

# Forward **FOCUS**

A News Bulletin For Employees Of Metro Nashville Public Schools

IN THIS ISSUE: COUNSELOR HELPS STUDENTS FIND THEIR INNER LEADER • GOODLETTSVILLE MIDDLE OPENS



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Dr. Shawn Joseph*

If we are going to be a great school district, we must focus on culture. Focusing on culture begins with looking within ourselves. When I think of the employee we want in MNPS, I think of someone who:

**Enthusiastically focuses on results.** Completes work in ways that support others; not merely doing “duties” or following processes.

**Takes responsibility.** Learns from mistakes.

**Focuses on solutions.** When things go wrong, does not blame others; immediately begins searching for effective answers.

**Takes correction easily.** Because this employee is focused on helping others, he looks for ways to improve, learn and grow.

**Is accountable.** She requires little oversight from her supervisor. She is accountable and takes initiative to measure her performance.

**Actively both learns and teaches.** He actively seeks information, training, wisdom and insight, and shares what he learns with others.

**Enthusiastically helps others.** She is the epitome of a team player and collaborator.

**Inspires trust.** He does not manipulate, lie to or mislead others and has no hidden agendas.

As we move through the school year, we will begin celebrating you for your commitment to service.

## FEATURE STORY



## THE ROLE OF DATA ANALYSIS IN STUDENT SUCCESS

*One of four critical areas for school improvement*

The ultimate goal shared by all employees at Metro Schools is outstanding performance by all children in all schools. Under the direction of a new administration, the 2016-2017 school year will be a foundational year where all employees will be asked to collectively participate in a “study, reflect, plan, do” process to gear up for moving faster next year as the district develops a new strategic plan.

“This year is a year of gray,” acknowledges Director of Schools

Dr. Shawn Joseph. “It is a year where we need to organize ourselves for the collaborative work that will allow us to move forward and accelerate progress.”

Joseph has said the first year of any transition is spent studying needs, gathering input and developing the plan. The second year is spent implementing that plan and hopefully starting to assess some initial results. The third year should bring results

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that demonstrate if the plan is working and what modifications are needed.

The call to action for all employees lists four areas of focus required to ensure schools improve and all students achieve. They are:

1. Data Analysis
2. Critical Thinking
3. Rigorous Instruction and Student Engagement
4. Curriculum Implementation.

During the next few weeks, we will take deeper looks at each of these areas and our plans to address each one of them, beginning with data analysis.

As we think about data analysis this year, district staff will be asked to help us take a critical look at our current assessments and determine which ones provide meaningful data

teachers and district staff can use to support improved instruction.

Plans are underway to survey teachers to understand how many of our assessments are truly meaningful and which ones are not. A review of each assessment, the information it provides and how that information is used will be part of a process to determine which assessments the district will continue to use, which ones will be eliminated and whether or not we are getting the data we need to support instruction.

"We will be prescriptive in approving fewer high quality assessments that we will expect the district to work with," Joseph said. "We want to be mindful about not being too prescriptive, but we want to provide schools and teachers with enough thought and support to be successful."

## SUGGESTED READING:

*The Revised and Expanded Edition of Data Wise: A Step-by-Step Guide to Using Assessment Results to Improve Teaching and Learning* (Harvard Education Press, 2013) shows how systematic and thoughtful examination of a wide range of data can be a catalyst for important schoolwide dialogue.

*Results – The Key to Continuous School Improvement*, by Mike Schmoker, looks at how teachers and administrators can surpass the community's expectations and facilitate great improvements in student learning by setting goals, working collaboratively and keeping track of student achievement data from many sources.

*Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement*, by Victoria Bernhart, provides a framework for improving teaching for every teacher, and learning for every student, through the comprehensive use of data.

