach can be expanded across the district. The district’s effort this past year to provide training to 4,000

MNPS SPECIAL EDUCATION DECEMBER CHILD COUNT								
DISABILITY	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
AGES 3-5 ALL	611	695	796	718	851	745	848	941
AGES 6-21								
Mental retardation	1,277	1,193	1,084	965	875	838	808	772
Hearing impairment	144	141	140	142	141	131	131	128
Speech/language	1,980	1,998	1,927	1,959	1,964	1,929	1,812	1,814
Visual impairment	52	56	56	62	61	54	48	52
Emotionally disturbed	801	743	749	632	638	582	584	572
Orthopedic impairment	120	114	100	97	77	74	59	56
Health impaired	769	909	984	953	786	797	804	885
Autism	145	173	197	208	277	333	386	465
Learning disabled	4,000	3,739	3,403	2,972	2,695	2,582	2,340	2,305
Deaf - Blind	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multi disabilities	3	6	9	4	12	14	15	19
Traumatic brain injury	37	35	39	39	36	29	24	21
Developmental delay**	6	44	108	169	296	337	351	364
Total students 6 - 21	9,334	9,151	8,796	8,202	7,858	7,700	7,362	7,453
GRAND TOTAL SPECIAL EDUCATION	9,945	9,846	9,592	8,920	8,709	8,445	8,210	8,394
Gifted	332	293	291	355	184	112	129	112
Functional Delay					263	298	385	389
Total special-education students with gifted and functional delayed	10,277	10,139	9,883	9,275	9,156	8,855	8,724	8,895

Source: MNPS

teachers and staff on inclusive practices signals that MNPS is ready to move in this direction.

In addition to the work happening within the department, the Mayor’s Advisory Council on Special Education has produced two valuable reports that include performance indicators and recommendations for improvements. The most recent report, issued in July 2009, notes that overrepresentation of ethnic minorities in MNPS special education continues to be a concern, and it includes recommendations aimed at expanding

inclusive practices, more accurately identifying gifted students, and helping more graduates transition to work. Both reports are available online at <http://www.nashville.gov/mocyspecial/index.asp>.

## **Special student populations: committee observations**

- MNPS should start with the expectation of educating students of special populations with the most inclusive approach possible. We recognize that students have different needs at each stage of their development, and interventions such as a newcomer program or a resource classroom for special-needs students may continue to be necessary. Even so, the committee believes that inclusion and immersion should be the preferred educational setting, so long as there is adequate support for general-education teachers who do not have training or experience in educating these students.
- MNPS needs a system-wide strategy to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population that goes far beyond isolated cultural competency and diversity training. This ongoing school-based training should be joined by such tactics as a recruitment strategy for teachers and principals who are multilingual, and staffing translation services adequately, such as ensuring at least one part-time translator at each school offering ELL services.
- Two large and significant supports for at-risk students, SES services and after-school programs, should be coordinated or even integrated. Through his After-Zones initiative, the mayor can take a leadership role in promotion, coordination, and quality assurance, and should recruit additional community-based SES providers, such as nonprofits who operate

after-school programs and higher education institutions. The application window for new SES providers to obtain state approval for the 2010-2011 school year is February 2 through March 26, 2010.

- Data-sharing between nonprofits, city agencies and schools should be a high priority in the interest of serving students with special needs, whether through a software package like KidTrax, used in Louisville, Ky., or by expanding the capacity of the MNPS student information management system, Chancery.
- Hours of access to the school building should be expanded through the evening, on weekends and during the summer, bringing in appropriate community, government and nonprofit services. Glenclyff High School is moving toward the community school model by hosting nonprofit services on the school campus. More information about this approach can be found online at [www.communityschool.org](http://www.communityschool.org).
- Transportation to after-school programs and enrichment opportunities continues to be a barrier for many at-risk students. We are pleased to learn that MTA and Metro Schools Transportation meet regularly to discuss these challenges and have had some success in changing routes to meet specific student and community needs.
- Family involvement and communication is critical to student success, and many parents of ELL students need to understand how to be involved in their child's school. Schools must recruit and train parent ambassadors who are known and respected in the community and can help bridge gaps between school and parents.
- The need for adequate translation services was a recurring theme in our research. Some transactions require district-em-

ployed translators, but the demand of routine communication needs can be alleviated through engaged parent leaders with a multilingual background.

- Diversity is a competitive advantage for MNPS. During the committee visit to Glenclyff, we met with the United Nations student ambassadors and were impressed with the leadership and communication skills of these students who had originally come from countries all over the globe. As MNPS improves instruction to ELL students and produces highly prepared multilingual graduates, colleges and businesses will seek out these talented individuals who represent the future of America.
- MNPS must have a recruitment strategy that targets hiring teachers and administrators that represent the diverse population of Metro Schools. Males make up only 20 percent of the MNPS teaching force. And while African-Americans comprise close to 50 percent of the student population, they represent only 28 percent of all teachers. For Hispanic educators, the disparity is just as pronounced, (less than 1 percent of teachers, but 15 percent of students). We recognize, however, that part of the strategy must be to attract more qualified candidates to the teaching profession through compensation reform.

- MNPS needs additional tailored and freestanding programs helping older students transition to self-sufficiency and employment. With special-education services provided until a student turns 22 years old, there are students who may have satisfied all academic graduation requirements at 18 or 19 years old, but do not plan to enroll in higher education. Preparing these students for success in the workplace and working with employers to make the transition successful for all parties requires a sustained focus. MNPS should pilot best practice models, from district programs to encouraging the creation of a charter school run by a nonprofit or university with appropriate expertise. As a possible model, in fall 2009, the local Arc in St. Johns County, Fla., opened a charter school for special education students focused solely on transition to employment in the community.
- The district's program for gifted students, ENCORE, enrolls students through the 8th grade. The district should have a well-articulated plan for how each of these students can be challenged through their high-school career, including options for independent study and follow-up counseling to ensure these students take the highest-level or college credit-earning courses, as appropriate. In addition, African-American and Hispanic students are substantially underrepresented in ENCORE, indicating that past identification strategies have not worked.



As MNPS improves instruction to ELL students and produces highly prepared multilingual graduates, colleges and businesses will seek out these talented individuals who represent the future of America.

# School Funding

There are no easy answers and no magic solutions to the constant tension between limited resources and growing needs. Beyond that perennial struggle, the financing of public education is further complicated by the state, local, and federal governments all having a role in providing resources for education through a political process. Add to that public debate and disagreement over which level of government should shoulder most of the burden or authority and whether, in the end, taxes need to be raised to support student learning, and you get a sense of what makes public education such a difficult, yet fascinating, subject.

While it isn't always apparent when it comes time for voters to open their wallets, there is a strong consensus about the importance of education in our city. With 87 percent of Nashvillians believing it is important to improve public education, and 78 percent believing Metro should provide more funding for the public school system in order to meet the challenges the schools face, there is solid public sentiment for resourcing Metro Schools adequately. But we also know that when faced with the real pocketbook decision of raising their own taxes, voters in Nashville choose not to invest. A 2005 half-cent sales tax referendum for education and senior citizen property tax relief failed by an overwhelming margin, and Nashville voters have not approved a sales tax increase since 1980. And in this time of economic downturn and declining tax revenues, elected officials are understandably wary of raising property taxes.

## Adequacy and Equity

How much funding does a school system need to be successful? This is perhaps an even more difficult issue than how to pay for public education, but unfortunately for Tennessee's school children, that has rarely been a question guiding state policy. The round of state funding lawsuits filed in the 1980s and 1990s were primarily centered on equity. In many cases, including in Tennessee, small rural school systems were suing their state, arguing that the funding formula was inequitable to communities who could not afford to supplement state dollars with local resources. In Tennessee, the issue was settled through the creation of the BEP formula in 1992, which distributed state and local funds based on each school system's fiscal capacity to raise local revenue. The formula also made a number of spending improvements and was accompanied by a half-cent sales tax hike for education. The substantial increase in overall state spending resulted in a rising tide of funding for all. This is dramatically illustrated by the fact that the state formula funded 34 percent of the MNPS operating budget in 1992, but that shot up to 40 percent the following year, once the BEP was in place.

Over the past 15 years, large urban school systems have seen dramatic increases of students with special needs, particularly students in poverty and, for Nashville, a substantial influx of ELL students. The BEP formula created a disparity by treating the urban districts as wealthy systems, while ignoring the fact that they had the responsibility of educating students who required more support and resources. In response to these concerns,

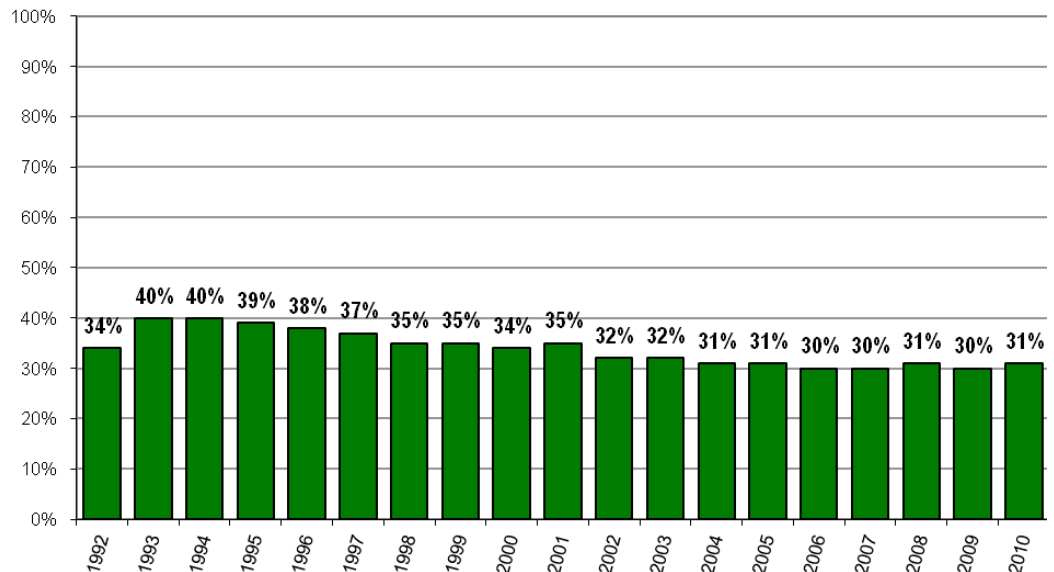


Governor Bredesen pushed for revisions to the formula in 2007.

Named “BEP 2.0” and funded with proceeds from a new tax on cigarettes, the formula improvements were designed to expand the support given to “at-risk” and ELL students in the formula, as well as increase the state responsibility for funding teacher salaries. Because of declining tax revenues in the current economic climate, the BEP 2.0 improvements were only partially funded, with no further improvements during the last two state budget cycles. Of particular interest to Nashville was the increased funding for ELL students in the formula, which was improved to one teacher for every 30 students. With MNPS teaching one-third of the ELL students in the state, getting the funding ratio down to the promised goal of 1:20 remains critical for our district.

