

18TH ANNUAL EDUCATION

Report Card

SUBMITTED BY THE CHAMBER EDUCATION REPORT CARD COMMITTEE
CO-CHAIRS KEITH BELTON & CABOT PYLE



METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

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Executive Summary

In Nashville, we have a saying: “Education is the most important thing our city does.” Education may also be the most difficult thing our city does. Each school day in Nashville, more than 75,000 public school students deserve a safe, supportive and inspiring learning environment. For Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS), it has been a struggle to make adequate yearly progress under the state’s accountability system -- only twice in the past eight years.

For the 2009-2010 school year, that work became even more challenging for educators in Tennessee, as did the task of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce’s Education Report Card Committee in assessing Metro Schools’ progress. Students in grades K-12 were expected to meet much higher academic standards in math, reading and science, as measured by new state assessments. Last May saw the culmination of the Tennessee Diploma Project, an initiative of Governor Bredesen to move Tennessee’s standards from the weakest in the country to among the most rigorous. Predictably, many students who were considered proficient or advanced under the old standards struggled to attain proficiency in 2010. While it took considerable effort and courage to implement the tougher standards in one year, the use of these new tests and standards makes it extremely difficult to determine whether Metro students made real academic progress over the previous year. In addition, because of the massive flooding of our city in May 2010, Metro Schools, as a system, was granted a one-year reprieve from sanctions under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The 2009-2010 school year thus sets **a new baseline for improvement in Metro Schools.**

In the absence of comparable student performance data, we are especially pleased to see the continued improvement in Metro’s high school graduation rate, to 82.9 percent. The expansion of educational options for high school students, such as the programs at Old Cockrill, Opry Mills/Hickory Hollow, Big Picture High School and Diploma Plus, are an important part of this success, as is the continued implementation of the Academies of Nashville in the district’s 12 zoned high schools. The Nashville community continues to rally around high school reform. In June 2010, 82 businesses and organizations signed up to be academy partners for the following school year. It will take all the energy and commitment MNPS and the community can muster to improve instruction so that all MNPS graduates are prepared for college, work and life: Only 27 percent of Metro’s high school seniors scored a 21 or greater composite score on the ACT, the minimum needed to qualify for the HOPE college scholarship.

We commend district and city leadership for continuing to be collaborative and focused on improving student achievement. During another tight budget year, the school board made politically difficult decisions to reduce spending on areas outside the classroom in order to invest in student learning. The Mayor and Metro Council were true to their commitment to fund education by increasing the school system’s budget, even as other Metro departments experienced cuts. Mayor Dean expanded his leadership in education reform by launching the Center for Charter School Excellence in December 2009, and has worked to offer more afterschool programs in the city. Director of Schools Dr. Jesse Register has built an effective working relationship with the mayor, collaboratively initiating a process

that will begin overhauling how the district attracts, retains and rewards teachers. In discussing the first-year accomplishments of MNPS Achieves, his district-wide reform effort, Dr. Register reports progress in all nine areas of reform.

It is for these reasons that the 2009-2010 school year leaves the committee **encouraged, but impatient**. That is, the committee senses both positive momentum in the district's reform efforts and an uptick in district morale, but we are still waiting for broad, measurable academic improvement. We find that Dr. Register has continued to build his leadership team and that he is making perceptible progress in making MNPS a great place to work for talented teachers, administrators and staff. The addition of an online data warehouse, which allows MNPS staff to monitor the academic progress of students in real time, represents enormous potential in ensuring that every student succeeds in school. In addition, we believe initiatives as wide-ranging as the Academies of Nashville; the city's attendance center; the collaboration with the Nashville Public Library; and ASSET, the district's human capital reform effort, are all poised to contribute to measurable academic improvement. While the lack of comparable data to gauge progress in 2009-2010 was due to circumstances beyond the district's control, we anticipate documenting academic progress in our next report. Last year we recognized that a complete turnaround of the system will take three to five years of annual, measurable progress. For Metro Schools, that progress must begin to be visible from the assessments its students will take in May 2011.

This year the committee conducted an in-depth examination of two areas that are essential to the long-term success of our

school system: school system leadership development; and pre-K and kindergarten readiness. The district has made great strides in just the past year in expanding leadership training for district administrative staff to complement the Principal Leadership Academy of Nashville at Peabody College. In addition, the committee is excited about the work currently underway to institute a leadership development program for classroom teachers. What is still needed, however, is fitting these various initiatives into a cohesive district plan that provides a clear leadership development strategy from the classroom to the director's office.

Metro Schools has long recognized the importance of ensuring students enter school ready to learn, from the creation of the district's first nine pre-K classrooms in 1988 to 144 pre-K classrooms in 2010, funded through a variety of sources. Several of these classrooms involve innovative partnerships with community nonprofit organizations, but creating a citywide plan and vision for pre-K in Nashville could more effectively leverage the efforts of MNPS, Head Start, community providers, and the United Way. Metro Schools can learn from community-based providers by broadening its pre-K curriculum to include social-emotional learning and technology. The State of Tennessee has an important role to play as well. The new governor and General Assembly should take steps to protect state funding for existing pre-K programs and should take the lead in developing a measurable, statewide definition of kindergarten readiness.



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 E. In looking back at the 2009-2010 school year, the committee hopes MNPS and the broader community will give each of these recommendations careful thought and consideration.



School System Performance

- I. Conduct an external, business processes audit of a sample of individual schools to identify inefficiencies in school-level infrastructure and staff deployment.
- II. The State of Tennessee should preserve a consistent comparison of high school graduation rates across years by continuing to report the current National Governors Association (NGA) calculation of four years and a summer school for most students, and five years for English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

School District Leadership Development

- III. The many leadership development programs and initiatives within MNPS should be integrated into a cohesive system, creating a true pipeline of leadership from the classroom to the director's office.
- IV. Teacher leadership roles, such as team leader, department chair and mentor teacher, should be encouraged and rewarded as part of a differentiated compensation system.
- V. Each principal evaluation should include a section on how they are developing leadership capacity in their building, including the periodic reassignment of duties among assistant principals so that these future school leaders have experience with all aspects of running a school.
- VI. Support efforts by the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association (MNEA) to play a leadership role in education reform, such as human capital reform or the creation of a teacher-led school.
- VII. Each school should develop a plan for student leadership beyond the traditional student government structure that engages a significant portion of its student body.

Kindergarten Readiness

- VIII. The governor and Tennessee General Assembly should protect existing pre-K funding as a critical building block for the effective education of Tennessee's children.
- IX. The State of Tennessee should create a measurable definition of kindergarten readiness.
- X. The Mayor's Advisory Council on Early Childhood Development and Early Education should create a citywide plan with a unified vision for Nashville's existing pre-K programs that is driven by current research, best practices and program evaluation.

School System Performance

For the 18th consecutive year, the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce has organized a diverse and committed group of Nashvillians to assess the progress of MNPS. The 24 members of the Education Report Card Committee began their work in September 2010 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 2009-2010 school year.

A New Baseline for Improvement

Four years ago, Tennessee got embarrassed in front of a national audience. In April 2007, a report from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce gave our state an “F” in “truth in advertising,” and education policy experts figuratively handed Tennessee a “cream puff award” for our weak education standards. Eighty-seven percent of Tennessee’s eighth-grade students scored “proficient” on our state tests, but only 21 percent of those eighth-grade students were considered proficient when they took the more rigorous National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). A month later, Governor Phil Bredesen vowed to raise Tennessee’s standards so that high school graduates were prepared for college and could compete in a global economy. Developed during a process called the Tennessee Diploma Project, new standards for K-12 math, reading and science were adopted by the State Board of Education in January 2008. Every Metro school teacher received training on these new standards in early 2009 in order to prepare for their implementation during the 2009-2010 school year.

Moving to the new standards and new assessments in one year means we now have a more accurate picture of how our students perform, and we can be confident that rising test scores in the years ahead constitute real progress. And if there is one thing that this new baseline makes clear, it’s that there is



Mayor Karl Dean announces 82 new partnerships between individual businesses and high schools as part of the Academies of Nashville launch on June 18, 2010.

plenty of room for improvement. Statewide, only 26 percent of Tennessee’s eighth-grade students are proficient or advanced in math in 2010, and 40 percent are in the lowest category, “below basic.” The results in reading are perhaps more encouraging, or at least less dismal: 42 percent of the state’s eighth-grade students were proficient or advanced, with sixth-grade reading being the only set of results in which more than half the students met the new benchmark. In Metro Schools, 27 percent of the district’s students in grades 3-8 were proficient or advanced in math, and

41 percent met the benchmark in reading.

At the high school level, test results under the new standards confirm that low achievement in math is the state's greatest challenge. Forty-nine percent of the state's students were proficient or advanced on the Algebra I end-of-course test, while 70 percent were proficient in reading and language arts. The results were similar for high school students in MNPS. Thirty-nine percent of Nashville's public school students met the target in Algebra I, while 60 percent were deemed proficient or advanced as measured by the English II exam and 11th-grade writing assessment.

While it was anticipated that student proficiency rates would drop dramatically in Metro Schools and across the state on the new state assessments, it is difficult, if not impossible, to know if our students actually made gains in learning from the previous year. Drawing conclusions from student results on two dramatically different sets of standards and tests really is a matter of comparing apples to oranges. This quandary affected the state's computation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)—the determination of whether schools and districts are making sufficient headway in moving their students toward 100 percent proficiency by the year 2014. In the past, this calculation was made by averaging multiple years of student data, and many schools and districts made AYP through the “safe harbor” provision by demonstrating significant improvement over previous years' results. This year, the Tennessee Department of Education determined AYP using just the 2009-2010 school year, making safe harbor virtually impossible and leaving schools and districts with the task of reaching the targets in absolute terms. This is an important change, as Metro Schools made AYP as an “improving” district in 2009 by qualifying through the safe harbor provision.

How Tennessee students are measured under the new standards

Elementary and middle schools are held accountable for student performance on Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) tests in math and reading for grades 3-8 and for maintaining a 93 percent student attendance rate. Next year, for the first time, TCAP scores will count toward 20 percent of each Metro student's final grade in the subject. The state writing assessment counts for 1/6 of the reading calculation at the fifth- and eighth-grade levels.

High schools are measured by results in math, reading and for making progress toward a 90 percent on-time graduation rate. Math results are determined by student performance on the new Algebra I end-of-course exam, which most students take in ninth grade; the reading calculation is weighted 2/3 from the new English II end-of-course exam taken in 10th grade and 1/3 from the 11th-grade writing assessment. These assessments currently make up 20 percent of a student's final grade in the course.

When the test results are calculated, students are now classified into one of four categories: below basic, basic, proficient and advanced. Under the federal NCLB law, states are required to measure the adequate yearly progress (AYP) of schools and school systems in moving 100 percent of their students to at least “proficient” by 2014.



Director of Schools Dr. Jesse Register visits with the committee, flanked by co-chairs Keith Belton and Cabot Pyle.

High school students did take a test that didn't change. The ACT college entrance exam is a national, rigorous, and heavily validated assessment which, historically, has been the exit exam of choice for college-bound Tennessee high school students. You can compare ACT scores across years, but with the important caveat that 2009-2010 was the first year that all eligible students in Tennessee were required to take the test, whether or not they anticipated going to college or even graduating from high school. In 2010, an additional 763 MNPS students took the ACT—a 20 percent increase over the previous year, making a meaningful comparison with previous years problematic.

The 2009-2010 school year was shaping up to be a pivotal moment for Metro Schools. Making AYP for a second consecutive year would have brought our school system into Good Standing; failure to make AYP would have pushed the district further down the continuum of state accountability sanctions, into Restructuring II, with the likelihood of state control. In the end, Metro Schools failed to make AYP, and the massive flooding of our city in May 2010 gave Metro Schools a one-year reprieve from the critical determination under NCLB. Metro students

missed five days of school just as they were about to take the annual high-stakes tests. And while the vast majority of school buildings were fortunate to avert destruction, hundreds of students, families, teachers and staff remained displaced, even as classes resumed. MNPS made an appeal for a one-year waiver from sanctions for the school system and several affected schools under a “natural disasters” provision in the law, which was granted by the Commissioner of Education. The 2009 NCLB status of the school district will stay in place for one year, raising the stakes for the assessments that will be given to Nashville's students in May 2011.

Encouraged, but Impatient

When we last produced our report, the committee had cause for “cautious optimism” at the end of the 2008-2009 school year. The school board crafted a new vision for the district with the goal of making MNPS “the first choice for families.” Dr. Jesse Register became director of schools in January and moved quickly to retool the district leadership team and launch a comprehensive reform effort, MNPS Achieves. Mayor Karl Dean continued his aggressive push for education reform at the local and state levels, and his leadership in combating truancy was paying off in increased school attendance. And despite mixed results on the ACT and TCAP assessments, MNPS moved into “improving” status under NCLB by demonstrating significant growth in student progress.

While a year of setting a new baseline makes us impatient for student performance data that show system-wide progress, the 2009-2010 school year finds the committee encouraged about the direction of MNPS. There have been significant improvements in district infrastructure and capacity. The creation of an online data warehouse allows for teacher and principal “dashboards” and customized reports that show student information and

trends in real time, with a data coach assigned to each high school cluster to work with principals and teachers. The district overhauled its inefficient business practices by beginning the implementation of 102 recommendations made by outside experts. And the committee saw repeated evidence of the important support role that hundreds of instructional and academy coaches were playing in their assigned schools, such as the delivery of school-based, job-embedded professional development for teachers.