## OUR CALL TO ACTION

**So that...**

# Students Achieve!

## Experience the Metro Nashville Public Schools' Advantage.

**LITERACY**      **MATH**      **SCHOOL CLIMATE**

**THROUGH EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

**Data Analysis**  
Continuously utilizing appropriate formal and informal data to inform instruction, increase student learning, and inform the school improvement process

**Critical Thinking**  
Ensuring that all higher order thinking skills infused into the curriculum are understood by teachers and used in instruction and when not evident in the curriculum, exploring ways to do so

**Rigorous Instruction and Student Engagement**  
Improving first instruction for all students and matching needs for interventions for both struggling and advanced students to their specific needs

**Curriculum Implementation**  
Implementing new and existing curriculum focused on the TNReady State Standards with fidelity

**By engaging in Professional Learning Communities, we will focus on ...**



## BETH SCHROEDER HELPS STUDENTS FIND PERSONAL VICTORIES

The year has just begun, but Dr. Beth Schroeder, Fall-Hamilton Elementary School’s counselor, is already focused on helping students find their inner leader. For this school year, Fall-Hamilton was awarded a grant to implement *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* into their curriculum. Among other positive mindsets, *The 7 Habits* teaches students to find their own personal victories. Schroeder emphasizes that this victory could be something as simple as being a line leader. No matter what they choose to lead, Schroeder hopes to help students find that belief in themselves.

Along with developing the children’s confidence, Schroeder’s favorite part of being a counselor is figuring out a student’s personal needs and how she can best fill those.

“Dr. Schroeder is 100 % about meeting the needs of all students,” said Principal Mathew Portell. “She connects with the adults and students to ensure Fall-Hamilton is a place where everyone wants to be.”

And MNPS is a place that Schroeder herself wants to be — she has been a school counselor with MNPS for nine years, but she started her career as a social worker.

“I decided I wanted to counsel kids because I believe prevention is the key to success with mental and emotional health. I wanted to be a part of that proactive side,” Schroeder said. “If the problem is caught early that is where we can really make a difference.”

Schroeder works every day with the mindset of connecting with people’s humanness—meeting the students and parents where they are and remembering that each situation must be handled with kindness and equity.



## AT LONG LAST, GOODLETTSVILLE MIDDLE PREP MOVES INTO NEW BUILDING

Goodlettsville Middle Prep staff and students celebrated with the community during a ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 9 to officially open their new school building. The new Goodlettsville Middle Prep is a state-of-the-art, 131,150-square-foot building back in its home on Goodlettsville’s Main Street. The campus includes science laboratories, an open concept library and media center, music room and shared study spaces.

The ceremony included a student performance of the National Anthem and greetings from U.S. Representative Jim Cooper’s office, Mayor Megan Barry, Goodlettsville Mayor John Coombs, Board Member Jill Speering, Director of Schools Dr. Shawn Joseph and the Principal of Goodlettsville Middle, Beatriz Salgado. After the program, guests attended a reception and participated in student-led tours of the building.

### BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

#### AUGUST 9, 2016

- The Hume-Fogg Jazz Ensemble performed before the meeting.
- Chris Henson was honored by Mayor Megan Barry for his years of service to Metro Schools.
- Sandy Irwin, a sixth-grade teacher at Bellevue Middle Prep, was recognized as Metro Middle School Teacher of the Year, Blue Ribbon Teacher and Tennessee Teacher of the Year Finalist.
- The Board also recognized the hard work of MNPS construction, maintenance and custodial crews in getting our schools prepared for the first day, particularly the team that helped Sylvan Park recover from a lightning strike and flood a week before school started.
- The Office of Charter Schools presented two resubmitted applications from Rocketship Education. One was to convert an existing Metro School into a charter school. The other was to create a new school from scratch. Both applications were denied in June during the original approval process. Tennessee state law allows the charter organization to revise the application and resubmit it to the Board for reconsideration. Both resubmitted applications were again denied based on the overall academic performance of the existing Rocketship schools.



## CALENDAR

### AUGUST 17

Listen & Learn

6 – 8 p.m.