On the more technical side, the interrupted progress in completing the funding improvements under BEP 2.0 has resulted in an even more complicated fiscal capacity calculation that is used to estimate each school system’s ability to raise local revenue. The system in place before BEP 2.0 was developed by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) and included a number of measures, including per capita income. As part of BEP 2.0, the fiscal capacity model was changed

*MNPS Operating Budget  
State BEP Funding Trends FY 1992 to FY 2010*



*Source: Presentation to the Chamber Education Report Card Committee by Chris Henson, 10/2/09*

to a system that examined each county’s share of the state’s total property and sales tax base. Because moving from one fiscal capacity calculation to another created a financial gain for some school systems and a loss to others, it was to be phased in as the BEP 2.0 funding improvements were completed. While the intention was to have moved fully to the 95-county model, the calculation is presently a hybrid of the old TACIR model and the new 95-county model. Because Davidson County’s fiscal capacity is lower using the 95-county model, TACIR estimates that fully moving to the newer model would result in a \$419,000 annual increase to MNPS. Even more important, it puts in place a calculation that is fairer to Nashville in advance of any future BEP funding improvements.

While BEP 2.0 attempted to address some of the adequacy issues around special student populations, it was essentially building

needed components onto a formula that was designed for an entirely different purpose. But as the uncompromising goals of NCLB—100 percent student proficiency by the year 2014—loom closer for struggling districts, states can expect to be confronted with growing calls for an adequacy discussion in education. As a committee, we applaud the state for increasing the weak K-12 standards that were previously in place. But we are concerned whether districts really have the resources they need to successfully meet the Tennessee Diploma Project standards.

While the state has not had an extensive public discussion about adequacy, a group of education stakeholders gathered under the name The Coalition for Tennessee's Future did commission a statewide adequacy study that was completed in October 2004. Augenblick, Pailach and Associates analyzed the 2002-2003 budget year to determine how much funding needed to be supplied to Tennessee school districts to reasonably expect them to reach the proficiency requirements under NCLB. At that time, the study reported that state spending would need to increase by \$1,377 per student. The study also looked at the adequacy needs of every individual school district in Tennessee. In general, smaller school districts needed a much bigger increase, while Nashville was determined to need an increase of only \$82 per pupil, or a total of \$5.5 million, to reach adequacy. Statewide, the

total additional funding needed to achieve adequacy was \$1.1 billion (to achieve much lower standards), which we assume created enough sticker shock to immediately cause dust to gather on the report the moment it was released.

Education Week, through its annual Quality Counts report, grades states on a variety of measures relating to support for education, including school finance. Tennessee received an overall “D+” for school finance, which is comprised of an “A-” for equity and an “F” for spending. The failure grade in spending is driven by our state ranking 46th in the amount of per-pupil spending based on the 2006-2007 school year.

In Nashville, our most recent discussions have focused on providing adequate and predictable funding. In response to the see-saw cycle of a property tax increase creating new revenue lasting a couple of years, and then remaining flat while the school budget must be cut back until the next tax increase, then-Mayor Bill Purcell appointed a School Funding Task Force in 2004 to bring forth recommendations. While the report suggested action steps at the state and federal level, there was a clear recognition that the local recommendations would be the most impactful and likely to be implemented. With the goal of providing enough revenue for at least four years of operating revenue for MNPS, the task force recommended passage of a

property tax increase as well as the possibility of a half-cent sales tax increase that was estimated to bring in about \$50 million for MNPS. While the Metro Council did pass a property tax increase in June 2005, the voters soundly defeated the sales tax referendum.

So where does this leave Metro Schools as it prepares for the 2010 budget season? A school system with 72,000 students, 10,000 employees,



We applaud the state for increasing the weak K-12 standards that were previously in place. But we are concerned whether districts really have the resources they need to successfully meet the Tennessee Diploma Project standards.

and a \$620 million operating budget experiences significant inflationary costs in the neighborhood of \$25 to \$35 million each year. These costs include increases in health benefits, pension costs, and automatic “step” raises for staff that reflect completing an additional year of employment. If the operating budget remains flat, as it did in 2009, then cuts will need to take place in the base budget to accommodate. Dipping into the reserve fund to take care of non-recurring revenues is not likely to be an option, considering that strategy was used last year and tax revenues continue to underperform against projections. To make the outlook even more sobering, the economic climate makes it more politically difficult than usual to raise property taxes.

## **It is in this context that we make the following school funding observations:**

- The mayor and Metro Council should prioritize education funding in the Metro budget process in order to cover the annual inflationary costs of Metro Schools so that cuts are not made to academic programs. In making its budget presentation to the mayor and Council, MNPS must articulate a comprehensive approach to identifying and reducing costs, measuring programs for effectiveness, leveraging Metro government or outside resources, and increase the transparency of resource allocation, particularly at the individual school level.
- Each Metro school should be able to be viewed as a cost center. MNPS should report annually the amount of funding each school receives, in total and by category. Possible categories include teacher salaries, administration, Title I dollars, supply dollars, federal Perkins funds, federal or state

grants, private support (PTOs, fundraisers, contributions, sponsorships), in-kind support (business partners, volunteers, mentors), and capital improvements. The information for each school should be publicly available online. For years, some have suspected that there is inequity between MNPS schools. Posting this information online each year would go a long way toward identifying potential disparities, as well as dispelling public misperceptions and myths.

- Once MNPS demonstrates a compelling case for the efficient and effective use of resources on an annual basis and has developed a detailed plan for district improvement (once the TLGs complete their work), the city must be ready to step up and resource that plan. Our hope and expectation is that the state of Tennessee would be a partner in that increased funding, but the children of Nashville cannot afford to wait.
- The next governor should call a constitutional convention allowing the election of delegates that could run on a platform without the worry of being re-elected. The purpose of the convention would be to design an educational funding and delivery system capable of achieving the new Tennessee Diploma Project standards. As the state experiences a record 20th consecutive month of declining tax collections and a third budget year of making cuts rather than revenue opportunities, there do not appear to be any immediate solutions to the fiscal crisis facing education in our state. In addition, at a January gubernatorial forum on education, the impending K-12 education funding crisis was largely ignored, with only two out of seven candidates even volunteering an opinion on funding: One promised full funding of the BEP formula and the other vowed to put education first during the state budget process. In the near term, the state should move

immediately to meet the promise of funding ELL teachers at the 1:20 ratio under BEP 2.0 and should complete the transition to the 95-county fiscal capacity model.

- Per-pupil expenditure data provides a good spending comparison among school districts, and MNPS does not appear out of line with similar systems in Tennessee or our competitor cities. The National Center for Education Statistics compiled per-pupil expenditures for the largest 100 school districts for 2005-2006, where Nashville came in at \$9,249; Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C., was at \$9,087; Jefferson County, Ky., spent \$9,296; and Fulton County, Ga., was at \$10,206. In Tennessee, MNPS led the “big four” urban systems in per-pupil spending in 2008-2009, with \$10,459. Private-school tuition for schools in Nashville represents a much broader range, with the more selective schools ranging in price from \$8,000 a year to \$20,000 a year, depending on grade span.



The mayor and Metro Council should prioritize education funding in the Metro budget process in order to cover the annual inflationary costs of Metro Schools so that cuts are not made to academic programs.



# Appendix A:

## Charting the Purchase of an Item in Metro Schools

### Purchase of Items Supported by Federal Funding

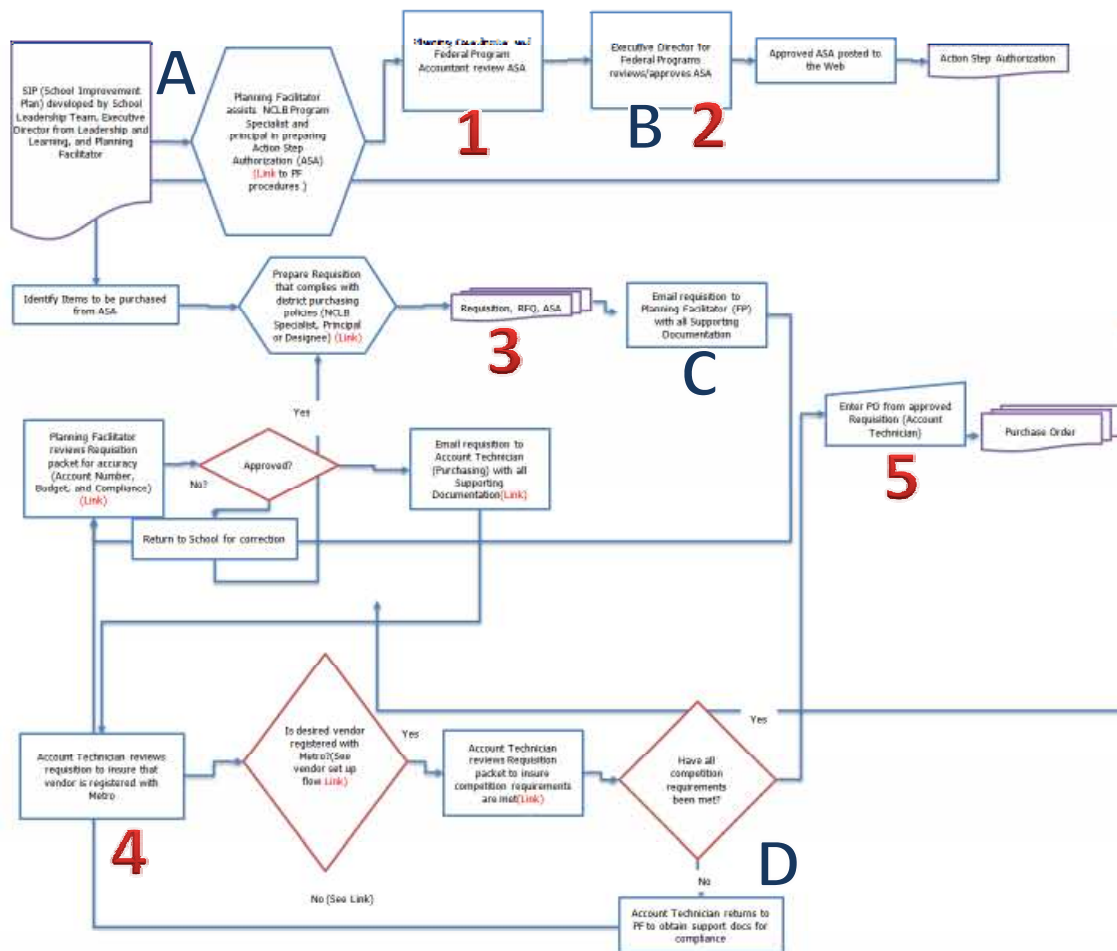
This graphic illustrates the current process used by the District to purchase goods that can be paid for by Federal funding. Notes on this graphic represent the recommended changes that will be implemented by Project Magellan, significantly improving the current processes.

#### Current Process

A. Each school in the District undergoes an annual planning process (called the SIP – Schools Improvement Plan). A budget for the expenditure of Federal Funds is produced by this process, termed the ASA- Action Step Authorization.