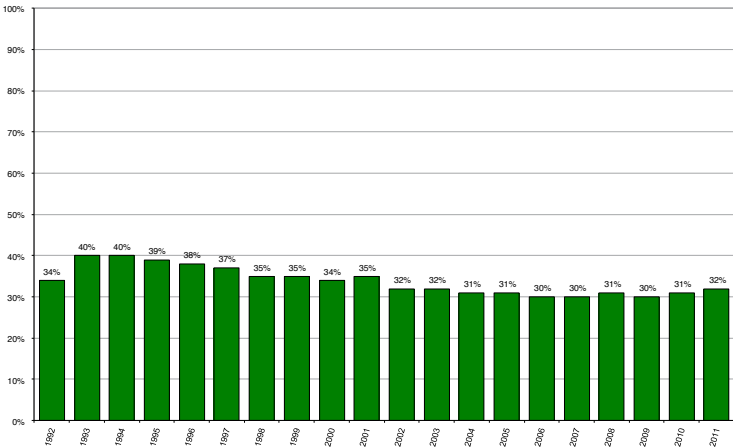
The district has also built upon its commitment to create a more collaborative culture. The nine MNPS Achieves workgroups deepened their work this past year with strong district and community representation. This past summer, Dr. Register and Mayor Dean launched ASSET (Assuring Student Success through Effective Teaching), a multi-year effort to create a human capital system that attracts, retains and rewards outstanding teachers. The city and school district successfully piloted the Limitless Libraries program at Hillsboro, Hillwood and Pearl-Cohn high schools, a project that connects high school students to a 1.5 million-item collection with next-day delivery. The partnership between the Mayor’s Office and Metro Schools also extended to afterschool programming, as the Nashville After-Zones Alliance (NAZA) opened its doors in East Nashville in January of 2010, filling all 250 available slots. And Nashville’s business community broadened its support for Metro’s high school reform efforts in June, when more than 80 Nashville businesses signed formal partnership agreements with 12 zoned high schools, bringing industry expertise and real-world experiences to students and teachers as part of the Academies of Nashville initiative.

We are also encouraged by the accelerated pace of education reform at the state and local level this past year. Governor Bredesen’s leadership during a January 2010 special legislative

session in pushing through dramatic changes in how teachers will be evaluated paved the way for Tennessee’s receipt of a \$500 million Race To The Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Locally, Teach For America finished a successful first year, with 52 corps members in 21 schools. Mayor Dean launched the Center for Charter School Excellence, which will train future charter school leaders to open their own school in Nashville and, eventually, in other parts of the state. And Metro Schools brokered an innovative partnership between Cameron Middle School, which was facing state takeover under NCLB, and LEAD Academy, a local charter school operator, to transition the school to charter management one grade at a time, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year.

And there is good reason to be optimistic about the future. MNPS’s share of the state’s Race To The Top grant will be \$30 million over four years, with the funds being targeted toward four areas: high-quality standards and assessments; use of data; teacher effectiveness; and turnaround of low-performing schools. Both Dr. Register and Nashville business leader Darrell Freeman are serving on a state committee charged with developing a new

MNPS Operating Budget
State BEP funds as a percentage of total MNPS operating revenues 1992-2011



teacher evaluation instrument that will be used annually beginning next year, with 50 percent of every evaluation tied to student performance data. And Dr. Register continues to bring in outside expertise, when needed, to create efficiencies and drive improvement. In 2010, an outside evaluation of the English Language Learners (ELL) program sparked leadership and programmatic changes. CSS International, the firm overseeing improvements to the district's business practices, is now conducting a similar review of the human resources function.

We find many reasons to be encouraged, but we are impatient for results. While this report looks at the achievements of the most recently completed school year, we recognize school system turnaround is not a one-year endeavor. With this year's new baseline, the proficiency level of too many of our students is unacceptably low. It is critical that we see noticeable improvement relative to this new baseline for all students in 2011.

Commendations

As in previous years, the committee would first like to praise the areas in which MNPS made significant improvement during the 2009-2010 school year:

High schools continue to improve

Metro's on-time graduation rates have been on an upward trend, from 56 percent in 2004 to 73 percent in 2009. That number jumped dramatically to 83 percent in 2010. The sustained increase is strong evidence of successful initiatives designed to engage students in high school: the Academies of Nashville in the 12 zoned high schools; programs to reclaim dropouts at Old Cockrill and Opry Mills that granted 150 diplomas in 2009-2010; the expansion of high school options such as Big Picture and Diploma Plus; and Twilight Schools, a discipline approach that reduced out-of-school suspensions by 10 percent.

Part of the 2010 increase is also due to the state changing a flaw in how the rate was previously calculated. In past years, students who dropped out of high school, re-enrolled at a later date, and then dropped out again were counted several times against the district's dropout rate. If the student re-enrolled in different schools within the district, that one student counted against the dropout rate of each of those schools. In 2010, "multiple dropouts" were eliminated, and only the most recent instance was charged to the district and to the last school attended.

MNPS also saw a 10-percentage-point increase in the 11th-grade writing assessment results, with 90 percent of its students deemed "competent" by attaining a score of 4 on a 5-point scale.

The focus has stayed on student achievement during a difficult budget process

Mayor Dean and the Metro Council are to be commended for staying the course on education funding. As school systems across the country were laying off teachers during the national recession, and as other Metro departments were asked to cut their budgets, Metro Schools received a \$25 million increase over the previous year. But even that increase forced the school board and administration to make difficult budgetary decisions. Faced with the decision to cut student instruction or look for efficiency in other areas, the school board kept its focus on student achievement and outsourced custodial services. When asked at a Metro Council hearing whether the enticement of additional funds would persuade him to keep custodial services in-house, Dr. Register replied that any additional funds would be directed to classroom instruction. While we certainly recognize the difficulty of their decisions now and in the future, we would like to thank the school board, mayor and Metro Council for insisting that our schools are, first and foremost, about the business of learning.

The Nashville public remains supportive

Despite a turbulent budget season, public perception of Metro Schools, as measured by the Chamber’s annual public opinion poll (see appendix A), is steady, and there is a clear, three-year upward trend for Metro’s high schools. Education continues to be the top priority for Nashvillians. Eighty-five percent of the public believe it is personally important to them to improve education, and education is still ranked as the most important issue for the city (30 percent), with the economy coming in second (22 percent).

Perceptible shift in culture at MNPS

In its many interviews and school visits, the committee was struck by a spirit of innovation and reform at MNPS. It is also clear that the working relationships among the school board, director of schools, mayor, teachers’ union and community organizations are the best they’ve been in the past five years, if not longer. These groups share a focus on increasing student achievement and they are coalescing around a shared vision of preparing all students for college, career and life. It will be critical for these groups to keep their shared focus in the months ahead in order for MNPS to make measurable progress.

Challenges

ACT performance is mission-critical

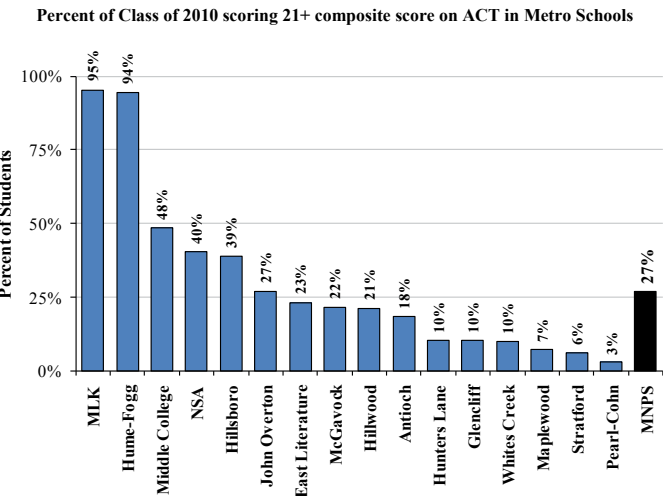
After the school board set the vision of every student having the “knowledge, skills and character necessary to excel in higher education, work and life,” the MNPS Achieves high school committee set about defining measurable criteria for meeting that standard. The system has set the goal of every MNPS graduate earning a 21 or greater composite score on the ACT (on a 36-point scale). The advantages of using the ACT are numerous: every Tennessee graduate is required to take it, it is a national test used for college admissions decisions, and a score

of 21 qualifies a student for a lottery-funded HOPE scholarship. In addition, ACT has conducted extensive research on how their scores correlate to success in college and the workplace, with 21 being an average of four benchmark scores that indicate college preparedness.

While the ACT goal is exactly the right approach, and we hope that it can be raised higher than 21 in the future, the challenge is enormous and immediate. Only 27 percent of the class of 2010 met or exceeded a 21 composite score in Metro Schools. Looking at individual school results, the scores are even more sobering, with three high schools in single-digit percentages. In addition, a majority of the district’s students aren’t even close to making the goal. Only 40 percent attained at least a 19, which is the minimum needed to gain entrance to a public university in Tennessee.

Students have a long way to go to meet the new state standards

As anticipated, the percentage of students in Metro Schools who were considered proficient or advanced plummeted under the new standards. Mirroring the statewide results, middle school



math represents the greatest challenge as measured by the new assessments. With many middle school teachers needing additional training and support in order to teach higher-level mathematical skills, there is an even greater need to recruit highly qualified math and science educators.

Under NCLB, schools and school systems must ensure that significant demographic groups of students, as well as the student body as a whole, make AYP toward the 2014 goal of 100 percent of students attaining proficiency. In moving to the new standards, the annual proficiency targets were lowered for 2010, so that in grades 3-8, 32 percent of students needed to be proficient in reading, and 20 percent must be proficient in math. Next year, those percentages will rise to 49 percent and 40 percent, respectively. In grades 3-8, MNPS students with disabilities missed the target in reading, African-American and economically disadvantaged students missed the target in math, and ELL students missed the target in both subjects. At the high school level, proficiency levels and targets were higher, but students with disabilities and ELL students missed the targets in both reading and math.

The state’s graduation rate must be consistent

Ironically, just as MNPS’s graduation rates reach an all-time high of 83 percent in 2010, a planned change in the way the state calculates the rate may send Metro’s numbers off a cliff in 2011.

Tennessee Proficiency Targets for No Child Left Behind					
Grade and Subject	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-14
K-8 Math	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
K-8 English	32%	49%	66%	83%	100%
9-12 Math	25%	44%	63%	81%	100%
9-12 English	49%	61%	74%	87%	100%

The current NGA graduation rate allows for four years and a summer school opportunity for most students and five years for ELL students and students with disabilities. The NGA rate also excludes the counting of “multiple dropouts.” Next year, to conform with federal requirements, all students must graduate within four years and summer school, or they will be counted against a school’s graduation rate.

We are deeply concerned that this substantial, potential change in the calculation will make it impossible to track and compare our progress over previous years. It is difficult but necessary to create a new baseline year in order to implement meaningful standards and assessments, and the long-term gain is more than worth the one-year frustration of not being able to chart progress. But, frankly, the benefits of moving to the proposed four-year graduation rate for all students are difficult to fathom. We consider special-needs students who walk across the stage with a regular diploma in five years to be success stories, not dropouts. And constantly moving targets and recalibrations that prevent real accountability from taking place are exactly the sort of thing that invites public cynicism about this work.

We recommend that the State of Tennessee work with our federal elected officials to persuade the U.S. Department of Education to allow the continued use of the NGA graduation rate, or, alternatively, continue to report the NGA rate on the state report card to allow for meaningful comparisons across years.

Metro Schools still has work to do to improve business practices

Two years ago, MNPS faced the catastrophic possibility of losing its federal funding, because of antiquated and inefficient business



practices. In response, the district hired CSS International, an outside consultant, to examine business and purchasing operations, make recommendations for improvements, and assist school system personnel in making the necessary changes. As a result, MNPS passed its first-year inspections, but is still considered a “high-risk grantee” by the federal government until it passes two more years of inspections. In addition to the embarrassment of the label, being a “high-risk grantee” can carry with it the practical disadvantage of being ineligible for certain federal opportunities, such as waivers or grants. As CSS is hired to broaden its examination to include human resources, MNPS should work with the company to ensure that the 102 recommendations for improving business practices continue to be fully and consistently implemented.

Because we feel so strongly about the value of this approach, we recommend the school system conducts a similar outside review of the business processes and human capital deployment at the

individual school level. In this era of high-stakes accountability, principals are expected to be instructional leaders, and assistant principals must be the next generation of outstanding principals. But these leaders report being mired in administrative detail, such as authorizing purchases or

processing discipline referrals. If the role of these leaders has changed, and they are expected to truly lead instruction, then we suspect many of the business functions and roles of support staff within a school must change as well.