*Rose Park Middle Prep*

*1025 9th Ave S, Nashville, TN 37203*

### AUGUST 18

Q & A Session with Dr. Joseph

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

*McGavock High School*

*3150 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214*

### AUGUST 23

Board of Education Meeting

5 p.m.

*Central Office Board Room*

*2601 Bransford Ave., Nashville, TN 37204*

### AUGUST 31

The deadline to apply for the Parent Ambassador program in the EL Office is Aug. 31. Contact [Ruben.DePena@mnps.org](mailto:Ruben.DePena@mnps.org) if you have questions or need an application.

### SEPTEMBER 5

Labor Day Holiday

### SEPTEMBER 10

Real Talk Forum on Race, Equality and Leadership

*Music City Center, Exhibit Hall A*

*201 5th Ave S, Nashville, TN 37203*

### SEPTEMBER 24

School Choice Festival

*Music City Center*

*201 5th Ave S, Nashville, TN 37203*



**METRO NASHVILLE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
*Exceeding Great Expectations*

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[WWW.MNPS.ORG](http://www.mnps.org)

To submit to Forward Focus use this online form:  
<http://bit.ly/2acUpTv>

The deadline for submissions is the end of the business day on Tuesday. Submissions received by this deadline will be reviewed for the following week's edition.

### QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

Email [communications@mnps.org](mailto:communications@mnps.org).

## NEWS BRIEFS

### *Forward Focus is Now Available Online*

Forward Focus Editions will be archived on [MNPS.org](http://MNPS.org) under the "Current Employees" section.

### *Nashville Public Library Graphic Design Contest for Middle and High School Students*

The Nashville Public Library is hosting a Snapchat™ Geofilter design contest for middle and high school students. Until Sept. 6, students can submit original designs for NPL's Snapchat™ Geofilter. The winner will receive a pair of Beats by Dre™ headphones, and his or her design will be used as the official NPL Geofilter. Second and third-place entries will receive Amazon gift cards. The guidelines for designing a Geofilter can be found on NPL's website or students can attend Studio NPL's Geofilter design workshop Aug. 15.

### *GED/HiSet Classes at DuPont Hadley*

DuPont Hadley Middle Prep is offering GED/HiSet classes taught by a certificated teacher. The classes are held on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday of each week from 6 - 8 p.m. There is no charge for the classes, materials or testing. If you are interested, call the Community Achieves Site Manager, Mindy

Feuerborn, at 615-847-7300 x215 or show up on a Monday evening for class and you will be registered on-site. Please bring a picture ID. All academic levels are welcome.

### *Buena Vista Holds Ribbon Cutting for New Playground*

On Aug. 11, Buena Vista Elementary School celebrated a new playground donated by the Nashville Sounds. The reception included comments from Michelle McVicker, Buena Vista's principal, a representative from the Nashville Sounds and a Buena Vista student, speaking on behalf of students' appreciation.

### *Student Contest for Metro Water Services*

Metro Water Services is seeking students' help for the Imagine a Day Without Water campaign - to educate the community about the value of water in our daily lives. Metro Water Services is seeking artwork, written pieces, advertisements, social media memes, broadcasts, etc. that can be used in the campaign. The campaign culminates with a national rollout of projects on Sept. 15. Learn more: <http://imagineadaywithoutwater.org>.

## STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

### AWARDS

On Aug. 4, Dr. Simyka Carlton, assistant principal of Stratford STEM Magnet High School, was recognized as the overall education winner for the Chamber of Commerce's Nashville Emerging Leader Award (NELA). Beverley Flatt, another MNPS employee, was also nominated for the award. The NELAs celebrate outstanding young professionals for their professional and personal accomplishments. Congratulations to Simyka Carlton and Beverley Flatt.

### IN MEMORIAM

Jacques "Jerome" Hill, 68, passed away Aug. 4. Jerome retired from the mailroom in 2010 after serving Metro Schools for 38 years. Services were held Aug. 8.

*Have a staff recognition or In Memoriam to share with others in the district? Please submit to <http://bit.ly/2acUpTv>.*