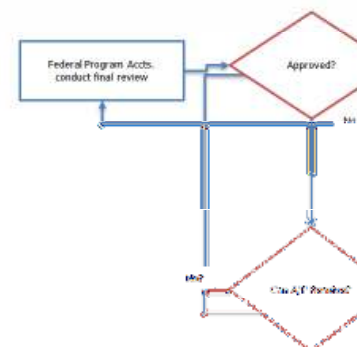
B. The Federal Programs department assists each school with the development of their ASA in accordance with the latest Federal guidelines and laws. Ultimately the ASA is approved by Federal Programs and the initial planning process is complete.

C. Let's assume a teacher at Antioch High School wants to purchase some curriculum materials to support her classroom needs, If these items qualify for the use of Federal Funds for payment, then the process unfolds as follows: at most schools the Secretary-Bookkeeper or Teacher completes a manual requisition to purchase the item. The requisition is first approved by the School Principal and is then emailed to the Federal Programs Planning Facilitator for review and approval. The Planning Facilitator reviews the requisition for accuracy, completeness, and compliance to Federal funding guidelines, then forwards it to the Account Technician in Purchasing.



D. The Account Technician also reviews the requisition for completeness, the assignment of the proper account code, and whether or not support documentation has been included for competitiveness. If the requisition package is accurate and complete, the Account Technician manually enters an electronic Purchase Order into the District's EBS Purchasing system.

E. The purchase order is then emailed, faxed, or mailed to the Supplier; copies of the requisition are forwarded back to the point of requisition or contact persons; and Purchasing creates an electronic copy of all support documentation.



F. The Supplier receives the purchase order and ships the items to the School. The School receives the item, the Principal or Department Head validates this receipt and sends a signed copy of the purchase order, packing slip, and invoice (if received) to Accounts Payable.

G. Accounts Payable combines all supporting purchase documentation and forwards it to Federal Programs for final review and approval to pay.

H. Upon final approval, Federal Programs forwards the purchase documentation packet (FASTPak) to Metro Government Accounts Payable for actual check payment to the Supplier.

This combination of: manual, automated—but non-integrated—processes; multiple, cross-departmental approval cycles; misplaced or lost paperwork; resolution of in-process problems; and occasional breakdowns in the overall process flow have resulted in some start-to-finish purchasing times of 4 to 5 months, severely limiting a school's ability to leverage purchased resources in a timely manner.

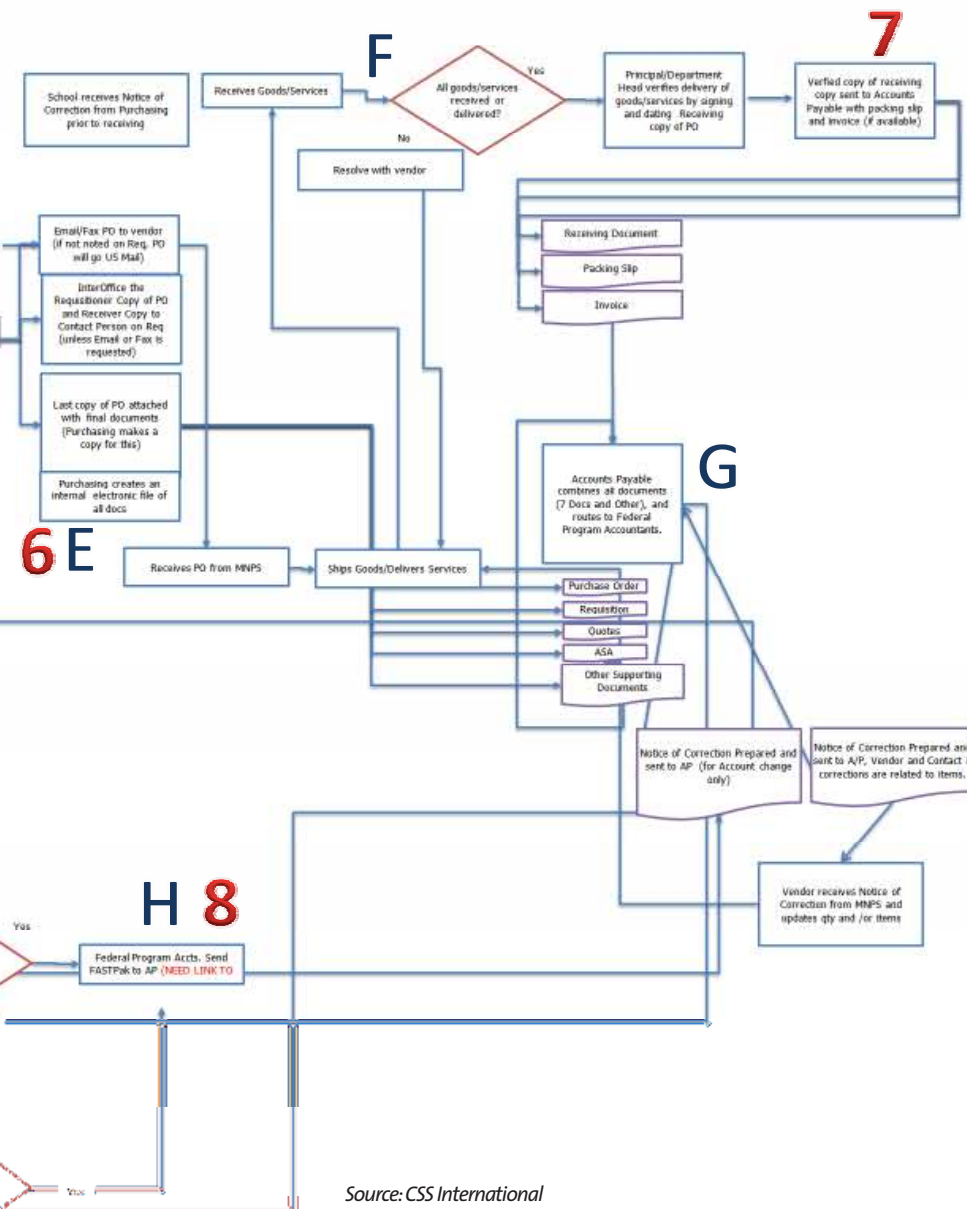
## Future Project Magellan Processes

Future processes for the District, as a result of Project Magellan implementation, will be characterized by: elimination of non-value added process steps; elimination of redundant approval cycles; automated manual tasks and online integrated process steps; electronic, online support documentation visibility of requisition and purchase order status; greatly reduced requisition to purchase order receipt time; ability to pay suppliers on a timely basis.

While many factors affect start to finish purchase times, Project Magellan improvements are targeted to achieve purchasing cycles in a two week timeframe.

## Project Magellan Recommendations

1. This process will be streamlined.
2. This process step will be eliminated.
3. Manual requisition entry and approvals will be automated to reduce process time and increase visibility.
4. These process steps will be eliminated.
5. Requisition to purchase order conversion will be automated and electronic, ensuring 100% accuracy.
6. These processes will be automated and will provide online documents.
7. These processes will be automated and will provide online viewing.
8. Paper documentation packets will be eliminated and documents will be electronic, eliminating lost paperwork.



Source: CSS International



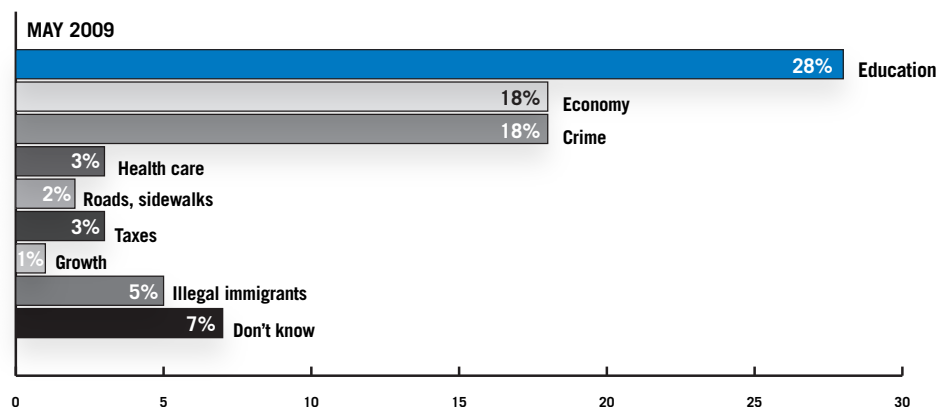
# Appendix B:

## Public Opinion on Education May 2009

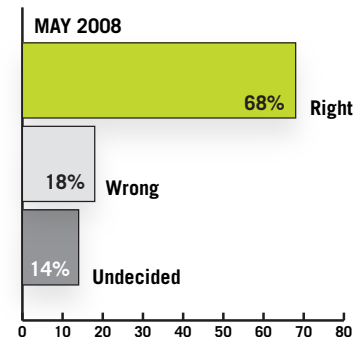
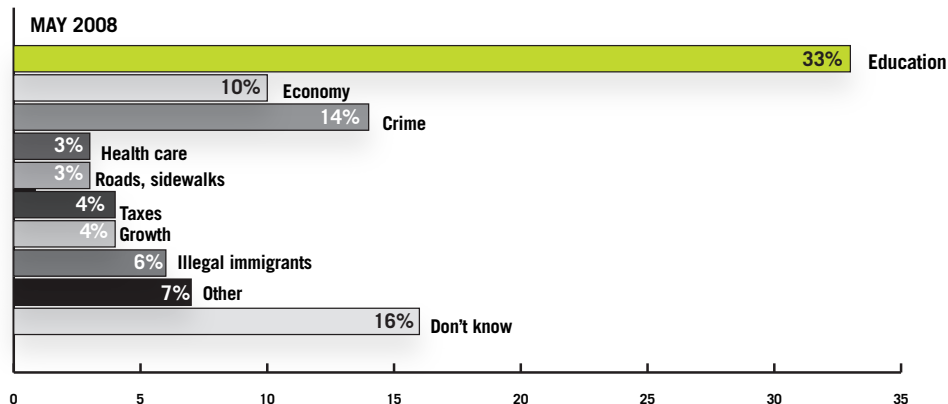
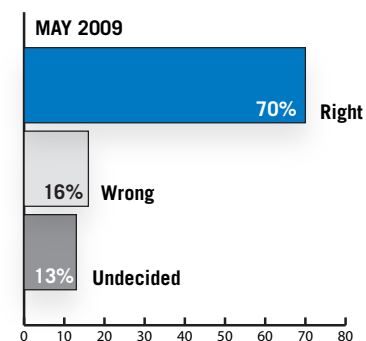
The following graphs represent results from a telephone survey commissioned by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. The survey was designed, written and analyzed by McNeely Pigott & Fox Public Relations in Nashville. The Parker Group of Birmingham, Ala., randomly surveyed 500 Davidson County residents during May 19-21 and 23-24, 2009. The survey has an error rate of approximately plus or minus 4.4 percent for the total sample.

All percentages in this report have been rounded for readability. As a result, not all responses will total 100%.