Story time at the MAC Early Head Start program at McNeilly Center for Children

Comparison of the Four Large Urban School Systems in Tennessee

	Davidson	Memphis	Knox	Hamilton
NCLB Status	Restructuring 1-Improving	Target	School Improvement 1	Target
2010 Graduation Rate	82.9%	70.8%	86.6%	80.2%
Student Enrollment	71,708	103,593	54,384	40,051
Schools in “Good Standing”	66 out of 133 schools (50%)	78 out of 187 schools (42%)	56 out of 87 schools (64%)	48 out of 74 schools (65%)
Grades 3-8 achievement state letter grades (Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science)	DDDD	DFFF	BBBB	CCCC
Grades 3-8 “value added” state letter grades (Math, Reading, Social Studies, Science)	DDCD	DFCD	CCBC	DDBD
2010 ACT Composite	18.1	16.6	20.5	18.6
Economically disadvantaged students	72.1%	87.2%	47.5%	60.7%
Special Education	12.2%	15.2%	11.7%	16.6%
Limited English Proficient	14%	6.3%	2.5%	3.4%
Per-pupil expenditure	\$10,777	\$10,767	\$8,529	\$9,220

Leadership Development

The purpose of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce is to “facilitate community leadership to create economic prosperity.” So it is perhaps natural that the Chamber Education Report Card Committee selected school system leadership development as one of its two areas of focus. There are no magic solutions or easy answers in education reform, but we believe outstanding leadership to be one of the essential elements of any successful, complex enterprise. This section of the report lays out our observations about the district’s past and current approach to leadership development, as well as recommendations that might assist the district in creating a systemic and intentional pipeline of leadership from the classroom to the director’s office.

The beginning of a system to develop school leaders

Through our interviews and research with employees inside and outside the system, we have come to understand that over the past 10 years -- and perhaps longer -- leadership development in Metro Schools has historically been narrowly defined as principal identification. Leadership development has also been informal and very much driven by individual initiative. In some cases, aspiring principals had been identified and groomed for leadership by mentors. Others self-identified, and pursued advanced degrees and an administrator’s license to further their career goals.

Recognizing there was little formal preparation and training for leadership positions at the school level, Annette Eskind, founder of the Metropolitan Nashville Public Education Foundation, began working in 1999 with then-Director of Schools Dr. Bill Wise and faculty from Peabody College on plans for a principal leadership academy. In 2001, as MNPS, Peabody, and foundation staff jointly created the curriculum, the idea got a very public boost from Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell in his first State of Metro address in front of Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce members. Eskind’s foundation underwrote the operation for the first three years of the new initiative, and then directed the

foundation’s corpus to a professional development endowment linking Peabody and MNPS. By the summer of 2001, MNPS had a new director of schools, and the Principal Leadership Academy of Nashville (PLAN) at Peabody College had its first class of 10 aspiring principals.

Since that time, 200 candidates and existing principals have graduated from PLAN, and the format of the program has remained remarkably consistent. Class members participate without additional compensation and spend two weeks in class during the summer and then two days a month throughout the year. The curriculum stresses the understanding and use of data to improve instruction, and participants develop a strategic plan as a year-long project. But while the curriculum remained consistent, PLAN’s selection process and its relationship to the district’s approach to leadership development were constantly changing. The next MNPS administration, led by Dr. Pedro Garcia, initially used PLAN as a way to outsource the district’s leadership development needs. Later, before he left the district in January 2008, he would completely change tack and create his own leadership program that was understood to be the sole path to becoming a principal in the district.

Recognizing that the effective identification of future leaders



MNPS principals Angela Chapman and Ron Woodard discuss the district's approach to leadership development.

was an important but underused contributor to PLAN's success, in 2008 Director Tom Ward moved to a selection system that asked district principals and staff to identify potential leaders and encourage them to apply to PLAN. The result was a strong pool of 95 applicants who went through a rigorous selection process to get to a class of less than 25. When Dr. Jesse Register became director of schools in 2009, he brought with him a strong belief in the importance of building leadership capacity and instituted a number of initiatives that are now ready to be pulled together as part of a comprehensive and fully integrated district plan.

A broader district approach to developing leadership

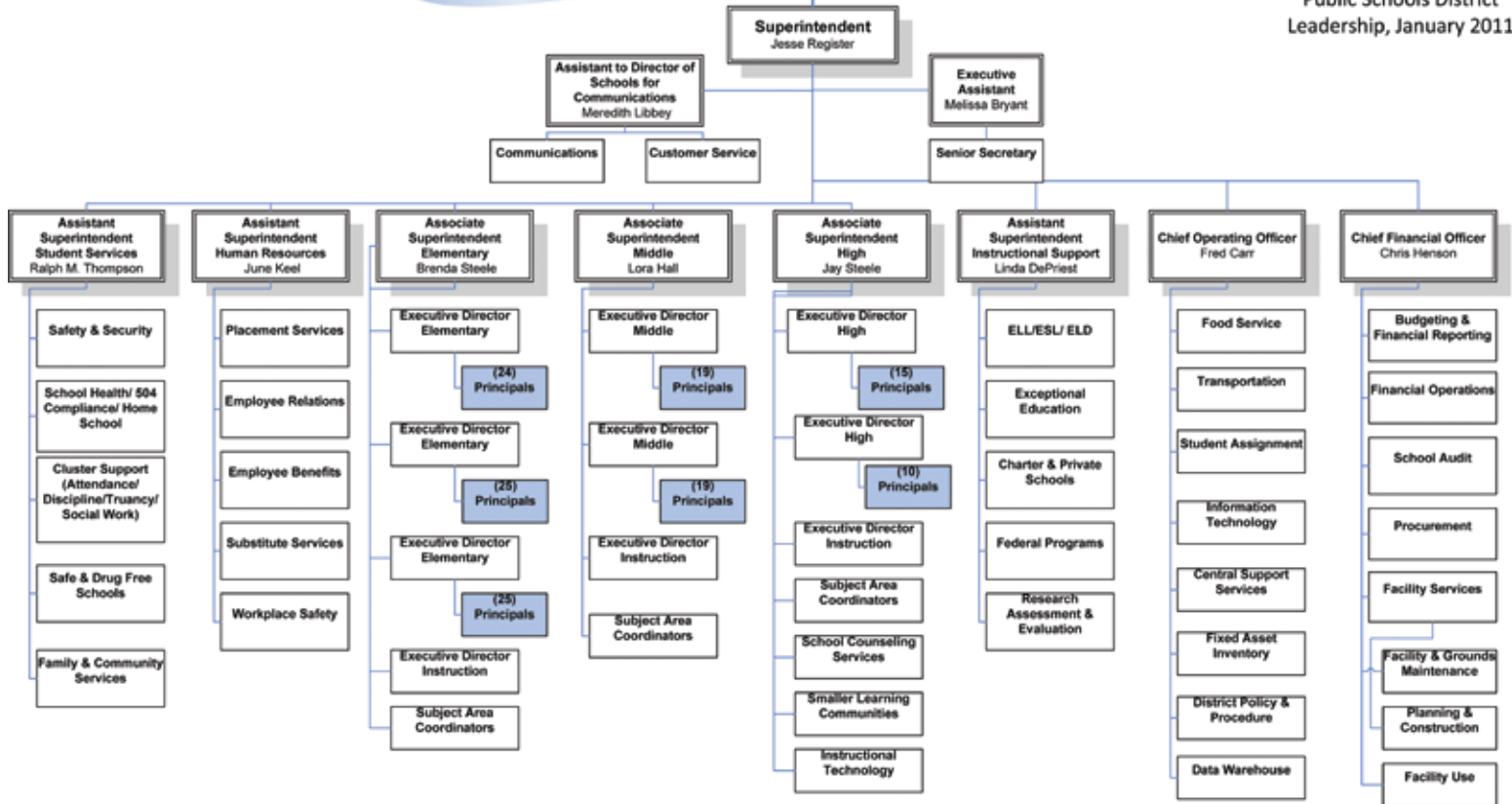
Over the past 18 months, there has been an extraordinary expansion of activity to increase the district's leadership capacity. Executive principals are receiving periodic training

from the North Carolina-based Rutherford Learning Group based on classroom observation and teacher coaching. In addition, district staff are receiving professional development on leadership team development from Hamilton County-based consultant John Norris. MNPS has also instituted an "instructional rounds" program, based on the medical rounds model used to train health care professionals, where a group of principals spend time observing another school's classrooms and sharing observations about what they saw. Critical to the future leadership at MNPS, for the first time the district is providing ongoing training to assistant principals, who, in prior years, were often promoted with little or no formal preparation in leading a school.

With the recently launched ASSET initiative that intends to create a cadre of outstanding teaching professionals by transforming the district's human capital system, MNPS is now beginning to think seriously about developing teacher leadership. One of the planned components of ASSET is the development of a leadership track for teachers who may assume additional roles and responsibilities, but may not necessarily move into administration. The idea was inspired by the Chamber's Leadership Study Mission to Denver in 2009, in which Dr. Register, Mayor Dean and business leaders heard Brad Jupp of Denver Public Schools speak about their human capital reform initiative, ProComp, and their plans for a teacher leadership program. Dr. Register and the Mayor then held a one-day teacher compensation forum in Nashville in August 2010, in which they committed to co-lead human capital reform in Metro Schools. While MNPS is developing a leadership track that would be competitively available to the district's top teachers, we also believe it is important for every district employee to have a professional growth plan that can include opportunities for leadership.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Metropolitan Nashville
Public Schools District
Leadership, January 2011



The need for teacher leaders is pressing and varied. Pairing teachers that have fewer than three years of experience with a mentoring teacher is of critical importance. With the incorporation of weekly planning time that allows subject department teachers to collaborate, there is now a need to identify and support department chairs or leaders. In addition, the creation of academy teams in the 12 zoned high schools has created additional responsibilities for team leaders. It is not only important for these teacher leaders to be thoughtfully selected, trained and supported; these educators should be also be appropriately compensated for their additional role. This sentiment is overwhelmingly shared by the Nashville public. When asked if teachers should receive a substantial financial bonus if they agree to take on additional leadership duties at their school, such as mentoring other teachers, 80 percent of those polled agreed, and nearly half “strongly agreed.” The teachers’ union, the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association (MNEA), is already playing a leadership role in the ASSET work to develop teacher leadership and should be encouraged to consider other creative ways to engage teacher leadership, such as a teacher-led school.

The district’s thinking about leadership development shouldn’t be limited to just adults. One sure way to create a positive school culture is to help students develop a love of learning and ownership of their academic success. Glenduff High School, with the most diverse student body in the city, is approaching this by distributing and expanding opportunities for student leadership beyond the traditional student government association. Because students at the school literally come from around the globe, principal Tony Majors created a student United Nations to celebrate cultural differences and instill school pride. Developing Community Leaders, an elective class developed in partnership with Alignment Nashville, is offered in Metro’s high

schools, and the classes are serving as a pipeline for additional leadership groups at Glenduff, such as a Senate and a planned House of Representatives. MNPS is now creating an Academy Ambassadors program in which students will be selected to represent their high school academy and will help recruit future students or prospective business partners. And the Teaching Academies that are just getting underway at Antioch and Whites Creek represent an excellent strategy for MNPS to grow its own future teacher leaders.

The district may also learn from the charter school sector. Mayor Dean launched the Center for Charter School Excellence in order to prepare future charter leaders to lead high performing schools. Building Excellent Schools (BES), a Boston-based nonprofit that provides a year of intensive charter school leader training, was hired to get the work started in Nashville. The organization recruited two fellows who went through the program last year and have now each been approved to open their own charter school in Nashville in 2011. In addition to giving its participants opportunities to learn firsthand from some of the country’s most successful charter schools, a highly selective candidate process is a key component of the BES model. The organization scours a prospective city for candidates who have the qualities, determination and leadership experience to make a great school leader. Five hundred applications are eventually winnowed into 18 half-day interviews where candidates compete for four fellowships.

Finally, it is important for leadership development to be practiced at the very top of the organization. Executive principals should have responsibility and accountability for developing the leadership capacity of their assistant principals, so they are ready to lead the school when the need arises. At the director of schools level, if a school system is making progress and is headed

in the right direction, the school board is likely to strongly consider internal candidates so that there is no break in momentum. While it is perfectly appropriate for a district to bring in a superintendent from outside the system, the inability to groom possible successors is perhaps a failure of past directors of schools. Dr. Register fully recognizes the importance of identifying and developing a group of district leaders who have the ability to someday take his place, and is intent on making that happen.



Committee members met with student leaders during their visit to Glenclyff High School.

Pre-K and Kindergarten Readiness

Why early childhood education is important

In 2010, Metro Schools appropriately devoted considerable time and attention to determining measurable criteria for the successful high school graduate. It is now time for a renewed focus on how students begin their school careers, 13 years prior to earning their diplomas. In the last decade, brain research has confirmed what many educators have long observed in their classrooms and centers: early learning opportunities are critical preparation for the academic challenges that begin with kindergarten.

As Professor Dale Farran of Peabody College at Vanderbilt shared with the committee, learning begins in utero, and continues throughout childhood. According to Dr. Farran, the brain organizes itself in response to the stimulation it receives, and children's brains are highly dependent upon regular patterns of stimulation, with repeated experiences creating strong connections. In the years before entering elementary school, it is particularly important for young children to be exposed to mathematical concepts, as well as language and vocabulary. Young children must also "learn how to learn." Being able to focus on a task, persist through challenges or difficulties, and understanding cause and effect are all cognitive skills that prepare a child for later academic success, as are the social-emotional skills of developing self-control and regulating how one responds to stimulation. Early childhood education is especially crucial for families living in poverty, because low-income households tend to provide children with fewer literacy experiences. On average, infants and toddlers whose parents are professionally employed hear three times as many words per

hour as children whose families live on public assistance, and receive five times as many storybook reading experiences.