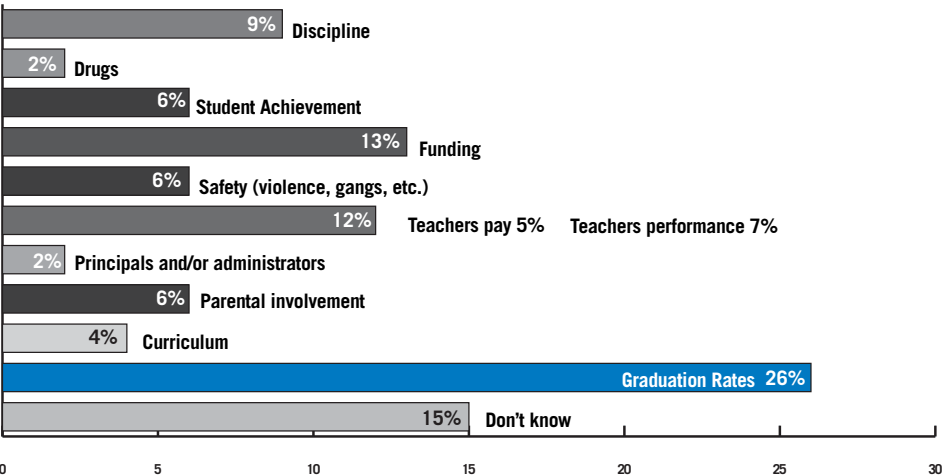
In your opinion, what is the most important issue or problem facing Nashville?



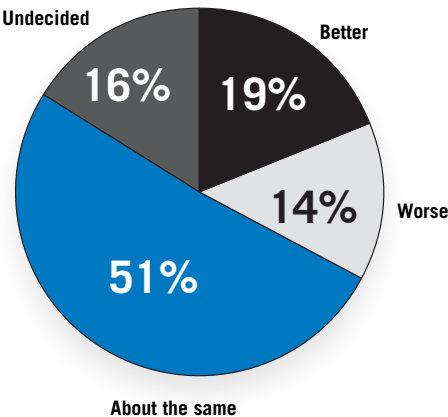
Is Nashville heading in the right direction?



# What do you think is the most important issue or problem facing Metro public schools today?

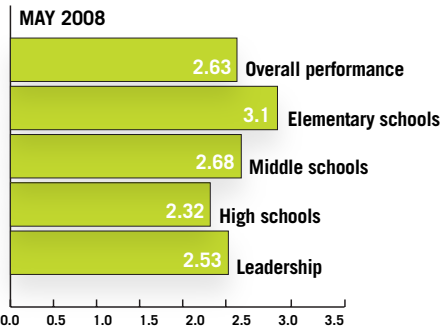
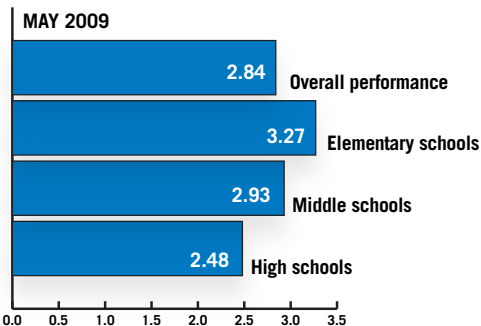


When you think of K through 12 public education in Nashville, would you say it is better than it was one year ago, worse or the same?



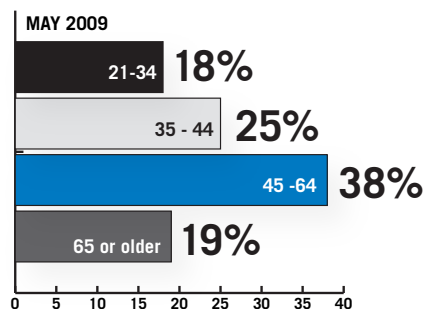
## Average rating for Nashville's public school system

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

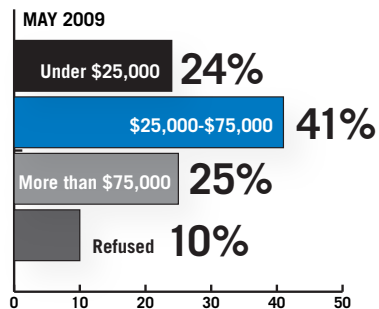




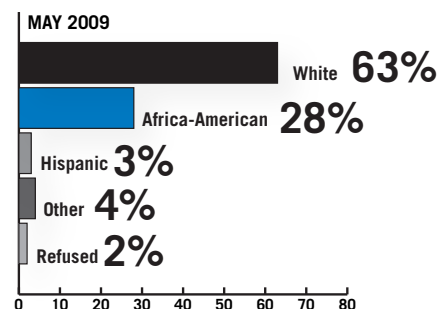
What is your age or which categories best describes your age?



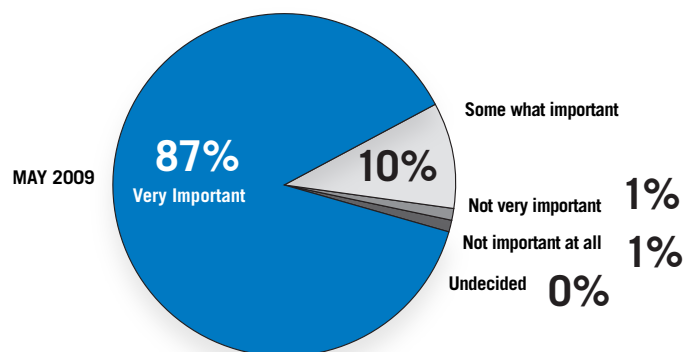
Which of the following categories best describes your total household income before taxes?



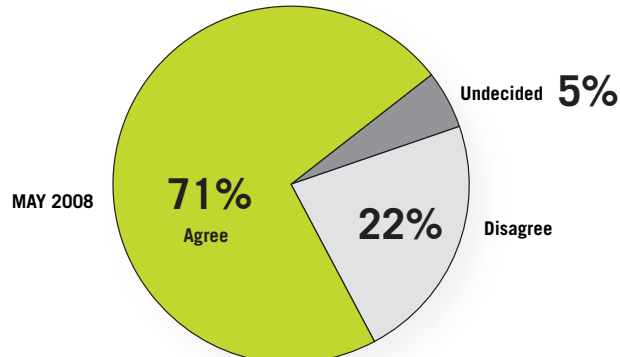
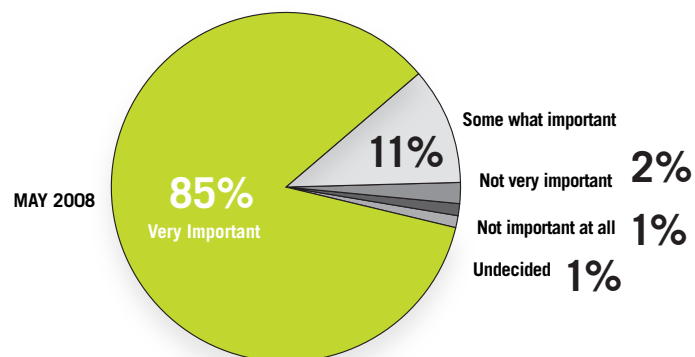
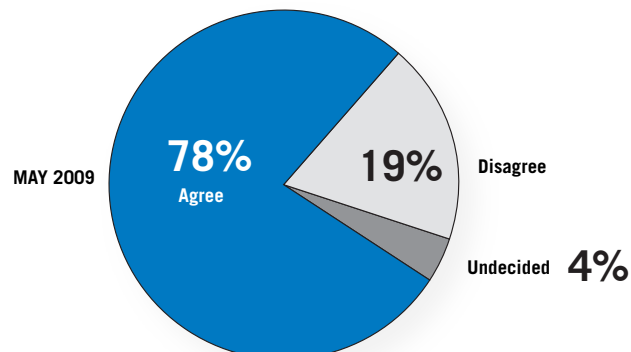
Race



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 schools face.

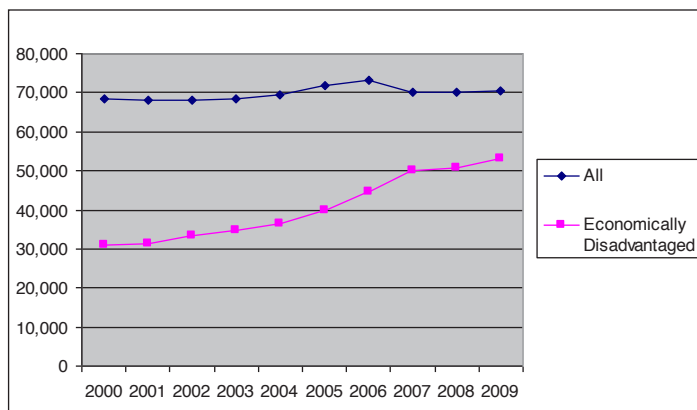


# Appendix C:

## MNPS Demographic and Achievement Data

This section represents a summary and analysis of data about MNPS. The most recent data included in the report are from the 2008-2009 school year. Unless otherwise noted, the source of data for this report is the 2009 Tennessee Department of Education State Report Card, accessible at [www.state.tn.us/education/reportcard](http://www.state.tn.us/education/reportcard).

*Metro Schools Enrollment 2000-2009*



### Demographic Trends

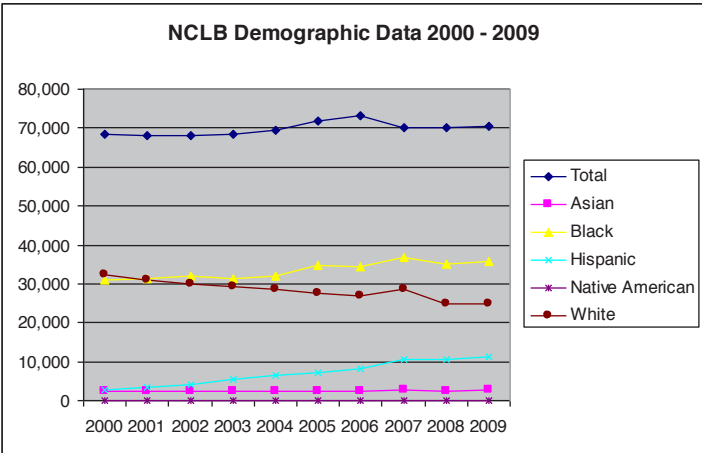
The number and percentage of economically disadvantaged students attending Metro schools has increased dramatically over the last nine years. Seventy-six percent of children were identified as economically disadvantaged in the 2008-2009 school year, a slight increase over the 73 percent of students reported to be economically disadvantaged in 2007-2008.

Year	NCLB Demographic Subgroup Data							
	All		Economically Disadvantaged		Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
2009	100%	70,378	76%	53,253	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



The racial composition of students in MNPS is also changing. An increasing number and percentage of students are Hispanic. The number of white students has declined since 2000, while the number of black students has remained relatively constant for the past five years.

Year	NCLB Racial Subgroups									
	Asian		Black		Hispanic		Native American		White	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
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



This chart reflects the number of students withdrawing from Metro Schools and enrolling in another Tennessee public school system, as well those enrolling in private schools. Note that these numbers 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.

In-State Withdrawal	All year		After day 1	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
2008-2009	3653	779	2051	281
2007-2008	4027	822	2230	299
2006-2007	3918	771	2273	312
2005-2006	3942	752	2330	273
2004-2005	3748	796	2207	334

# 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. For the 2009 state report card, the scale and benchmark year by which letter grades are determined and assigned to schools and school systems changed, in preparation for the new standards and assessments being implemented in 2009-2010. Consequently, the 2009 letter grades in the charts below cannot be compared to earlier years; we simply include the previous years' results for historical reference. A grade of "C" means a school or district has a three-year average achievement level equal to the state average in 2008-2009.

State Report Card K-8 Criterion Referenced Academic Achievement										
Subject	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Reading	D	D	D	D						
Language	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	D
Math	D	D	D	D	C	C	C	C	B	D
Science	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
Social Studies	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	C	C	D

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 the students' performance. Value-added scores measure individual growth from year to year, regardless of proficiency. Prior to this year, grades were assigned based on progress relative to the average gain by Tennessee students in 1997-1998. Because the benchmark year has now been changed to 2008-2009, the grades below cannot be compared to previous years. A grade of C means a school or district has a three-year average gain equal to the state average in 2008-2009.

State Report Card K-8 TCAP Value Added Letter Grades										
Subject	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Reading	B	C	C	C						
Language	F	F	F	D	C	B	A	A	A	C
Math	C	D	C	C	C	B	B	B	B	C
Science	B	B	C	C	C	B	B	A	B	C
Social Studies	A	C	C	C	C	A	A	A	A	C

## No Child Left Behind Ratings

Under federal law, school districts nationwide are rated along a continuum, where the highest rating is “good standing,” and the lowest is “state/Local Education Agency (LEA) reconstitution.” Ratings are determined by the school’s attainment of targets established by the state in reading, math and attendance (for elementary and middle schools) or graduation rates (for high schools). Schools achieving targets for one year are rated as “improving.” Schools failing to achieve targets for two years in a row are reclassified at a lower rating. While the percentage of MNPS elementary schools rated at “good standing” increased in 2009, and the percentage of high schools achieving this designation is at an all-time high, the percentage of middle schools rated “good standing” dropped to 44 percent.

Percentage of MNPS Schools in Good Standing			
Year	Elementary	Middle	High
2009	75%	44%	50%
2008	70%	49%	41%
2007	88%	38%	27%
2006	79%	46%	27%
2005	80%	38%	27%
2004	79%	54%	47%
2003	43%	5%	20%

State targets for reading and math change periodically. State targets are designed to set goals so that 100 percent of students achieve proficiency targets by the 2013-2014 school year. When targets change, schools must achieve the new targets to maintain their ratings.

Tennessee Targets for No Child Left Behind				
Grade and Subject	2005-06 thru 2006-07	2007-08 thru 2009-10	2010-11 thru 2012-13	2013-14
K-8 Math	79%	86%	93%	100%
K-8 English	83%	89%	94%	100%
9-12 Math	75%	83%	91%	100%
9-12 English	90%	93%	97%	100%

High School Ratings (from highest to lowest)	
High School	Status 2009
Cane Ridge	New
Hume Fogg Magnet	Good Standing
Martin L. King Magnet	Good Standing
Nash School of Arts	Good Standing
East Literature Magnet	Good Standing
John Overton	Good Standing
Hillwood	Good Standing
Hunters Lane	Good Standing
Maplewood	Good Standing
Pearl Cohn	Target
Hillsboro	School Improvement 2 – Improving
Antioch	School Improvement 2
Stratford	School Improvement 2
McGavock	Restructuring 1
Whites Creek	Restructuring 1
Glencliff	Restructuring 2



## K-8: Reading, Language Arts and Writing

In 2009, the percentage of K-8 students reaching proficiency targets in reading declined for all subgroups except Limited English Proficient and Hispanic students. Only the Asian and Caucasian subgroups were able to meet the 89 percent proficiency target in this area.

K-8 Reading, Language and Writing by Racial Subgroup				
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
<b>PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Reading, Language, and Writing</b>				
2009	91%	83%	81%	92%
2008	93%	86%	80%	93%
2007	93%	83%	77%	91%
2006	92%	79%	73%	90%
2005	92%	84%	76%	92%
2004	86%	75%	69%	88%
2003	85%	74%	66%	86%
<b>ADVANCED PROFICIENCY in Reading Language and Writing</b>				
2009	50%	22%	24%	49%
2008	55%	25%	26%	52%
2007	52%	24%	22%	49%
2006	49%	21%	21%	47%
2005	51%	18%	24%	45%
2004	37%	14%	15%	39%
2003	33%	14%	12%	39%

K-8 Math by Demographic Subgroup				
PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Mathematics				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficiency
2009	86%	82%	60%	80%
2008	85%	81%	59%	74%
2007	82%	77%	50%	67%
2006	81%	75%	46%	69%
2005	81%	75%	46%	71%
2004	76%	67%	33%	54%
<b>ADVANCED in Mathematics</b>				
2009	36%	26%	14%	22%
2008	33%	23%	13%	16%
2007	30%	20%	10%	12%
2006	28%	18%	9%	14%
2005	26%	16%	6%	11%
2004	23%	12%	3%	6%
<b>K-8 Math by Racial Subgroup</b>				
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
<b>PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Mathematics</b>				
2009	94%	81%	87%	92%
2008	94%	80%	84%	92%
2007	94%	77%	80%	91%
2006	94%	75%	78%	89%
2005	94%	75%	77%	89%
2004	87%	67%	71%	85%
<b>ADVANCED in Mathematics</b>				
2009	63%	24%	30%	53%
2008	59%	21%	26%	50%
2007	56%	19%	23%	47%
2006	53%	17%	21%	44%
2005	53%	15%	17%	41%
2004	41%	12%	14%	37%



## 9-12: Reading, Language and Writing

Reading proficiency increased for all subgroups in 2009. Only Asians and whites met the reading proficiency target of 93 percent.

Percentage of High School Students Proficient and Advanced in Reading/Language + Writing (1 <sup>st</sup> time Test Takers)				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2009	92%	89%	73%	80%
2008	90%	86%	66%	72%
2007	88%	83%	58%	71%
2006	88%	83%	58%	79%
2005	87%	81%	53%	83%
2004	83%	72%	42%	64%
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
2009	96%	89%	89%	96%
2008	94%	88%	87%	94%
2007	93%	85%	84%	93%
2006	92%	85%	85%	94%
2005	93%	83%	86%	91%
2004	87%	80%	79%	87%

Percentage of Proficient & Advanced in High School Reading, Language & Writing (1 <sup>st</sup> Time Test Takers)							
High Schools	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% Econ. Dis.
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	71%
Hume-Fogg	99%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	16%
Martin Luther King	99%	99%	99%	100%	100%	100%	21%
Nash. School of the Arts	96%	97%	98%	97%	97%	97%	31%
Antioch	79%	90%	92%	90%	92%	88%	67%
East Literature Magnet	96%	97%	95%	96%	96%	96%	58%
Hillsboro	90%	85%	90%	87%	92%	94%	52%
McGavock	80%	89%	93%	91%	94%	92%	64%
Overton	94%	89%	90%	90%	92%	95%	69%
Hillwood	80%	89%	90%	88%	87%	92%	70%
Hunters Lane	89%	88%	90%	85%	91%	90%	76%
Glenclyff	82%	84%	82%	86%	83%	89%	>95%
Maplewood	80%	92%	78%	85%	89%	89%	91%
Pearl-Cohn	66%	82%	79%	77%	85%	86%	>95%
Stratford	82%	79%	85%	81%	73%	88%	>95%
Whites Creek	86%	84%	83%	84%	84%	87%	80%
MNPS	83%	87%	88%	88%	87%	86%	76%

## 9-12: Mathematics

Overall math results were mixed, with some subgroups improving while others declined in the percentage of students reaching proficiency. Math scores for Asians and whites exceeded the state math target of 83 percent in 2009.

Percentage Proficient and Advanced in High School Math, Algebra I (1 <sup>st</sup> Time Test Takers)				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2009	81%	77%	54%	72%
2008	80%	78%	50%	76%
2007	69%	65%	40%	59%
2006	69%	62%	31%	63%
2005	69%	63%	34%	64%
2004	67%	59%	28%	55%
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
2009	91%	77%	78%	87%
2008	92%	75%	82%	88%
2007	91%	62%	74%	79%
2006	89%	59%	67%	82%
2005	88%	62%	65%	79%
2004	81%	38%	59%	76%

Percentage of Proficient & Advanced in High School Math, Algebra I (1 <sup>st</sup> Time Test Takers)								
High Schools		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	% Econ. Dis.
Cane Ride		---	---	---	---	New	New	67%
Hume-Fogg		>95%	100%	99%	99%	100%	100%	13%
Martin Luther King		>95%	100%	99%	99%	100%	100%	17%
Nash. School of the Arts		81%	90%	87%	85%	88%	89%	26%
Antioch		58%	77%	79%	71%	72%	76%	62%
East Literature Magnet		90%	94%	90%	71%	77%	89%	57%
Hillsboro		87%	76%	69%	80%	74%	89%	45%
McGavock		61%	69%	68%	66%	85%	80%	55%
Overton		81%	82%	70%	81%	86%	82%	63%
Hillwood		69%	72%	62%	64%	80%	82%	60%
Hunters Lane		71%	63%	73%	67%	83%	87%	65%
Glenclyff		45%	68%	74%	80%	91%	84%	90%
Maplewood		60%	70%	52%	63%	85%	83%	91%
Pearl-Cohn		61%	70%	55%	75%	75%	69%	91%
Stratford		83%	59%	63%	66%	91%	91%	92%
Whites Creek		74%	68%	58%	53%	61%	66%	76%
MNPS		67%	69%	69%	69%	80%	76%	73%

# ACT Scores

The ACT composite score should be equal to or greater than 21 points, the minimum requirement to qualify for a lottery-funded HOPE scholarship. A minimum score of 19 is the entrance requirement for state colleges and universities. Six MNPS high schools achieved average ACT scores equal to or greater than 19.

ACT Scores by High School								
School	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	>= 21?
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	New	---
Hume-Fogg	26.4	26.3	26.7	26.4	26.8	26.7	26.7	Yes
Martin L. King	25.4	26.1	25.9	26.2	26.5	27.0	26.7	Yes
Middle College					23.0	20.0	22.5	Yes
Hillsboro	20.3	19.5	21.1	20.3	20.5	19.9	19.5	No
Nash. School of the Arts	18.2	18.7	19.2	18.6	20	20.2	20.4	No
Overton	19.1	19.3	18.7	18.9	19.4	18.8	19.1	No
Hillwood	20.5	20.5	19.9	19.2	19.3	18.9	18.9	No
East Literature	18.7	19.2	19.9	19.1	18.8	18.3	18.7	No
McGavock	18.6	18.9	18.3	18.4	18.7	18.3	18.3	No
Antioch	17.9	18.1	17.6	17.9	18.1	17.8	17.9	No
Hunters Lane	17.6	17.9	17.5	17.5	17	17.7	16.9	No
Glenclyff	17.7	17.3	17.1	16.8	17	17.1	17.2	No
Stratford	15.3	16.3	16.6	16.7	16.7	16.1	15.7	No
Maplewood	15.8	15.8	15.6	16.7	16.3	15.9	15.9	No
Pearl Cohn	16.3	16.2	16.9	16.6	16.2	16.2	16.0	No
Whites Creek	16.9	16.7	16.5	15.8	16	16.3	16.3	No
MNPS Average	19.2	19.1	19.3	19.1	19.2	19.1	19.0	No

# Attendance

The state attendance goal is 93 percent for grades K-12. Elementary and middle schools achieved this goal, but high schools did not.