In Tennessee, the term "pre-K" typically refers to an educational program for 4-year-olds that is tied to public funding and is delivered by school systems or in partnership with community agencies. "Early childhood education" is a term that includes pre-K, but also encompasses a wide variety of educational programs for children aged 0-5. Both are an important support in creating a high-performing system of education. Again, there are no simple solutions to ensuring that all children succeed in school, but the early childhood field has accumulated considerable evidence of its positive impact. The Chicago Longitudinal Study, which continues to follow the lives of 1,539 Chicago students who attended preschool and completed kindergarten in 1986, shows that children who were exposed to quality early learning programs were 41 percent less likely to need special education services and were more likely to graduate from high school. Another longitudinal study, the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, conducted in Ypsilanti, Mich., found that adults who began their academic careers in preschool were later more likely to be employed, with a one-third higher income, as compared to their peers that did not experience preschool. As a strategy that works, investing in early childhood education makes strong business sense.

In a presentation made by the Federal Reserve Branch in Minneapolis at the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville annual meeting in 2006, economist Rob Grunewald reported the financial benefits found in a number of early childhood

evaluations. With quality preschool education saving taxpayer dollars by reducing the demand for special education services, public assistance and the criminal justice system, the Perry Preschool provided a cost-benefit ratio of \$1 to \$17 with an annual rate of return of 16 percent, while other programs demonstrated smaller, but still impressive, returns of \$5-\$7 for every \$1 spent on quality preschool.

Nashville’s early childhood programs

Children in Nashville experience quality early childhood education in three primary settings: Head Start, MNPS pre-K classrooms and in community-based early learning centers.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded program that helps young children in poverty prepare for kindergarten. In addition to teaching literacy and numeracy skills, Head Start programs are known for their expanded focus on the health, nutritional and social well-being of participating children. In many ways, the launch of Head Start in 1965 as part of President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty also served as the beginning of the national early childhood education movement. The beginning of Head Start also had a special connection to Nashville. In 1964, Dr. Susan Gray, a researcher at Peabody College who was studying the effect of preschool programs on young children with disabilities in Middle Tennessee, hosted a classroom tour of her program for Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her husband Sargent Shriver, an adviser to President Johnson. The Shriver credit that visit and Dr. Gray’s work as the initial inspiration for the creation of the Head Start program a year later, and that contribution was memorialized by the naming of Nashville’s first new Head Start facility, the Susan Gray Head Start Center in South Nashville, which opened in 2006. Administered by the Metropolitan Action Commission (MAC), Nashville’s Head Start

program currently serves 1,485 students at seven centers and three partner sites. The program is currently at capacity with 400 families on the waiting list. One of the challenges of the program is its strict eligibility requirements set by federal law. Children may only enroll if their annual family income is below the federal poverty line, which was \$22,050 for a family of four. In May 2010, in partnership with McNeilly Center for Children, MAC began an Early Head Start program for 52 children aged 0-3, to help meet the even greater demand for quality infant and toddler programs.

MNPS Pre-K

Among Tennessee school systems, MNPS has been a leader in recognizing the value of pre-K programs for 4-year-old children. The program began more than 30 years ago with nine locally funded classrooms at Caldwell, Head and McKissack schools in 1988. Seven years later, state and federal funds allowed for the program’s expansion to 21 classrooms. In 2009-2010, there were 144 classrooms supported by local, state and federal dollars, and the restrictions associated with these different funding sources necessitate a variety of program models. Federally funded Pre-K programs come from Title I dollars and are reserved for students at risk of academic failure, with a Brigance Test of Basic Skills score of 79 and below. Locally funded classrooms have the same eligibility, but families are asked to pay a weekly fee on a sliding

Early Childhood Education Fast Facts Metropolitan Nashville Davidson County	
Population under 5 years of age.	45,898
Students enrolled in Kindergarten	6,913
Students enrolled in MNPS Pre-K classrooms	2,498
Students enrolled in Head Start	1,485
3-star center student capacity	13,391

scale based on household income, in order to maximize capacity. The district also has locally funded “blended classrooms” in which eight children receiving special education services are paired with an equal number of typical peers who score a 65 or above on the Brigance pre-K test, with the typical peers also paying a scale-based weekly fee. In addition, there are “self-contained” pre-K classrooms, in which all students are receiving special education services. Finally, there are 55 pre-K classrooms through the State of Tennessee’s program, which requires a local funding match and is reserved for children who qualify for free and reduced lunch. Despite this dramatic expansion, capacity has not caught up with the need, particularly in the fast-growing sections of South Nashville. While there were 2,498 available MNPS pre-K slots in 2010, the district received more than 4,000 applications.

The State of Tennessee’s pre-K program has played an essential role in the expansion of early childhood education in Nashville. In 1996, “Smart Start” legislation authorized the creation of pilot state pre-K classrooms, and the first 30 pilot classrooms opened across the state in the 1998-1999 school year under Governor Don Sundquist. In 2005, under the leadership of Governor Phil Bredesen, the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Act was passed,

funded initially with excess revenues from the new Tennessee Lottery. While the 1998 pilot classrooms were funded almost entirely by the state, the new pre-K program employs a local match in order to stretch state dollars, with the state/local funding split based on each individual school system’s BEP formula allocation. For Metro Schools, this means 57 percent of the funding for each pre-K classroom comes from the state, and 43 percent comes from the local government. While it was Governor’s Bredesen’s intention that the state pre-K program would expand to serve all Tennessee’s 4-year-olds on a voluntary basis, the number of classrooms in the state has remained steady at 934 for the past three years because of budgetary pressures in a difficult economic environment. The program is currently limited to nearly 18,000 students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, serving about 36 percent of the eligible population and 21 percent of all the state’s 4-year-olds. While state budget discussions are expected to remain difficult for the foreseeable future, we strongly encourage the new administration and General Assembly to protect existing funding for the state pre-K program and, indeed, look for ways to expand the program in the years ahead. We find this to be a smart educational investment that also enjoys broad public support: A 2008 statewide poll commissioned by the Tennessee Alliance for Early Education and Pre-K Now found that 69 percent

of Tennesseans supported expanding pre-K to all 4-year-olds on a voluntary basis.

Community-based Pre-K

Early childhood learning also takes place in community-based centers, both nonprofit and for-profit. While the Tennessee Department of Education monitors the quality of the state pre-K sites, childcare centers are licensed by the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS). Community-based centers may participate in

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Pre-K Programs				
Type	Classrooms	Student Composition	Screening	Fee
State Funded	55	At Risk	Brigance Score ≤ 79	Free
MNPS Funded	39	At Risk	Brigance Score ≤ 79	Sliding Scale
Title I Funded	6	At Risk	Brigance Score ≤ 79	Free
Blended	32	At Risk/Typical	Brigance Score ≥ 65 for typical peers	Sliding Scale/Free
Self-Contained	12	Exceptional Education	Exceptional Education Department	Free

a voluntary, quality rating system. Based on inspections that assess environment, staff and curriculum, centers can earn up to a three-star rating. In Nashville, 164 providers earned the top rating with a total capacity of 13,391 slots. Under the 2005 state pre-k legislation, community-based centers with a three-star rating are eligible to partner with local school districts to host a state pre-K classroom. Fannie Battle Day Home, Martha O'Bryan Center and McNeilly Center for Children were the first to open community-based pre-K sites in 2006. The partnership between MNPS and community nonprofits has since expanded to eight classrooms at six locations, adding pre-K classrooms at Bethlehem Center of Nashville, St. Luke's Community Center and Wayne Reed Child Care Center. As our committee discovered during visits to Fannie Battle Day Home and McNeilly Center for Children, community-based sites can be an attractive option for families for a variety reasons, such as proximity to home, the enrollment of siblings, the availability of before- and afterschool care, and a welcoming environment for families. We also found that, since Fannie Battle and McNeilly classrooms had to adhere to multiple sets of standards from different licensing or accrediting agencies, such as the Tennessee

Department of Education, DHS, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), these centers simply raise all their classrooms to the highest possible standard.

While community-based centers often have substantial expertise in engaging parents and families, high-quality professional development for teaching staff is a consistent need. United Way of Metropolitan Nashville's Read To Succeed program is an important resource to 11 community-based centers at 14 sites, helping young children build literacy skills to prepare for kindergarten. Started in 2002, Read To Succeed provides each participating center a professional literacy coach, curriculum, classroom libraries, a family lending library and workshops, and more than 24 hours of annual professional development to the center's teachers. The results have been impressive: In fall 2004, only 33 percent of the participating centers' children met the Get Ready to Read benchmark; by spring 2010, that number had risen to 98 percent. The program, however, is only beginning to meet the need. While 1,209 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years currently participate in the program, that represents about 10 percent of the children under 5 years old living in poverty in our city.

The importance of community coordination and leadership

With current early childhood education services spread across several government agencies and community organizations and unable to meet growing demand, it is vital that the efforts of programs are coordinated in order to maximize limited resources. It was not long ago, however, that there was substantial distrust and misunderstanding between MNPS and community programs. That began to change with a new focus on early childhood education from the Mayor's Office. The first substantial collaboration among these providers took place in 2003, when the annual Mayor's Summit on Children



Committee member Benjamin Smith observes a pre-k student at Fannie Battle Day Home for Children.



The announcement of training on the newly adopted PreK standards on February 4, 2004. From l-r: Cynthia Croom of MAC, Orrin Ingram, Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell and Bonnie Spear of Blakemore Children's Center.



Committee member Cynthia Wiel is served a "meal" at Fannie Battle Day Home for Children.



Committee member Price Bell interacts with students at McNeilly Center for Children.

and Youth called for the development of community pre-K standards that were shared by Metro Schools, Head Start and community agencies. As the community pre-K standards were being developed by a team of school district educators, community-based teachers, and staff from the Mayor's Office later that year, plans were underway to create Alignment Nashville, a community agency that would coordinate the efforts of nonprofits to support the success of Metro Schools. Alignment Nashville was publicly launched in February of 2004, with the provision of community-wide training on the new pre-K standards as its first project. Since that time, the Alignment Nashville Pre-K Committee has been instrumental in facilitating partnerships. Committee initiatives include promoting the district's pre-K essential literature list, publicizing kindergarten and early childhood registration, and creating Home Is the First Classroom public service announcements that model everyday strategies to reinforce the community pre-K standards.

Nashville's philanthropic community has also encouraged collaboration among community-based providers. In late

2007, funders encouraged 12 local, three-star early childhood education providers to discuss creating a new, sustainable business model to improve operating efficiency and service to those they serve. The funders realized that regulatory requirements, coupled with the challenges of economic recession, put these centers and the children they serve at risk. In 2010, Tennessee's DHS granted the convener, The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, a three-year, \$2 million grant to support this work. The 12 centers, representing 21 separate sites, have already begun to see the benefits of group purchasing and have decided to adopt a shared services model. Once operational, this model will embrace the inclusion of other three-star centers, nurture the efforts of one- and two-star centers to attain a three-star ranking, and will be replicable to other communities across Tennessee.

While MNPS and community providers have collaborated around an impressive set of initiatives, there has not been as much progress in coordinating the location and expansion of services. Providers report a concentration of programs and classrooms in East and North Nashville, while fast-growing

parts of the city experience long waiting lists. In September 2010, Mayor Dean created the Mayor's Advisory Council on Early Childhood Development and Early Childhood Education, chaired by Vice Mayor Diane Neighbors. With strong representation from government, business and community leaders, we believe the Advisory Council is ideally positioned to create a citywide plan with a unified vision for Nashville's existing early childhood programs that is driven by current research, best practices and program evaluation. The development of the citywide vision would tackle difficult, strategic issues. For example, if it is the city's vision to provide a voluntary pre-K classroom for every 4-year-old, does MAC's Head Start program help the city reach that goal, or are the agency's resources better directed toward serving younger children through Early Head Start? The Advisory Council could also develop a process to create greater coordination around the location of new and existing programs, as well as strategies to support the significant number of children in family-based care. In the end, any conversation about the expansion of pre-K early childhood education should focus only on high-quality programs. Poor-quality programs can do more harm than good, just as the best programs can help at-risk children catch up to their more advantaged peers.

Potential opportunities

As the committee reflects upon its study of pre-K and kindergarten readiness, we offer up several potential areas in which to improve the delivery and coverage of pre-K and early childhood education:

Pre-K curriculum

In visiting several Metro pre-K classrooms at Bellshire Elementary, the committee was deeply impressed with the commitment and knowledge of the school's pre-K teachers. But while Metro's pre-K curriculum has a strong focus on

Potential model: Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland created a school district plan that specifically links their pre-K program to district goals at later grades, such as third-grade reading proficiency. Visit the "Research & Reports" page online at www.pewcenteronthestates.org.

literacy and numeracy, there is a need to implement a consistent curriculum across classrooms that covers pre-K standards in areas such as social-emotional competencies and technology. As an example, the DLM Early Childhood Express curriculum used by Head Start and several community-based programs covers these broader areas.

Making quality programs affordable

Aside from the state pre-K and federal Head Start programs, which are free, but limited in their capacity and eligibility, the high cost of quality early childhood education can be a significant barrier to many families. According to a briefing published by the Institute for a Competitive Workforce, nationally, families pay 60 percent of the cost of all early learning programs, while government funds 39 percent and business/philanthropy makes up the remaining 1 percent. Using federal dollars, the Tennessee DHS offers a childcare certificate program that assists parents of low-income and at-risk children with the cost of childcare. However, "working poor" families with an income that disqualifies them from the DHS certificate program can find it difficult to afford services. Through the leadership of the late Nelson Andrews, the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee established an Early Childhood Education Scholarship Initiative, in which donors contribute to scholarships for children who fall just outside the income eligibility for the state certificate program. The scholarships are dedicated to support a selected child from six weeks of age until he/she is old enough to enter

Tennessee's pre-K program. That four-year commitment to the child, which amounts to as much as \$20,000, requires that the child remain at a nonprofit, three-star Early Childhood Education center and that their parents remain in school or in the workforce. In 2010 alone, the program supported 17 children in seven different centers. Intended to create evidence-based data to demonstrate the impact of quality early childhood education, the program hopes to expand the number of scholarships available to families.