Year	Attendance by Grade Tier		
	K to 4	5 to 8	9 to 12
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

Four magnet high schools and the new zoned Cane Ridge High School exceeded the state attendance target of 93 percent.

Attendance by High School							
High Schools	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	94.7
Martin Luther King	97.3	97.3	95.3	94.9	96.1	96.5	96.3
East Literature	93	95.6	94.9	95.1	95.8	95.8	95.6
Antioch	92.6	91.5	88.7	90.8	95.7	90.6	91.5
Hume-Fogg	92.2	95.3	95.5	95.5	95.6	96.5	96.3
Nash. Sch. of the Arts	NA	93.6	93.1	93.9	94.0	94.1	94.0
Overton	91.5	91.4	90.1	91.2	91.8	92.1	92.0
Hillsboro	91.1	90.1	91	90.3	91.4	91.6	90.8
Pearl Cohn	87.3	86.6	84.6	88.5	91.2	91.7	89.7
Hunters Lane	92	91.6	91.3	89.5	89.7	89.8	90.9
Stratford	87.6	86.6	82.3	83.2	89.2	84.6	88.3
Whites Creek	89	89.4	89.1	89.9	88.9	88.9	89.8
McGavock	88.5	90.5	88.7	87.6	88.8	88.8	90.4
Hillwood	90.2	89.2	87.9	88.3	88.4	90.7	89.8
Glenclyff	89	87.8	86.5	86.7	88.1	89.2	92.3
Maplewood	88.4	87.3	85.4	86.1	85.4	89.7	88.5
MNPS Average (9-12)	NA	NA	91.1	89.3	90.2	87.4	91.4



# Graduation Rates

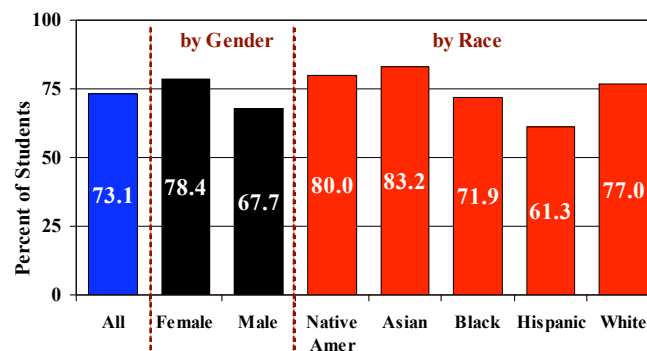
Graduation rates at four magnet high schools achieved the state graduation target of 90 percent in 2008-2009. No comprehensive high school achieved the target 90 percent graduation rate. Graduation rates improved at the following comprehensive high schools: Antioch, Glenciff, Hillsboro, Maplewood, Pearl-Cohn, Stratford and Whites Creek.

Graduation Rates by High School							
High Schools	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	≥ 90?
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	N/A
Hume Fogg	99	99	98.5	99.5	98.5	100.0	Yes
Martin Luther King	100	99.4	98	99.3	99.4	99.3	Yes
East Literature	56.1	97.3	97.8	99.2	99.3	97.3	Yes
Nashville Sch. Arts	89.7	89.7	90.9	95.2	96.5	98.1	Yes
Overton	69.8	72	75.1	79.6	79.1	77.9	No
Hunters Lane	64.7	69.4	72.7	78.3	77.7	76.5	No
Antioch	63.8	66.5	66.9	75.3	71.5	74.7	No
Hillwood	61.5	63.3	68.7	75.8	75.8	67.7	No
McGavock	51.4	56.1	68.5	74.3	76.3	75.8	No
Stratford	38.1	50.5	54.5	73	64.6	67.6	No
Hillsboro	67.3	63.6	74.4	70.9	81.0	81.6	No
Glenciff	50.1	53.3	63.4	68.4	66.6	73.3	No
Pearl Cohn	50.6	46.2	65.1	67.7	66.1	68.0	No
Whites Creek	57.2	53.7	65.8	64.5	64.7	67.5	No
Maplewood	42.8	41.2	42.6	58.2	69.3	69.5	No
MNPS	58.2	61.9	68.8	70	72.6	73.1	No

## Graduation Rate by Subgroup, 2008-2009

Schl #	School	Female	Male	Am Ind	Asian	Black	Hisp	White	Total	Target
0	MNPS	78.4%	67.7%	80.0%	83.2%	71.9%	61.3%	77.0%	73.1%	73.9%
20	Antioch HS	83.7%	66.0%	100.0%	85.7%	78.4%	57.4%	79.3%	74.7%	76.8%
203	East Literature Magnet	97.1%	97.5%	100.0%	100.0%	97.2%	100.0%	97.1%	97.3%	72.8%
240	Glenciff HS	79.0%	68.4%	0.0%	78.9%	81.3%	59.5%	72.5%	73.3%	69.9%
302	Harris Hillman	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	47.9%
335	Hillsboro HS	87.5%	75.8%	100.0%	83.3%	81.4%	50.0%	83.6%	81.6%	78.4%
340	Hillwood HS	72.0%	63.2%	0.0%	83.3%	58.9%	73.7%	76.6%	67.7%	75.6%
355	Hume-Fogg Magnet	99.1%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.3%	99.5%	89.5%
358	Hunters Lane HS	83.4%	69.0%	50.0%	100.0%	79.9%	67.4%	71.8%	76.5%	77.0%
394	John Overton HS	77.5%	78.3%	0.0%	80.8%	80.5%	59.7%	81.7%	77.9%	79.8%
437	Middle College	95.2%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.2%	97.0%	NA
443	Madison School	16.7%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	30.0%	35.7%	54.8%
445	Maplewood HS	72.4%	66.2%	0.0%	100.0%	73.7%	71.4%	48.1%	69.5%	66.2%
456	M. L. King Jr Magnet	98.7%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.7%	99.3%	89.5%
470	McGavock HS	79.8%	71.6%	100.0%	80.0%	77.3%	73.0%	74.6%	75.8%	70.6%
505	Murrell School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	NA
512	Nashville Schl of Arts	100.0%	95.0%	0.0%	100.0%	98.4%	100.0%	97.7%	98.1%	89.5%
555	Pearl Cohn HS	73.1%	62.3%	0.0%	0.0%	69.2%	33.3%	63.6%	68.0%	70.0%
620	Stratford HS	69.6%	65.4%	100.0%	80.0%	72.8%	57.1%	50.9%	67.6%	63.6%
704	Whites Creek HS	71.8%	63.0%	0.0%	0.0%	68.2%	100.0%	61.4%	67.5%	73.3%

## 2008-2009 MNPS Graduation rate by Gender and Race



Source: Presentation to the Chamber Report Card Committee by Paul Changas, 11/13/09





# Cohort Dropout Rates

The dropout rates of all zoned high schools are greater than the state dropout target of 10 percent, with the exception of Pearl-Cohn, which made substantial progress from the 2007-2008 school year. Zoned high schools decreasing their dropout rates in 2009 were Antioch, Glenclyff, Hillsboro, Hunters Lane, Maplewood, McGavock, Overton, and Pearl-Cohn.

Cohort Dropout								
High Schools	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	<=10?
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	New	New
Martin Luther King	0	0	0	1.1	0.5	0.5	0.0	Yes
East Literature	4.7	3.7	0	0.6	0.6	0.5	1.9	Yes
Hume Fogg	0	0.9	0	0	0.7	1.4	0.4	Yes
Nash. Sch. Arts	5.6	3.3	n/a	5.6	4.1	2.6	2.0	Yes
Pearl Cohn	26.5	17.4	25.3	20.2	19.4	17.1	8.8	Yes
Overton	12.2	12.6	15.7	13.1	10.6	13.7	11.5	No
Hunters Lane	11.8	13.2	14.7	11.4	11	11.1	11.0	No
Stratford	16.3	34.9	32.8	28.1	12.6	14.0	14.8	No
Antioch	18.7	18.1	19	19.6	14.1	18.2	16.4	No
Hillwood	12.4	18	19	19.1	13.8	13.1	19.3	No
McGavock	16.9	16.7	17.6	17	16.3	13.7	11.9	No
Glenclyff	26.7	24.3	24.2	22.6	16.4	14.7	12.0	No
Whites Creek	14.6	12.2	19.6	15.1	20.0	14.9	17.4	No
Hillsboro	11.8	13.7	15.9	16.6	21.9	13.0	12.6	No
Maplewood	22.7	22	37.7	43.4	27.4	19.4	19.1	No
MNPS	16.2	17.8	20.8	19	20.4	16.8	15.8	No

# Suspensions

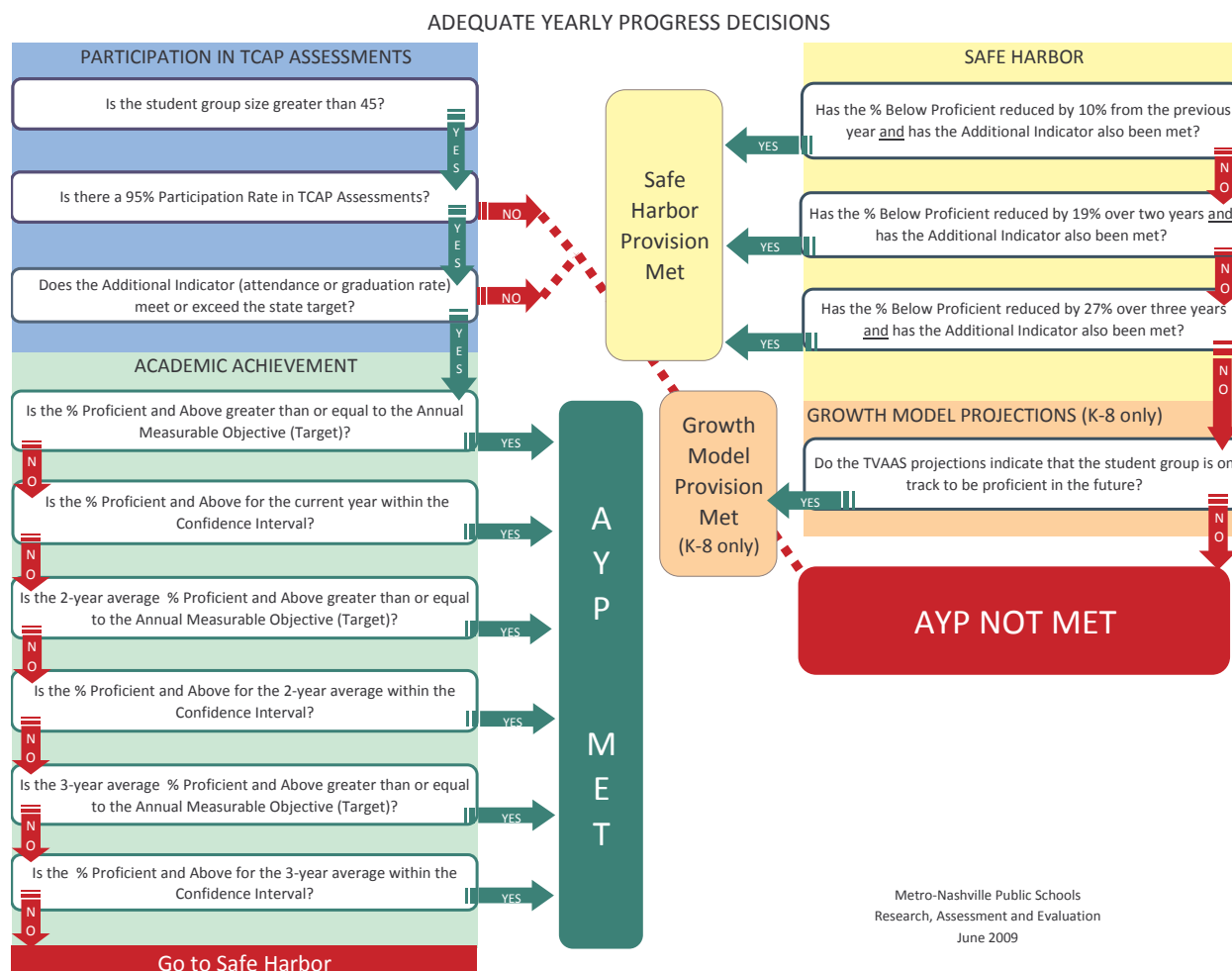
The percentage of students suspended declined for all subgroups in 2009, but African-American students are still significantly overrepresented compared to the other demographic groups.

Suspensions as a Percentage of the Number of Students in Each Subgroup					
Year	% Total	% Asian	% Black	% Hispanic	% White
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%



# Appendix D:

## How Adequate Yearly Progress Is Determined



# Appendix E:

## Experts Interviewed

The Education Report Card Committee is sincerely grateful to the school board members, administrators, teachers, students, and elected officials who took time to meet 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 Davidson County

**The Honorable Karl Dean, Mayor**

**Dr. Danielle Mezera**, Director, Mayor's Office of Children and Youth

**Candy Markman**, Planning Director, Mayor's After-school Initiatives

### MNPS Board of Education

**The Honorable David Fox, Chairman, District 8**

### MNPS Central Administration

**Dr. Jesse Register**, Director

**Paul Changas**, Director of Research, Assessment and Evaluation

**Ruben DePena**, Family & Community Liaison, Glenclyff Cluster

**Linda DePriest**, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support/Co-Chair Special Needs TLG

**Chris Henson**, Chief Financial Officer

**Debra McAdams**, Executive Director, Exceptional Education

**Beth O'Shea**, Coordinator Exceptional Education, Gifted Services

**Greg Patterson**, Assistant Superintendent Elementary Schools/Co-Chair Disadvantaged Youth TLG

**Kecia Ray**, Executive Director, Federal Programs and Grants

**LaWanna Shelton**, Executive Director, ELL

### MNPS Principals

**Robbie Hampton**, Harris-Hillman School

**Lora Hall**, Cane Ridge High School

**Kim Fowler**, Mt. View Elementary

**Tony Majors**, Glenclyff High School

**Janet Murphy**, Bass Middle School

**Catherine Prentis**, Cockrill Elementary

**Angela Vaughn**, Charlotte Park Elementary

### MNPS Teachers and Staff

**Michael Hollingsworth**, Cane Ridge High School

**Melissa Javors**, Paragon Mills Elementary

**GeDa' Jones**, Park Avenue Enhanced Option

**Deanna Privette**, Overton High School

**Gini Pupo-Walker**, Change Coach, Overton High School

**Kristopher Winfrey**, Cora Howe Exceptional School

### Metropolitan Nashville Education Association

**Erick Huth**, President

**Stephen Henry**, Vice President

## State of Tennessee

**Rita Fentress**, Office of Federal Programs, TN Department of Education

**Dr. Harry Green, Executive Director**, Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations

**Dr. Julie McCarger**, Executive Director of Federal Programs

**John Morgan**, Deputy Governor, Former Comptroller of the Treasury

**Dr. Connie J. Smith**, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Accountability, Teaching & Learning

## Community

**Abdelghani Barre**, Planning Analyst, Metropolitan Social Services

**Karen Goodwin**, Murrell School Parent

**Elise McMillan**, Co-Chair, Mayor's Advisory Committee on Special Education

**John Page**, Senior VP for Child, Adolescent and Family Services, Centerstone

**Norm Tenenbaum**, Executive Director, The Arc of Davidson County

**Lisa Wiltshire**, Co-Chair, Disadvantaged Youth TLG

## Martha O'Bryan Center, Parents

**Gertrude Beasley**

**Kelly Jolly**

**Tina Thompson**

**Quanasa Horton**

**Lisa Kilby**

**Lisa Caruthers**

**Annie Todd**

**Safia Mohamed**

## Consultants

**Tom Colbert**, CSS International

**Keith Jones**, CSS International

**Elizabeth Knox**, past member, Education Report Card Committee

**Roger Shirley**, McNeely Pigott & Fox Public Relations

## Schools Visited by Committee Members

**Cockrill Elementary**

**Charlotte Park Elementary**

**Glenclyff High School**

## MNPS Liaison to the Committee

**Fred Carr**, Chief Operating Officer

### School System Performance

**MNPS response:** After a very difficult 2008, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools experienced a complete change of course in 2009 that continues to reap positive benefits. The district began the calendar year with a new director of schools who is nationally recognized for his reform work in large urban school districts. Dr. Jesse Register spent his first weeks on the job meeting with employees, parents, community leadership and others to assess the district's climate and needs before launching MNPS Achieves, a district-wide reform effort that included massive reorganization of the central office and reallocation of resources to schools. As part of this effort, MNPS formed Transformational Leadership Groups (TLGs) comprised of district staff and community experts to guide reform in eight critical areas. The primary goal of this reform is to create highly effective leadership teams in schools, supported by the MNPS central office, that result in quality instruction for every student.

This past year, MNPS witnessed the beginnings of significant change, and as a result saw numerous successes. The most significant of these successes was making AYP under NCLB guidelines of No Child Left Behind for 2009. Work continues in 2010 to prepare for tougher testing standards and to continue moving the district and our students down the road to higher levels of achievement.





In response to the 2009 Chamber Report Card recommendations, MNPS submits the following responses:

**1. Determine how our students compare academically with students in large districts across the country. MNPS should participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress Trial Urban District Assessment to allow Nashville to compare the academic performance of our students to that of 11 other peer cities.**

It is the intent of MNPS to participate in the next Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA). This assessment occurs every two years and the first opportunity to participate following the Report Card's 2009 recommendation will be in 2011. The assessment includes reading, math, and writing in grades 4 and 8. In fall 2009, MNPS made preliminary contact with the National Assessment Governing Board to indicate our interest in participating in the 2011 assessment and to receive the information required to make a formal request to participate.

**2. Budget significant additional resources to evaluate the effectiveness of key initiatives and programs. The school board and administration need the data to maximize every dollar toward student achievement.**

All initiatives within MNPS are evaluated for effectiveness. Some initiatives have a formal evaluation component built in through grants. For most initiatives, the district examines a variety of student performance measures to assess effectiveness, including both academic (e.g., assessment results, grades) and non-academic (e.g., attendance, discipline, graduation/dropout) data. However, there are some key challenges that must be overcome in most large-scale evaluations: 1) the identification and separation of the effects of multiple interventions or initiatives; 2) the impact of high student mobility; and 3) the vast resources required to gather data on implementation of the initiative.

The district has implemented the program module of its student information system to assist with the identification of programs or initiatives for specific students. However, the use of this approach is limited to a few major initiatives due to staff limitations in schools. Keeping track of which students are involved in which initiatives over time can require significant staff time, especially due to high student mobility in most of our schools. The mobility issue must also be addressed in determining whether a student was involved in an intervention for a sufficient amount of time to be included in the "experimental" group (or too much time to be considered as part of the "control" group).

Program implementation may be Metro Schools' biggest challenge. For many initiatives, staff find drastic differences in the performance data between schools. A program or initiative may be implemented in one school or one classroom much differently than it is in another. The best way to evaluate the level of implementation is to spend sufficient time observing and recording key behaviors in classrooms, but this requires a considerable amount of staff time in a district the size of MNPS. An approach that utilizes survey data in addition to limited observational data is used in most cases.

Given the limited number of district staff available for program evaluation, MNPS is working with Vanderbilt faculty who have expressed an interest in assisting Metro Schools to address these evaluation challenges. Both hope to have a formal collaborative working relationship – which may include some positions at Vanderbilt dedicated to this project – established sometime in 2010.

Given the impact on performance data due to school leadership, teacher effectiveness, and how initiatives are

implemented, an alternative to focusing on traditional program implementation is to focus more on the evaluation of school effectiveness. Certain school administrators and teachers get results under almost any circumstances, and there is increasing research showing that teacher effectiveness far outweighs the impact of specific programs or initiatives. By identifying effective schools and using them as a model for other schools within the district, MNPS can not only identify what initiatives are working, but also how these initiatives can successfully be implemented.

This evaluation of school effectiveness goes well beyond NCLB AYP results. The MNPS department of research, assessment and evaluation has begun work on a school evaluation model that includes student achievement gains and consideration of school demographics among a variety of indicators. In the meantime, district and school staffs are continually being trained to make ongoing, formative evaluations of effectiveness using the most current academic and non-academic data available. This process should only improve with the implementation and expansion of the district's new data warehouse.

**3. Create a detailed, school-based strategy to ensure that every high school student attains at least the minimum ACT score necessary to qualify for a HOPE lottery scholarship.**

Tennessee now requires that all high school students take the ACT as a requirement for graduation. All MNPS high schools offer courses both during the day and after school that are designed to assist students in preparing to take the ACT. In addition, the district's data warehouse is in final testing to provide schools and teachers access to individual student data, and MNPS is working with Dr. Bill Sanders and Dr. June Rivers

to use Value-Added data to track student progress. With these tools, the district is able to determine specific areas of need for each individual student and tailor the programs or interventions to fit what that student needs to succeed. These efforts are designed to result in higher academic achievement for all students.

**4. Reincorporate education in the visual and performing arts, which is a proven strategy for reaching academic standards and engaging students in learning.**

Music and the visual arts are taught in every elementary school in MNPS by a certified teacher. The stability of returning teachers left very few openings this year. The middle schools have been of great concern for several years, with general music, band programs and the visual arts removed from the curricula of many schools. Through the leadership of Dr. Register, every middle school once again has visual arts, and general music has been reinstated at 13 middle schools. Band programs are in all middle schools, with the exception of two, and string programs are at nine of our middle schools. Theater courses as well as dance are offered at Creswell Middle Arts Magnet.