Definition of success

The committee concludes its observations about the challenges and opportunities surrounding pre-K and kindergarten readiness with a call for state leadership. Although the purpose of the state pre-K program is to prepare students for kindergarten, the state must articulate what that really means and then require a developmentally appropriate assessment of each student entering kindergarten to chart future progress. Just as a measurable definition of the college-and career-ready graduate helped guide and energize high school reform in our district, the development of a measurable definition of kindergarten readiness can focus the efforts of pre-K and early childhood education programs across our state. Such a task will not be easy, nor should it be. We do, however, believe it to be a logical next step before future expansion of the program, and we strongly encourage the State of Tennessee to take the lead in creating a definition of kindergarten readiness in 2011.



Students enjoying their pre-k experience at McNeilly Center for Children.



Committee members listen to a panel on pre-K collaboration. L-R: Pamela Mathews of Metropolitan Action Commission, Elyse Adler of the Nashville Public Library, and Melissa Jagers of Alignment Nashville.

Appendix A:

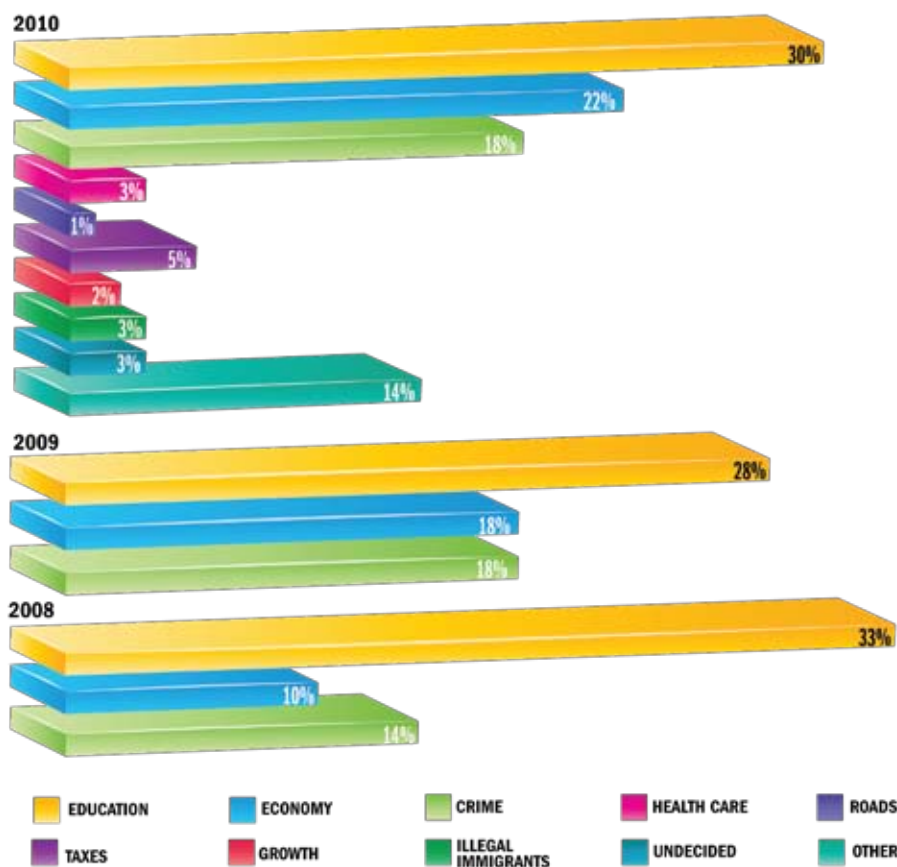
PUBLIC OPINION ON EDUCATION APRIL 2010

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

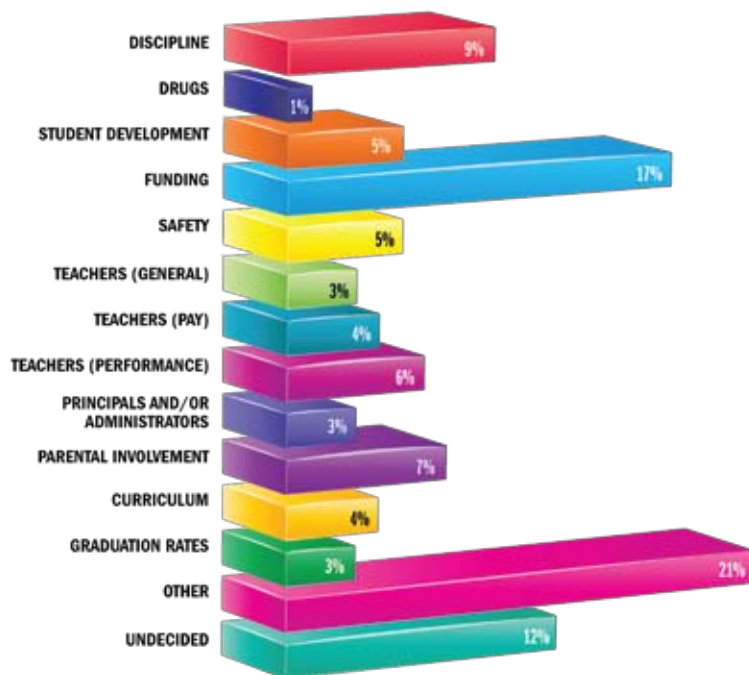
The following graphs represent results from a telephone survey commissioned by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. The survey was designed, written and analyzed by McNeely Pigott & Fox Public Relations in Nashville. The Parker Group of Birmingham, Ala., randomly surveyed 500 Davidson County residents during April 27-29, 2010. The survey has an error rate of approximately plus or minus 4.4 percent for the total sample.



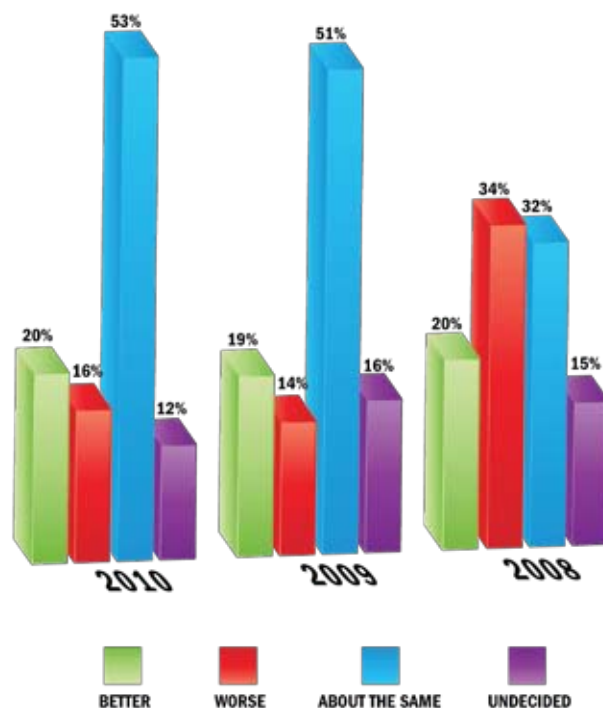
In your opinion, what is the most important issue or problem facing Nashville?



When it comes to education, what do you think is the most important issue or problem facing Metro public schools today?



Perception of K through 12 public education in Nashville compared to one year ago.



Overall rating of Nashville's public school system. Rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average, and 5 being excellent.



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



Rating of middle schools in Nashville.

Rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average, and 5 being excellent.

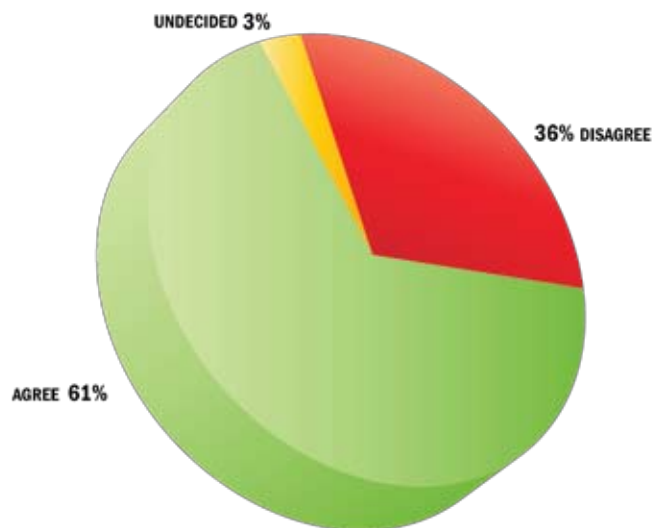


Rating of high schools in Nashville.

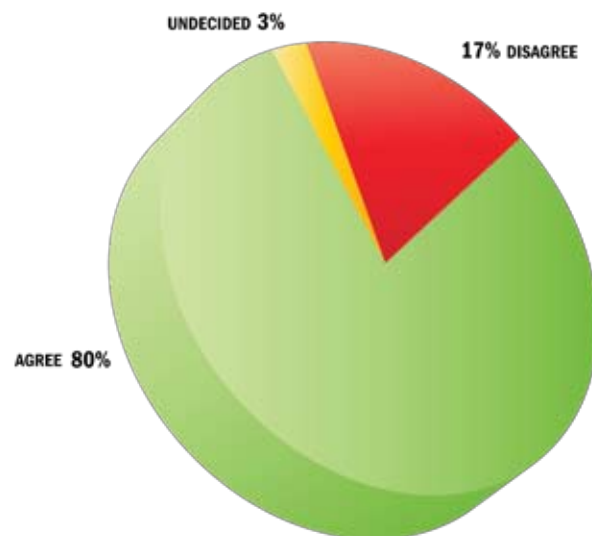
Rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, 3 being average, and 5 being excellent.



Teachers should receive a substantial financial bonus if their students score well on standardized tests.

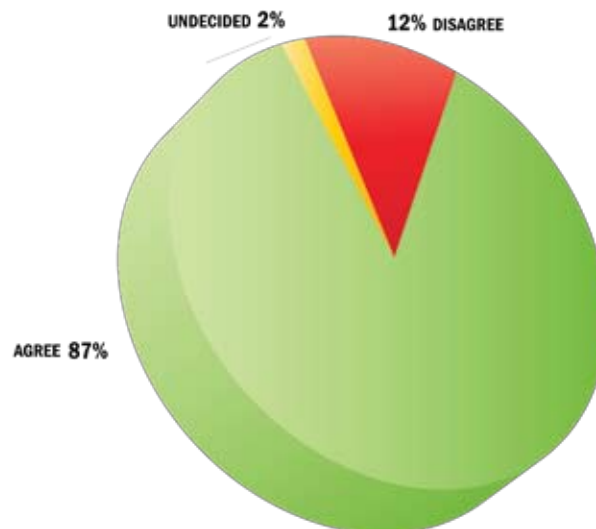
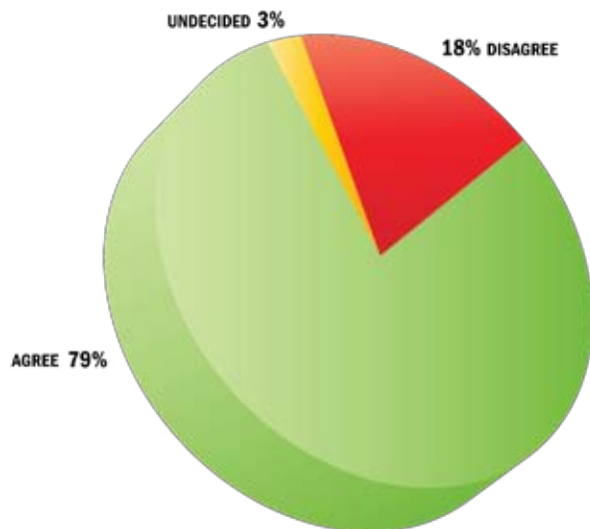


Teachers should receive a substantial financial bonus if they take on additional leadership duties at their school, such as mentor other teachers.



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

Metro Public Schools should have parents sign an agreement that outlines expectations for how a parent or caregiver should be involved in their child's education.

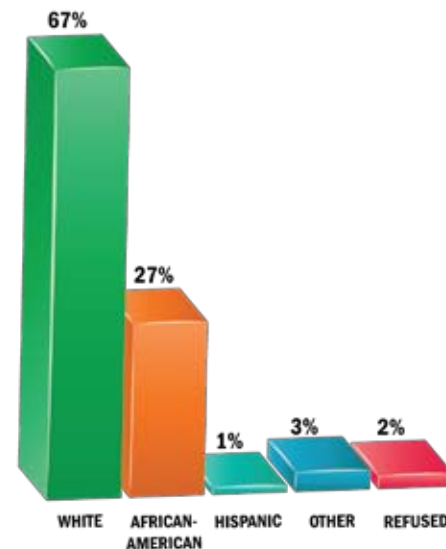
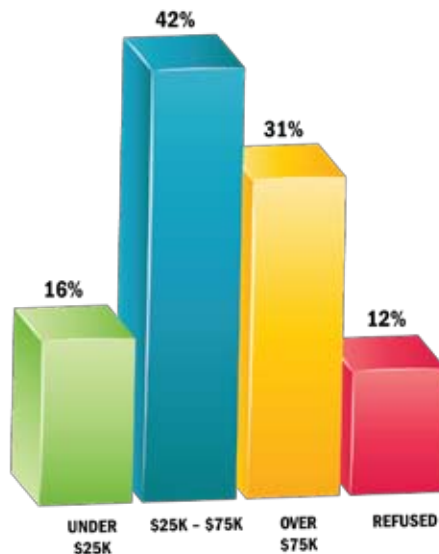
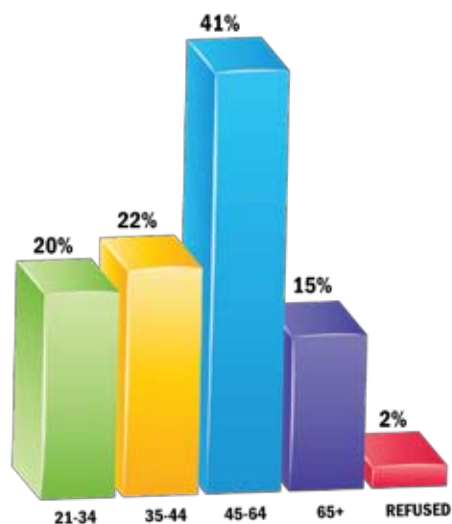


Demographics of Poll Respondents

AGE

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

RACE



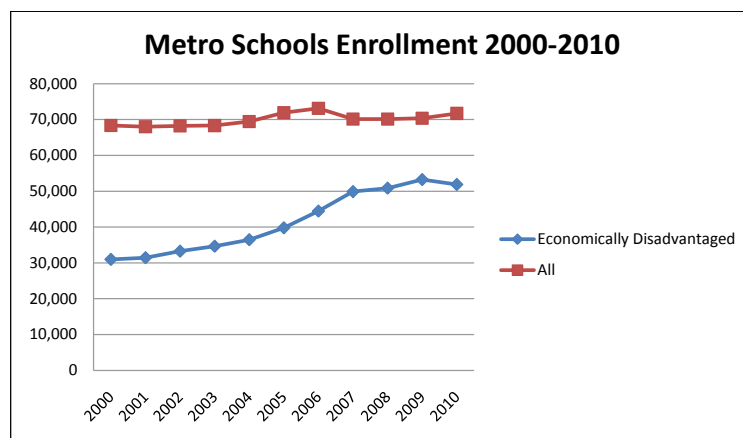
Appendix B:

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 2009-2010 school year. Unless otherwise noted, the source of the data for this report is the 2010 Tennessee Department of Education State Report Card, accessible at www.state.tn.us/education/reportcard.

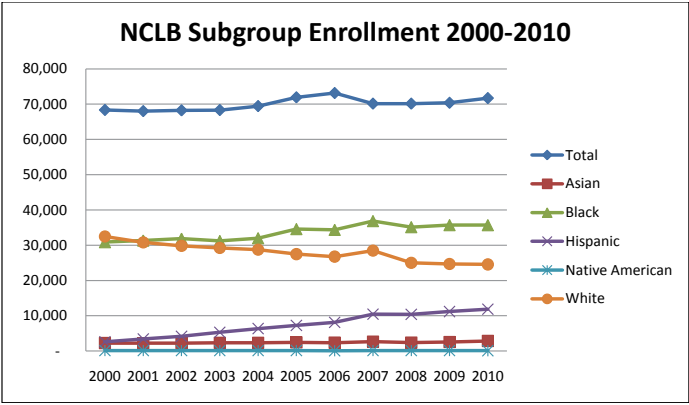
Demographic Trends

Breaking a longstanding trend, the percentage of students enrolled in MNPS receiving free and reduced lunch declined, from 76 percent in 2009 to 72 percent in 2010. Overall student enrollment increased for the third year in a row, to 71,708. Note that these enrollment figures from the state report card do not reflect pre-K students or students receiving full-time special education services.



Year	NCLB Demographic Subgroup Data							
	All		Economically Disadvantaged		Students with Disabilities		Limited English Proficient	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
2010	100%	71,708	72%	51,882	12%	8,746	14%	10,489
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

Year	NCLB Racial Subgroups									
	Asian		Black		Hispanic		Native American		White	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
2010	4%	2,853	48%	35,706	16%	11,882	0.1%	105	33%	24,554
2009	3%	2,577	38%	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



The following chart reflects the number of students withdrawing from Metro Schools and enrolling in another Tennessee public school system, as well as 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.

Student withdrawals from MNPS		
Year	Other TN Public School Systems	Private Schools
2009-2010	2625	618
2008-2009	3653	779
2007-2008	4027	822
2006-2007	3918	771
2005-2006	3942	752
2004-2005	3748	796

Source: MNPS Data Warehouse

Achievement Data

The Tennessee Department of Education uses the Tennessee Comprehensive Achievement test (TCAP) criterion-referenced scores to examine student achievement compared to a predetermined set of standards. Under the Tennessee Diploma project, in 2009-2010 students took new tests, which measured whether students were proficient on much more rigorous standards. Consequently, a comparison of student achievement in 2010 with prior years is not possible; we include the 2009 academic results as historical reference and to illustrate the impact of the new standards.

A grade of “C” or below in the following chart means a school district or school has a three-year average achievement level on the grades 3-8 TCAP criterion-referenced tests equal to the state average.

State Report Card K-8 Letter Grades MNPS Achievement Grades K-8		
Subject	2009	2010
Reading/Language	D	D
Math	D	D
Science	D	D
Social Studies	D	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 students’ performance. Value-added scores measure individual growth from year to year, regardless of proficiency. A grade of “C” means a school district or school has a three-year average gain equal to the state average.

State Report Card Letter Grades MNPS Value Added Grades K-8		
Subject	2009	2010
Reading/Language	C	D
Math	C	D
Science	C	D
Social Studies	C	C

NCLB 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.

Percentage of MNPS Schools in Good Standing			
Year	Elementary	Middle	High
2010	60%	37%	53%
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%

A shaded box in the table below denotes the granting of a natural disaster appeal for the Algebra I and English II end-of-course exams due to the May 2010 flooding. Schools that missed AYP because of those exams have their NCLB status frozen for one year; schools missing AYP because they did not make the 2009 graduation target saw their NCLB status drop, regardless of whether a disaster appeal was granted. McGavock High School was also granted a natural disaster appeal, but the school made AYP regardless of the appeal.

High School NCLB Ratings (from highest to lowest)		
High School	Status 2010	Status 2009
Cane Ridge	Good Standing	Good Standing
Hume Fogg Magnet	Good Standing	Good Standing
Martin L. King Magnet	Good Standing	Good Standing
Nash School of Arts	Good Standing	Good Standing
East Literature Magnet	Good Standing	Good Standing
Maplewood	Good Standing	Good Standing
Hillsboro	Good Standing	School Improvement 2 – Improving
Overton	Target	Good Standing
Hillwood	Target	Good Standing
Hunters Lane	Target	Good Standing
Pearl Cohn	School Improvement 1	Target
Antioch	School Improvement 2 – Improving	School Improvement 2
Stratford	School Improvement 2	School Improvement 2
McGavock	Restructuring 1 – Improving	Restructuring 1
Whites Creek	Restructuring 1 – Improving	Restructuring 1
Glencliff	Restructuring 2 – Alt. Governance	Restructuring 2

State targets for reading and math change periodically. State targets are designed to set annual goals so that 100 percent of students achieve proficiency by the 2013-2014 school year. When targets change, schools must achieve the new targets, or make enough growth toward the target to achieve “safe harbor,” in order to maintain their ratings.

Tennessee Targets for No Child Left Behind					
Grade and Subject	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-14
K-8 Math	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
K-8 English	32%	49%	66%	83%	100%
9-12 Math	25%	44%	63%	81%	100%
9-12 English	49%	61%	74%	87%	100%

MNPS K-8: Reading/Language/ Writing and Math proficiency

The Tennessee Department of Education uses the TCAP criterion-referenced scores to examine student achievement compared to a predetermined set of standards. Under the Tennessee Diploma Project, in 2009-2010 grades 3-8 students took new tests, which measured whether students were proficient on much more rigorous standards. Students are classified as Below Basic, Basic, Proficient and Advanced. Students must be Proficient or Advanced in order to satisfy Tennessee accountability standards. Again, an accurate comparison of student achievement in 2010 with prior years is not possible; we include the 2009 academic results as historical reference and to illustrate the impact of the new, more rigorous standards.

K-8 Reading, Language and Writing by Racial Subgroup				
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Reading, Language, and Writing				
2010	57%	32%	32%	57%
2009	91%	83%	81%	92%
ADVANCED PROFICIENCY in Reading Language and Writing				
2010	17.3%	5.3%	4.6%	16%
2009	50%	22%	24%	49%

K-8 Reading, Language, and Writing by Demographic Subgroup				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficiency
PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Reading, Language, and Writing				
2010	41%	32%	27%	17%
2009	86%	82%	67%	67%
ADVANCED PROFICIENCY in Reading Language and Writing				
2010	9.1%	5%	8.7%	2.1%
2009	32%	22%	13%	11%

K-8 Math by Demographic Subgroup				
PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Mathematics				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficiency
2010	27%	19%	20%	16%
2009	86%	82%	60%	80%
ADVANCED in Mathematics				
2010	8.6%	4.6%	8.5%	3.7%
2009	36%	26%	14%	22%
K-8 Math by Racial Subgroup				
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
PROFICIENT and ADVANCED in Mathematics				
2010	51%	17%	21%	42%
2009	94%	81%	87%	92%
ADVANCED in Mathematics				
2010	23.3%	3.9%	4.5%	16.1%
2009	63%	24%	30%	53%

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

High schools are measured by results in math, reading and for making progress toward a 90 percent on-time graduation rate. Math results are determined by student performance on the new Algebra I end-of-course exam, which most students take in ninth grade; the reading calculation is weighted 2/3 from the new English II end-of-course exam taken in 10th grade and 1/3 from the 11th-grade writing assessment. These assessments currently make up 20 percent of a student’s final grade in the course.

Percentage of Grade 9 to 12 Students Proficient and Advanced in Reading/Language + Writing (1 st time Test Takers)				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2010	60%	50%	30%	29%
2009	92%	89%	73%	80%
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
2010	79%	52%	47%	75%
2009	96%	89%	89%	96%

Percentage of Proficient & Advanced in Read., Lang. & Writing (1 st Time Test Takers)				
High Schools	2009	% Econ. Dis.	2010	% Econ. Dis.
Antioch	88%	67%	57%	54%
Cane Ridge	New	71%	57%	51%
East Literature Magnet	96%	58%	69%	63%
Glenclyff	89%	>95%	48%	45%
Hillsboro	94%	52%	70%	57%
Hillwood	92%	70%	63%	53%
Hume-Fogg	100%	16%	100%	97%
Hunters Lane	90%	76%	44%	40%
Maplewood	89%	91%	41%	39%
Martin Luther King	100%	21%	99%	97%
McGavock	92%	64%	61%	50%
Nash. School of the Arts	97%	31%	83%	78%
Overton	95%	69%	63%	56%
Pearl-Cohn	86%	>95%	33%	33%
Stratford	88%	>95%	44%	40%
Whites Creek	87%	80%	44%	41%
MNPS	86%	76%	60%	50%

Percentage of Proficient & Advanced in Math (1 st Time Test Takers)				
High Schools	2009	% Econ. Dis.	2010	% Econ. Dis.
Antioch	76%	62%	43%	44%
Cane Ride	New	67%	33%	28%
East Literature Magnet	89%	57%	37%	34%
Glencliff	84%	90%	27%	28%
Hillsboro	89%	45%	31%	22%
Hillwood	82%	60%	37%	26%
Hume-Fogg	100%	13%	99%	100%
Hunters Lane	87%	65%	25%	27%
Maplewood	83%	91%	32%	30%
Martin Luther King	100%	17%	97%	100%
McGavock	80%	55%	43%	38%
Nash. School of the Arts	89%	26%	67%	51%
Overton	82%	63%	37%	32%
Pearl-Cohn	69%	91%	23%	22%
Stratford	91%	92%	48%	45%
Whites Creek	66%	76%	26%	23%
MNPS	76%	73%	39%	32%

Percentage of Grade 9 to 12 Proficient and Advanced in Math (1 st Time Test Takers)				
Year	All	Economically Disadvantaged	Students w/ Disabilities	Limited English Proficient
2010	39%	32%	22%	24%
2009	81%	77%	54%	72%
Year	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
2010	55%	32%	34%	54%
2009	91%	77%	78%	87%

ACT scores

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

Average ACT Composite Scores by High School									
School	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	>= 21?
Antioch	17.9	18.1	17.6	17.9	18.1	17.8	17.9	17.1	No
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	New	New	---
East Literature	18.7	19.2	19.9	19.1	18.8	18.3	18.7	17.9	No
Glenclyff	17.7	17.3	17.1	16.8	17	17.1	17.2	15.9	No
Hillsboro	20.3	19.5	21.1	20.3	20.5	19.9	19.5	19.7	No
Hillwood	20.5	20.5	19.9	19.2	19.3	18.9	18.9	17.5	No
Hume-Fogg	26.4	26.3	26.7	26.4	26.8	26.7	26.7	26.3	Yes
Hunters Lane	17.6	17.9	17.5	17.5	17	17.7	16.9	16.1	No
Maplewood	15.8	15.8	15.6	16.7	16.3	15.9	15.9	15.3	No
Martin L. King	25.4	26.1	25.9	26.2	26.5	27.0	26.7	26.6	Yes
McGavock	18.6	18.9	18.3	18.4	18.7	18.3	18.3	17.6	No
Middle College	---	---	---	---	23.0	20.0	22.5	21.2	Yes
Nash. School of the Arts	18.2	18.7	19.2	18.6	20	20.2	20.4	19.6	No
Overton	19.1	19.3	18.7	18.9	19.4	18.8	19.1	18.2	No
Pearl Cohn	16.3	16.2	16.9	16.6	16.2	16.2	16.0	15.4	No
Stratford	15.3	16.3	16.6	16.7	16.7	16.1	15.7	15.1	No
Whites Creek	16.9	16.7	16.5	15.8	16	16.3	16.3	15.8	No
MNPS Average	19.2	19.1	19.3	19.1	19.2	19.1	19.0	18.1	No