Fifteen of our high schools have visual arts and band programs; 14 have choirs; seven have string orchestras; 14 have theater courses; and six have dance courses offered. It is our hope that all high schools will be able to offer dance and each will have studies in theater open to all of its students in the near future.

**5. Ensure the success of the high school career academy model through a clear commitment from district and school-level leadership with the necessary resources to make this reform sustainable.**

A master plan for small learning communities that includes the career academy model is currently in development with plans for school approval in spring 2010. Marketing and branding MNPS career academies is in the beginning stages of development. MNPS hired a new associate superintendent of high schools, Jay Steele, who has experience and success with the career academy model. The Transformational Leadership Group for High Schools is incorporating a five-year master plan that includes smaller learning communities and academies.

**6. Operate all zoned high schools with a high student mobility rate on the same type of class schedule.**

All MNPS zoned high schools will operate on the same A/B schedule beginning with the 2010-2011 school year. Mobility rates among schools have been studied and based upon a zoned high school mobility rate of 42.6 percent (2008-2009). Dr. Register instructed the high school principals to create a plan for standardizing and aligning high school schedules. This change to standardized schedules will significantly reduce the number of students who lose credits when they have to transfer to another school within the district. The standardized schedule will not apply to the magnet schools (mobility 1.3 percent – 9.8 percent).

The selection of the A/B scheduling model was made after the new associate superintendent of high schools received input from a high school principal committee that was formed to review the schedule, from all high school principals in their monthly meeting, from a panel of students, and from a panel

of teachers. He has also conferred with the teachers' union on this issue.

**7. Communicate an effective and consistent message about career academy planning and execution, both internally within each high school and the district, and externally to the larger Nashville community, with a special focus on having information visible on school web sites.**

Metro Schools has spent a great deal of time and effort to communicate effectively and consistently about the career academies in place within MNPS high schools. Information in district newsletters, on the district web site and given to media has resulted in numerous positive media reports in the past year. In addition, printed materials and videos have sought to raise awareness of the academies and how they provide the relevance, rigor, and relationships students need for success. A master plan is currently being developed, and a branding/marketing plan is in the planning stages for a consistent marketing and messaging for internal and external communication. The new associate superintendent of high schools, Jay Steele, is working with several entities to develop and communicate this plan. The MNPS web site and school web sites will be used as part of the marketing and communication plan.

**8. Authorize school principals to prescribe professional development for each member of their faculty and provide training for principals on how to assess teacher professional development needs.**

Under the leadership of Dr. Register, primary responsibility for faculty/staff development has been moved to the principal of each school. Significant changes have continued during this school year to address school-based professional development. Mandated school improvement plans now include a detailed plan of the types of professional development that will be offered, as well as when it will be offered and who will be involved. In addition, MNPS placed approximately 310 coaching positions in schools—positions designed to work with adults to assist with ongoing teacher support and training—as well as providing cluster support teams that as part of their duties provide training and support to schools. District-wide professional development is tailored to support and enhance the efforts of schools.

**9. Develop a district strategy to ensure new teachers are placed in schools, grade levels, and subjects for which they are best suited to teach.**

Principals in Metro Schools interview and choose the teachers they feel will be the most effective for their school needs. To encourage recruitment of high-quality teachers in hard-to-staff areas, the district offered what was to have been a one-time payment of \$5,000 for math, ELL, and special education teachers for the 2008-2009 school year who were highly qualified and newly assigned to a high-priority school. This incentive has been continued for the 2009-2010 school year. Also, MNPS ended the 2008-2009 school year with 98.91 percent of all courses being taught by a highly qualified teacher.

**10. Create a consortium between the higher-education teacher preparation programs located in Metropolitan Nashville (e.g., TSU, Vanderbilt, Belmont, Lipscomb, Trevecca, Fisk, and Aquinas) and MNPS for the purpose of providing at least two years of ongoing training and professional support to new teacher hires in MNPS from these local universities at no cost to the teachers.**

In February 2007, MNPS entered into a consortium of the area universities to provide ongoing support to teachers working under an alternative license. Universities included in this consortium are Belmont University, Cumberland University, Free Will Baptist Bible College, Lipscomb University, Tennessee State University and Trevecca Nazarene University. Under this agreement, the universities provide support to the alternatively licensed teachers enrolled in their institutions through coursework, seminars, and mentoring. MNPS is currently collaboratively working with Vanderbilt, Lipscomb, and Belmont to create additional new opportunities for current Metro teachers to extend their skills through master's degree programs in hard-to-staff areas. The focus is on providing the highest-quality teachers for schools with the greatest need.





**ACT American College Testing**

The ACT is a standardized test for high school achievement and college admissions in the United States.

**AYP Adequate Yearly Progress**

A term that indicates a school or school system has met the required academic performance for a year under the state accountability system mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

**BEP Basic Education Program**

The funding formula through which state and local 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 English as a second language instruction and are actively receiving these services.

**ENCORE**

The MNPS program for high-ability students who have been identified as gifted and talented.

**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****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 the year 2014.

**SES Supplemental Education Services**

Math and reading tutoring provided by schools, nonprofits or for-profit businesses to economically disadvantaged students in a school that has not met AYP for two or more consecutive years. Funding for the tutoring is provided through the federal Title 1 program.

**TCAP Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program**

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

**TDP Tennessee Diploma Project**

Initiative of Governor Phil Bredesen and the State Board of Education to raise the rigor of Tennessee's K-12 standards and increase the requirements for high school graduation. The new standards are to be implemented in the 2009-2010 school year.

**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.

# Acknowledgements

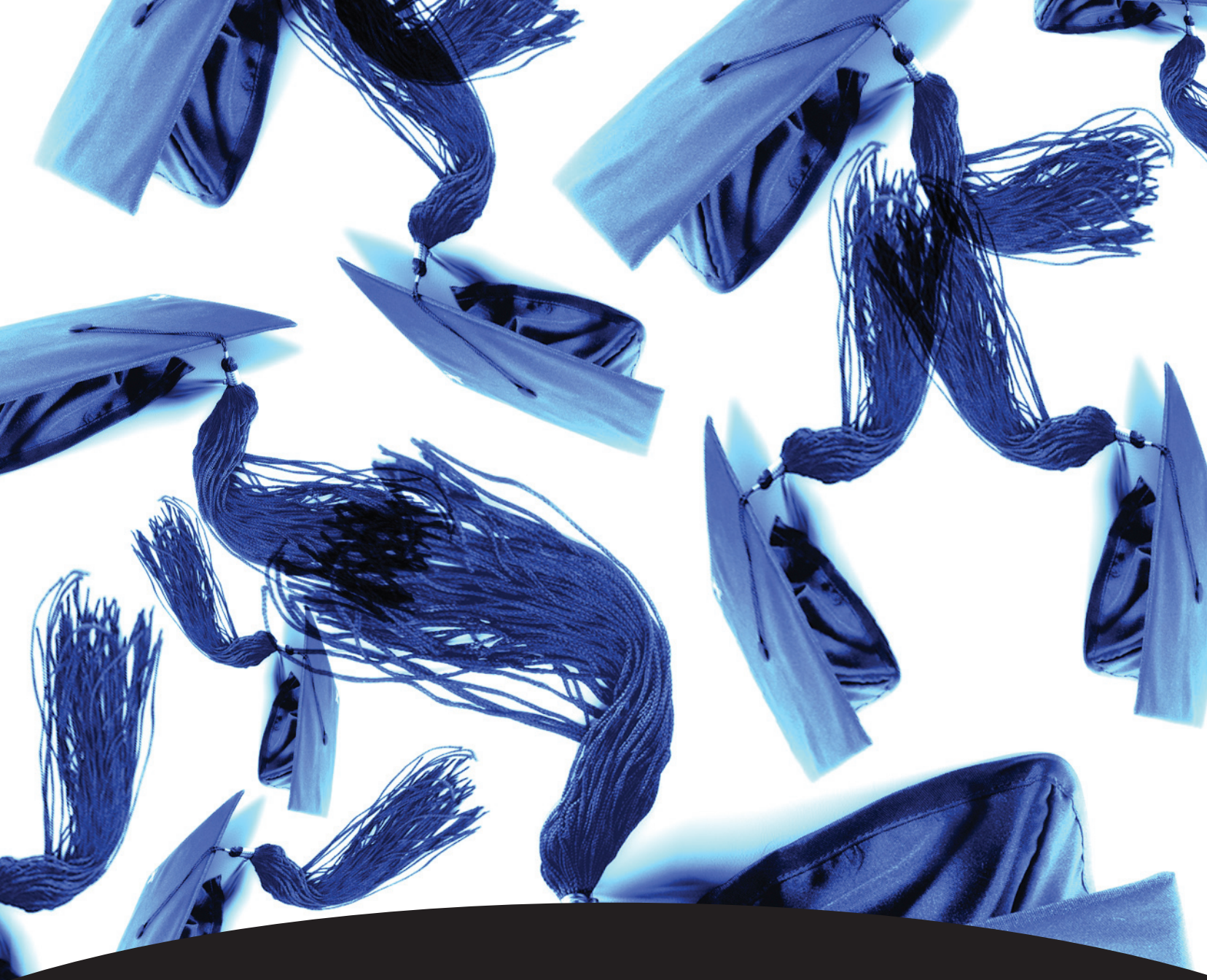
The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce has made the improvement of our public schools its top priority, and this commitment is personified by the 22 volunteer members of its Education Report Card Committee. Meeting nearly every Friday morning for the better part of five months, these members give their 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 like to especially thank Christon Arthur, Andrea Dillenburg, Jacobia Dowell, Michael Hayes, Ginger Hausser Pepper, Khaled Sakalla, and Margaret Whitfield for their commitment to this work over the past 36 months.

We would also like to thank all of our presenters and panelists for taking the time to share their expertise and viewpoints with us. It is only through their candor and insights that we are able to report accurately the successes and challenges, as well as search for creative solutions. We would like to especially thank Charlotte Park Elementary, Cockrill Elementary and Glendcliff High School for taking the time to host us, allowing the committee to see firsthand some of the excellent work taking place in Metro Schools every day. We also extend a special appreciation to the parents we met at the Martha O'Bryan Center for sharing with us the concerns and hopes they have for their children in Metro 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. As an indication of the seriousness with which they view our effort, over the years we have been fortunate to have outstanding MNPS liaisons working with our committee. That tradition has continued this year with the appointment of MNPS Chief Operating Officer Fred Carr. New to the district, he has quickly built an impressive knowledge base of the critical issues facing Metro Schools and has been a terrific resource to the committee.

Finally, we would like to thank the fine staff at Loews Vanderbilt Hotel for helping make our weekly meetings productive and comfortable. Also working behind the scenes, we recognize the extraordinary efforts of Etta Bell with the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, who handled flawlessly the logistical demands of a hard-working committee. The production of this report each year is a true team effort on the part of so many. We look forward to the discussion and work this report will inspire in the coming year.





Nashville

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