Percent of MNPS Students Scoring Above ACT Benchmarks: Classes of 2009 and 2010								
School	Class of 2009				Class of 2010			
	21 +		19 +		21 +		19 +	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Antioch	79	22%	141	39%	86	18%	152	32%
Cohn Adult	1	4%	2	8%	0	0%	0	0%
East Literature	42	32%	58	44%	41	23%	74	42%
Glenclyff	27	16%	52	31%	27	10%	60	22%
Hillsboro	85	39%	120	55%	96	39%	129	52%
Hillwood	58	34%	88	52%	44	21%	75	36%
Hume-Fogg	184	97%	190	100%	185	94%	190	97%
Hunters Lane	26	11%	65	29%	32	10%	66	21%
Jere Baxter ALC	0	0%	0	0%	1	7%	2	13%
Overton	96	35%	124	46%	83	27%	134	44%
Maplewood	13	10%	27	20%	12	7%	29	17%
Martin Luther King, Jr.	128	98%	130	100%	164	95%	170	99%
McGavock	97	26%	153	40%	112	22%	191	37%
Middle College	16	70%	20	87%	16	48%	22	67%
Nashville School of the Arts	63	45%	95	68%	61	40%	89	59%
Pearl-Cohn	6	10%	10	16%	3	3%	18	18%
Stratford	13	10%	19	15%	8	6%	17	13%
Whites Creek	12	9%	32	24%	17	10%	35	20%
[Not Identified]	2	50%	2	50%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	948	33%	1328	46%	988	27%	1453	40%

Attendance

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

Year	Attendance by Grade Tier		
	K to 4	5 to 8	9 to 12
2010	95.2		91.8
2009	95.4		91.4
2008	94.1		87.4
2007	94.9		90.2
2006	95.2	94.5	89.5
2005	95.2	95.1	88.9
2004	95.9	94.8	91.5
2003	95.9	94.8	91.9
2002	95.8	94.7	92.2
2001	95.9	94.2	90.8

Attendance by High School								
High Schools	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Antioch	92.6	91.5	88.7	90.8	95.7	90.6	91.5	92.7
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	94.7	93.9
East Literature	93	95.6	94.9	95.1	95.8	95.8	95.6	95.0
Glenclyff	89	87.8	86.5	86.7	88.1	89.2	92.3	91.3
Hillsboro	91.1	90.1	91	90.3	91.4	91.6	90.8	91.5
Hillwood	90.2	89.2	87.9	88.3	88.4	90.7	89.8	92.3
Hume-Fogg	92.2	95.3	95.5	95.5	95.6	96.5	96.3	96.6
Hunters Lane	92	91.6	91.3	89.5	89.7	89.8	90.9	90.4
Maplewood	88.4	87.3	85.4	86.1	85.4	89.7	88.5	89.3
Martin Luther King	97.3	97.3	95.3	94.9	96.1	96.5	96.3	96.5
McGavock	88.5	90.5	88.7	87.6	88.8	88.8	90.4	91.0
Nash. Sch. of the Arts	NA	93.6	93.1	93.9	94.0	94.1	94.0	94.2
Overton	91.5	91.4	90.1	91.2	91.8	92.1	92.0	92.9
Pearl Cohn	87.3	86.6	84.6	88.5	91.2	91.7	89.7	90.4
Stratford	87.6	86.6	82.3	83.2	89.2	84.6	88.3	87.9
Whites Creek	89	89.4	89.1	89.9	88.9	88.9	89.8	91.4
MNPS Average (9-12)	NA	NA	91.1	89.3	90.2	87.4	91.4	91.8

Graduation Rates

Graduation rates are calculated using the National Governors Association (NGA) formula and only count students receiving a regular diploma. Most students must graduate within four years and a summer school; ELL and special education students are given five years.

Graduation Rates by High School								
High Schools	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	>= 90?
Antioch	63.8	66.5	66.9	75.3	71.5	74.7	82.2	No
Cane Ridge	---	---	---	---	---	New	New	N/A
East Literature	56.1	97.3	97.8	99.2	99.3	97.3	98.4	Yes
Glenclyff	50.1	53.3	63.4	68.4	66.6	73.3	81.1	No
Hillsboro	67.3	63.6	74.4	70.9	81.0	81.6	82.7	No
Hillwood	61.5	63.3	68.7	75.8	75.8	67.7	86.0	No
Hume Fogg	99	99	98.5	99.5	98.5	100.0	99.5	Yes
Hunters Lane	64.7	69.4	72.7	78.3	77.7	76.5	80.7	No
Maplewood	42.8	41.2	42.6	58.2	69.3	69.5	87.4	No
Martin Luther King	100	99.4	98	99.3	99.4	99.3	99.4	Yes
McGavock	51.4	56.1	68.5	74.3	76.3	75.8	81.6	No
Nashville Sch. Arts	89.7	89.7	90.9	95.2	96.5	98.1	95.1	Yes
Overton	69.8	72	75.1	79.6	79.1	77.9	87.3	No
Pearl Cohn	50.6	46.2	65.1	67.7	66.1	68.0	80.5	No
Stratford	38.1	50.5	54.5	73	64.6	67.6	79.6	No
Whites Creek	57.2	53.7	65.8	64.5	64.7	67.5	78.5	No
MNPS	58.2	61.9	68.8	70	72.6	73.1	82.9	No

Suspensions

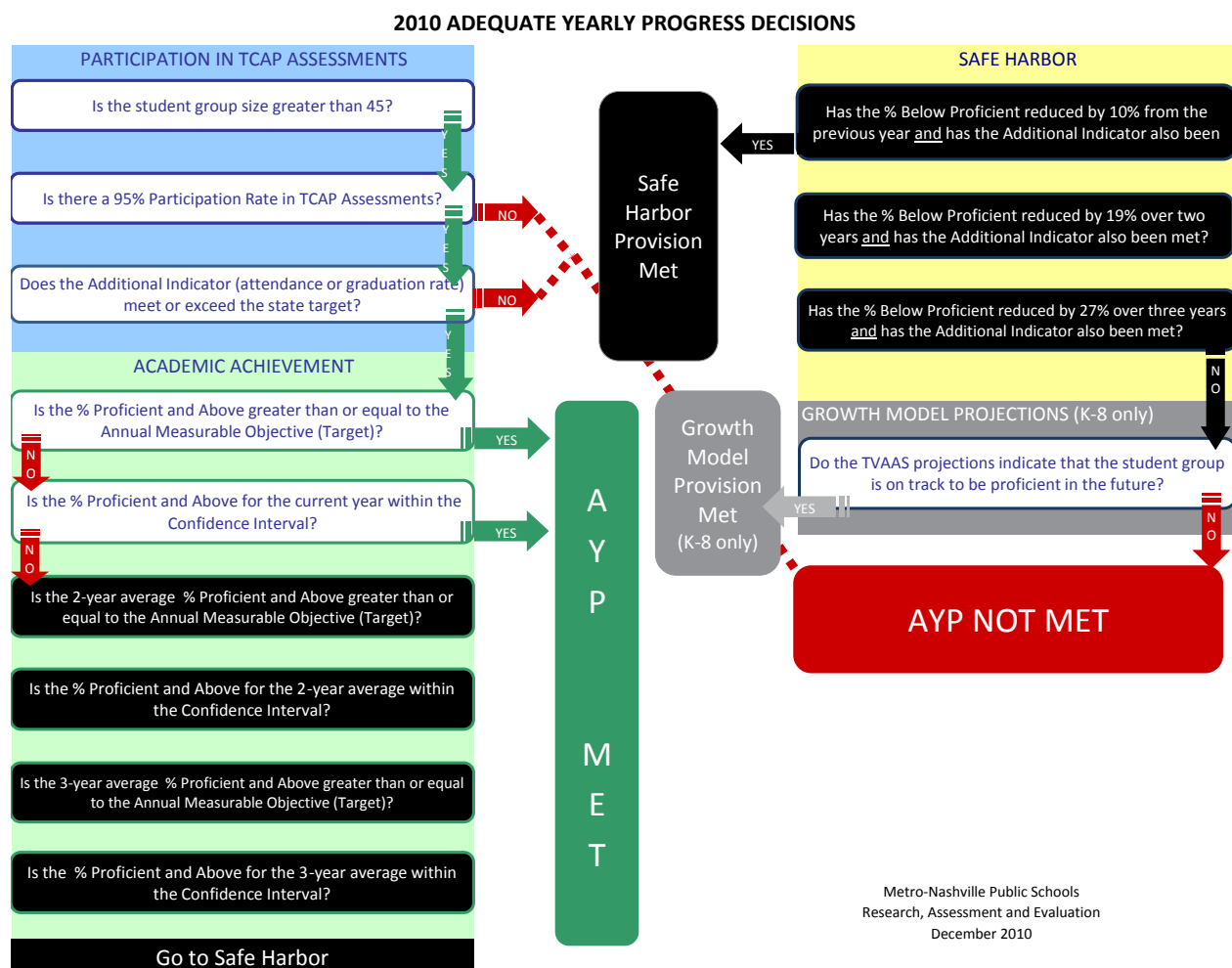
The percentage of students suspended declined for the fourth straight year in 2010, but African-American students continue to be significantly overrepresented compared to other demographic groups.

Suspensions as a Percentage of the Number of Students in Each Subgroup					
Year	% Total	% Asian	% Black	% Hispanic	% White
2010	12.9%	4.4%	18.7%	8.6%	7.6%
2009	14.7%	5.0%	20.7%	9.9%	9.3%
2008	17.0%	6.1%	23.4%	12.3%	10.9%
2007	17.3%	6.4%	25.0%	11.6%	10.6%
2006	17.5%	5.6%	23.4%	10.9%	9.9%
2005	15.9%	5.8%	22.8%	11.0%	10.1%
2004	14.8%	6.7%	21.4%	9.0%	9.4%
2003	14.7%	6.7%	21.2%	9.3%	9.4%
2002	15.6%	7.2%	20.9%	10.9%	10.7%
2001	17.2%	8.6%	23.3%	12.3%	11.7%

Appendix C:

How Adequate Yearly Progress Is Determined

In this graphic, a black background indicates options that were not available to Tennessee districts and schools in 2010. “Safe Harbor,” or demonstration of significant improvement, was not available since only one year of data was used to determine AYP and schools and districts could not consider two- or three-year averages in order to reach the proficiency targets. This particularly impacted schools and districts with subgroups that have typically been able to make AYP only through growth or improvement measures, such as the Students With Disabilities (SWD) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) subgroups. The gray shading represents the Value-Added growth model or projections. While technically this model was still in place as an avenue to make AYP, in actuality it was extremely difficult with the transition to new, more rigorous, standards to demonstrate sufficient growth to make AYP under this provision.



Appendix D:

Experts Interviewed

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

Metropolitan Government of Nashville Davidson County

The Honorable Karl Dean, Mayor

The Honorable Diane Neighbors, Vice Mayor

MNPS Board of Education

The Honorable Gracie Porter, Chair, District 5

MNPS Central Administration and staff

Jesse Register, Director

Shannon Black, Coordinator, Data Coaches

Fred Carr, Chief Operating Officer

Paul Changas, Director of Research, Assessment and Evaluation

Al Gaines, Enterprise Software Engineer

Chris Henson, Chief Financial Officer

Bobby Hurley, Coordinator, Data Integration

Flo Kidd, Pre-K Professional Development Specialist

Jennifer Lee, Data Warehouse Technical Lead

Phyllis Phillips, Pre-K Coordinator

Earl Wiman, Special Projects, Human Resources

MNPS Principals

Shatrina Cathey, Assistant Principal, McGavock High School

Angela Chapman, Principal, Ross Elementary

Kellie Hargis, Principal, Bellevue Middle

Melissa Harkreader, Assistant Principal, Cane Ridge High School

Tony Majors, Principal, Glenduff High School

Donna Wilburn, Principal, Bellshire Elementary

Ron Woodard, Principal, Apollo Middle School

MNPS Teachers and Staff

Amanda Binkley, Glenduff High School

Donna Gill, Bellshire Elementary

Lee Hildebrand, Glenduff High School

Yolanda Jackson, Glenduff High School

Scheniquah King, Glenduff High School

Jim Jobe, Wright Middle School

Audrey Largent, Bellshire Elementary

Jill Peebles, Glenduff High School

Gini Pupo-Walker, Glenduff High School

Pamela Sexton, Thurgood Marshall Middle School

MNPS Glenduff High School students

Tyreke Ansah

Lorena Avitia

Yasmine Bousseksou

Decorye Bradford

Ladan Hassan

Lanse Ngo

Henry Velasco

Jeffrey Woods

Metropolitan Nashville Education Association

Erick Huth, President

Stephen Henry, Vice President

State of Tennessee

Bobbi Lussier, Assistant Commissioner, Division of School Readiness and Early Learning, TDOE

Community

Elyse Adler, Nashville Public Library

Joanne Chase, Program Director, McNeilly Center for Children

Eric Dewey, President & CEO, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville

Dale Farran, Professor, Peabody College at Vanderbilt University

David Fox, former school board member, District 8

Nelda Fulghum, McNeilly Center for Children

Melissa Jagers, Associate Director, Alignment Nashville

Sara Longhini, Executive Director, Fannie Battle Day Home for Children

Melba Marcum, Executive Director, McNeilly Center for Children

Pamela Mathews, Head Start Director, Metropolitan Action Commission

Linda Mendez, Lead Founder and Principal, Liberty Collegiate Academy

Phil Orr, Senior Vice President, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville

Jackie Shrago, Director, Peabody College Center for Research in Practice, Vanderbilt University

Clare Terry, Manager, Read To Succeed, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville

Tom Ward, Director, Principals Leadership Academy of Nashville

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Schools Visited by Committee Members

Bellshire Design Center Elementary

Glenclyff High School

Wright Middle School

Fannie Battle Day Home for Children

McNeilly Center for Children

MNPS Liaison to the Committee

Fred Carr, Chief Operating Officer

School System Performance

1. Implement fully the CSS recommendations to transform Metro Schools' business practices.

Recognizing the critical impact of business and purchasing practices on student instruction, Metro Nashville Public Schools hired CSS International in 2009 to do a thorough review of the district's business operations and to recommend improvements. In November 2009, CSS released its Magellan Project Recommendations Report to the school board and MNPS administration. This report contained 112 recommendations designed to transform all areas of the district's business practices. By June 2010, the district had implemented 111 of the 112 recommendations. The recommendation that has not been implemented to date has to do with the implementation of a document tracking tool that will require additional software support that is not currently available. There will be follow-up as the support becomes available. Implementation of these comprehensive strategies has had an impact on everything from technology, organizational structures and purchasing processes to changes in the organizational culture to improve efficiency. From its May 17, 2010 implementation through Dec. 31, 2010, the new processes have shown significant improvements in the purchasing flow within MNPS. As examples, the number of purchase orders placed during that time was 18,949, compared with 4,796 the prior year, and the expenditures increased from \$45 million to \$161 million. This number is particularly significant since cumbersome

purchasing processes in the past have often caused lengthy delays for schools receiving needed materials. In 2010, the district expanded its work with CSS to include reviews and implementation of improvements to the operations of the federal programs and grants department and an ongoing improvement project for the district's human resources operation and procedures.

2. Leverage the resources of Metro government to improve the quality of our schools by creating and expanding strong partnerships with the city library, parks, police and health departments.

Collaborative partnerships are vital to improving the quality of instruction and resources available to our students and the community. We are pleased to have numerous positive working partnerships with various Metro government departments. While there are many partnerships, for the purpose of this response we will identify a few that are highlights for 2010.

Metro Schools and the Metro Police Department continue to work jointly to address needs in the areas of truancy and juvenile issues. District representatives attend and present at the Police Department's weekly Comstat meetings and work with school resource officers to provide security and build relationships with students.

The partnership between MNPS and the Metro Health Department is also a strong collaboration that is resulting in

better service to students, their families and the community. This past year, MNPS became one of the few districts in the nation, if not the only district, to provide every student with access to free H1N1 vaccinations during the school day. This monumental effort, undertaken through a partnership of MNPS and Health Department staffs, received national accolades from the Center for Disease Control. This focus on disease prevention includes numerous fast-track immunization clinics offered by Metro Health during school start times and, particular to 2010, a large-scale public awareness campaign and additional immunization clinics required to implement new state immunization requirements. Other areas of collaboration include the awarding and implementation of a federal Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant to build healthier communities. Funding from this grant is helping build community gardens, fund studies of child nutrition and food service quality in schools and provide additional physical education opportunities, among other activities.

After a successful pilot in early 2010, Metro Schools and the Metro Public Library expanded the Limitless Libraries program to all MNPS high schools. This program, in part, makes available the resources of the public library system to all MNPS high school students, with deliveries of materials directly to the school the student attends. Students use their school ID as a library card and may even borrow a laptop. The parent/guardian consent form for participation is included with the Student Code of Conduct.

One final partnership that is important to note in this report is the continuous collaboration between Metro Schools and the Mayor's Office on a variety of initiatives. In addition to longstanding efforts such as the First Day Festival, the district and the Mayor's Office are working together on initiatives

surrounding charter school operations in Nashville; the recruitment, retention and compensation of teachers; and the mayor's afterschool program for middle school students (Nashville After Zone Alliance, or NAZA), that launched in spring 2010 serving students in the Stratford and Maplewood clusters. An additional zone is on track to launch in February 2011 to serve the Glendale and Overton clusters.

3. 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.

Family involvement is a proven indicator of student academic success. Metro Schools strives to do everything within its ability to engage families in the education of their children. Some key efforts to build, encourage and support this involvement include the creation of cluster support teams that are designed to provide a continuum of services to schools and families as children advance through the system. This past year, the district assigned its Family Engagement Office to this team and hired additional family liaisons to provide one for each cluster to work with families and encourage their active participation in their children's education. In addition to these 13 liaisons, the district has six bilingual family assistants to help bridge cultural and language barriers between schools and non-English-speaking parents. Also this year, the district reorganized and expanded its Director's Parents Advisory Council to be more inclusive – increasing the average attendance at meetings from 20-30 to approximately 250. MNPS continues to use multiple communication outlets to share information with parents, including its automated phone system, electronic newsletters, social media, website

announcements and information, and printed materials. Customer service training has been developed and implemented to assist employees as they work to create a professional and welcoming environment for families and the community. The district's Parent University, a committee of Alignment Nashville, continues to grow, making available more than 98 community-provided workshops to more than 900 parents, as well as providing structured programs that served more than 1,000 children this past year.

Education Funding

4. Complete the promised state funding for English Language Learners (ELL) to meet the class size ratio of 1:20.

No additional state funding was provided to MNPS for ELL in 2010.

5. 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.

The members of the Board of Public Education and the administration of Metro Schools support any educational funding and delivery system that will provide an equitable and adequate amount of funding to schools. The calling for a constitutional convention on this matter is a broader request than can be undertaken by the school system, and the district must look to the Chamber of Commerce and the community to lead the effort in support of education funding.

6. Report annually the amount of funding each Metro school receives, in total and by category of funds (teacher salaries, Title I, private support, etc.).

MNPS is working in cooperation with the Chamber to develop a report document in a format that would be widely understandable and transparent to the taxpayer. All transactions and financial documents are available to the public; however, current reports are unwieldy and total more than 632 pages of content. The district is proud of the publication and availability of its first Budget Book, which won the Association of School Business Officials' Meritorious Budget Award for 2009-2010.

Special Student Populations

7. Educate students in the most inclusive setting possible, with appropriate training and supports for general education teachers.

MNPS continues to increase its inclusive practices in the education of ELL students and those with special needs. In exceptional education, the percentage of students with disabilities included in general education for 80 percent or more of the school day has increased significantly during the past three years. In 2008, the percentage was 36.08 percent. That number increased significantly in 2009 to 48.13 percent, and again in 2010, to 52.27 percent. Since July 2010, the district has provided extensive professional development to more than 3,000 teachers and support staff in the areas of inclusive services and differentiated instruction.

For ELL students, MNPS has provided additional professional development programs in literacy, numeracy, science and social studies that are designed to build collaboration and understanding among all teachers regarding effective

teaching strategies and student needs. Since July 2010, 64 teachers have attended the Introduction to ELL session and 935 teachers have attended other content area sessions that are focused on instructional strategies to differentiate with ELL students. MNPS continues to decentralize ELL services from schools with ELL centers and serve students as much as possible within their zoned schools. To support this strategy, Professional Learning Communities of English Language Development (ELD) teachers at each tier meet monthly. One focus area of these meetings is how to work effectively with content area teachers and co-teachers to best serve ELL students. The ELL office has initiated monthly teacher support meetings and holds New Teacher Open House nights at the start of school to help facilitate collaborative instruction between ELL and content area teachers. MNPS also uses ELL coaches to work with teachers and school-based coaches on effective instructional strategies.

8. 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.

MNPS supports expanded recruitment efforts for teachers and other staff that are multilingual and is currently developing a plan for a multi-cultural outreach office to serve the district's increasingly diverse families. Efforts to recruit more minority teachers continue with site visits to job fairs and universities, as well as using social media as a recruiting tool. The ELL office, recognizing the need for all teachers to understand the diverse needs of non-English-background families, provides an Introduction to English Learners professional development

program, and currently offers sessions to all school-based coaches so they can better support teachers working with ELL students. In addition, MNPS has 43 translators that speak 11 different languages, and has approved the hiring of four additional translators to meet higher demands in Spanish, Arabic and Kurdish. The Student Services Department provides diversity training to its staff and selected district employees. MNPS is considering ways to expand this effort and provide diversity and cultural competency training to other staff.

9. Create a spectrum of programs to meet the wide range of student special needs: from a Metro school to a charter school focused on solely 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.

Metro Schools recognizes that every student is unique and has unique educational requirements. The district continues to expand the number of choices available to families to find the school that best meets their children's needs. We are pleased that during the past year, MNPS has revamped and launched a comprehensive high school reform effort in its Academies of Nashville, which allow students to learn and study in a smaller learning community they have selected based on an area of specific interest. MNPS has also expanded the number of Advanced Placement courses available to students who wish to learn in a rigorous course that provides opportunity for college credit; opened The Academy at Old Cockrill and The Academy located at Hickory Hollow (relocated from Opry Mills after the May 2010 flooding) designed to keep students in school and working on a fast track to graduate; and opened a Transition Program to help prepare students for a

return to high school after incarceration. These programs are complementary to the Middle College, Big Picture and Diploma Plus High Schools that have been in operation for the past few years. The district also opened Twilight Schools as an alternative to out-of-school suspension for middle and high school students, as well as an opportunity for afterschool tutoring for other students.

To assist exceptional education students, a Transition/New Community-based classroom opened this year as part of a collaborative effort between the ARC of Davidson County, Project Opportunity and the Mayor's Office. In addition, our Encore Program teachers now serve gifted students in every elementary and middle school and provide direct service and coaching to students and faculty. Finally, staffs in the ELL and Exceptional Education offices are making a concerted effort to ensure students are provided the appropriate assessment tools to monitor academic progress based on their individual needs.



Pre-k students welcome committee members during a visit to Bellshire Elementary Design Center.

10. Connect Supplemental Education Services (SES) provided through the federal Title I program to the city's afterschool initiatives, with the mayor taking a leadership role in promotion, coordination and quality assurance.

At four of the schools currently participating in the NAZA afterschool program for middle school students (Bailey, Litton, Jere Baxter and Wright), NAZA anchor partners like Martha O'Bryan are also SES providers. Some of the students enrolled in the NAZA programs at these schools have also signed up for SES services. Those students go to the NAZA enrichment activities following their SES tutoring. As additional locations open in the afterschool program, there will be more opportunities to increase the number of students served in this manner.



Committee member Alison Vai votes for an area of study for this year's report card.

ACT American College Testing

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

ASSET Achieving Student Success through Effective Teaching

A comprehensive process led by Dr. Register and Mayor Dean to align MNPS's human capital system to make the district "the best place to teach." The process is organized into five areas: preparation; recruitment; hiring and support; development and evaluation; and retention and reward.

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.

Brigance Brigance Test of Basic Skills

A screening and assessment tool that provides a measurement of kindergarten readiness.

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.

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.

MAC Metropolitan Action Commission

City agency that administers federal grants and programs to eradicate poverty, including the administration of the Nashville's Head Start program.

MNPS Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools**NAEYC National Association for the Education of Young Children**

Membership organization with over 300 local, state and regional affiliates that promotes quality educational and developmental services for all children, birth through 8 years of age. Nationally, the organization accredits over 7,500 individual early childhood education programs.

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.

PLAN Principal Leadership Academy of Nashville

A leadership development program for existing and prospective MNPS principals hosted at Peabody College at Vanderbilt University with the mission "to develop educational leaders who creatively and courageously propel teaching and learning."

TCAAP 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 24 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 Co-Chair Keith Belton, Price Bell, Ray Bowman, John Hilley, Benjamin Smith and Bobby Lee Smith 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 **Bellshire Elementary, Wright Middle School** 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 are also incredibly thankful to the staff at **Fannie Battle Day Home for Children** and **McNeilly Center for Children** for opening their doors to members of the committee and for sharing their knowledge and passion for the education of young children.

In addition, we take this opportunity to thank **Metro Schools** for their full support of our work. The staff at MNPS make time to visit with our committee, supply us with information and data when we need it, and are incredibly gracious when confronted with the inevitable last-minute request. In particular, we would like to recognize the invaluable assistance of **MNPS Chief Operating Officer Fred Carr**, who served for a second year as the committee's district liaison.

Finally, we would like to thank the **YMCA of Middle Tennessee** for hosting our weekly meetings at their state-of-the-art downtown facility. **Journey Johnson, Melanie Howard** and **the Y staff** made our weekly meetings productive and enjoyable, and we are much appreciative. We recognize the important support of **Etta Bell** and **Zack Blair** with the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, who supported the logistical demands of a hardworking committee and still managed to snap photographs. 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.



2009 AWARDS FOR COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE

AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVES

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