

Forward **FOCUS**

A News Bulletin for Employees of Metro Nashville Public Schools

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Shawn Joseph

*"Treat a man as he is and he will remain as he is.
Treat a man as he can and should be and he will
become as he can and should be."*

– Stephen R. Covey

The best gift we can give our students is the gift of high expectations for them to grow, learn and achieve beyond what they believe they can accomplish.

To this end, we are making changes in our Encore program with two main goals in mind: 1) Identifying and serving more students who qualify for these services; and 2) Providing more rigorous and challenging opportunities for gifted and talented students during regular classroom instruction.

The changes starting next year are mostly related to the role and work of our Encore Teachers. You can read more about these changes in this Forward Focus, but I am pleased that for 2017 – 2018, every traditional MNPS elementary and middle school is guaranteed at least a half-time AART. Schools that currently fund a full-time Encore Teacher or would like to have a full-time teacher will continue to do so. Teachers in these roles will serve fewer schools and will teach Encore classes, help identify students for services and share best practices for teaching students with high abilities.

We are dedicated to finding the giftedness in all children and expansion of Encore is one example of how we are building our next budget to provide the supports needed to meet high expectations.

FEATURE STORY



GIFTED PROGRAM CHANGES WILL EXPAND ACCESS

Encore teachers will have new title, more time at schools

Starting in the fall of 2017, the Encore teacher position will transition to an Advanced Academics Resource teacher (AART) position. Although this role has a new title, current Encore teachers will NOT need to reapply. Among other things, AARTs will continue facilitating the Encore program; however, with the new model, AARTs will serve no more than two schools, meaning all schools will have a half-time AART. Schools that currently fund or want to fund a full-time AART will be able to do so. This increases the amount of time AART teachers can spend providing service to students at each school. AARTs may also co-teach

with teachers or help teachers plan advanced lessons for their classrooms.

These changes aim to better match advanced services to children's needs instead of a one-size-fits-all approach to curriculum.

There is a district commitment to expand access to advanced academics across all schools to increase the district's ability to identify and serve gifted and talented students. The schools that have none or very few identified Encore students will have more access to resources

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than they did before, and schools that have very highly identified Encore students will be able to utilize AARTs to increase all teachers' abilities in working with advanced students.

The Office of Advanced Academics wants to preserve the elements of the existing Encore program that are working well during this transition to an AART structure. This program will continue to support the needs of students, such as spending time with like-minded peers, special events and field trips, working closely with gifted teachers and exposure to curriculum specially designed for these students. All of these changes aim to increase school-wide rigor and quality of instruction across the entire district.

THE AARTS MIGHT WORK WITH THEIR SCHOOLS TO:

- coach and model effective teaching practices and rigorous instructional strategies in classrooms;
- co-teach and demonstrate differentiated lessons for teachers;
- analyze a variety of data and support teachers and school administrators with making data-driven instructional decisions;
- coordinate screening processes that help identify and nurture talent;
- provide content-based instruction that is advanced, differentiated, and appropriate for learners of varying levels and abilities pre-K-grade 8; and,
- provide information and resources to parents.

New AARTs must commit to completing a two-week gifted academics course facilitated by Vanderbilt University. Metro Schools will pay the course fees directly to Vanderbilt. AARTs will not receive a stipend for attending. The course will be offered during the summer, after school and/or on selected Saturdays.

Current Encore teachers will not have to reapply for an AART position, but they can indicate if they choose not to be placed in the AART pool if they do not want to be in that new role. In the next few months, the Office of Advanced Academics will continue to support schools and teachers with these changes to make a smooth transition into this new role.

BUDGET TIMELINE

We are quickly approaching the budgeting season. This year's budget will align with our new district strategic plan and the priorities outlined within. Stay tuned to Forward Focus for specific updates and developments. Key dates in this process are outlined below. All dates are subject to change.



MARCH 7
Dr. Joseph and his administration will share the budget proposal with the Board of Education's Budget and Finance Committee at 12:00 p.m.

MARCH-EARLY APRIL
The Budget and Finance Committee will meet several times to review and discuss the proposal.

- **MARCH 14** - 4:00 p.m.
- **MARCH 28** - 4:00 p.m.
- **APRIL 4** - 12:00 p.m.
- **APRIL 11** - 12:00 p.m.

APRIL 11
The Board of Education will vote to approve the budget request and submit the budget to Mayor Barry.

MID-APRIL
Budget hearings with Mayor Barry and district leadership.

MAY-JUNE
Metro Council reviews the recommended budget, conducts a budget hearing and will work to approve the budget in June.

STAYING HEALTHY AT METRO SCHOOLS

MNPS is committed to keeping employees healthy

We are in the depths of the height of the season for flu, strep throat, colds, and other illnesses and viruses. While many other counties have closed around MNPS, our district has, as of yet, been able to keep our doors open for more than one reason.

For starters, our size is our best defense against winter colds. The size and geographic density of our district helps us keep students in school. Secondly, our district has a great emphasis on health and wellness for all employees. All employees were offered the option to get a free flu shot in the fall and employees have access to our Vanderbilt Health Clinics all across the district.

If you start to feel under the weather, visit one of our Vanderbilt Health

Clinics. If you have any symptoms like a fever, vomiting, or a rash, seek medical care and stay home.

CALL 615-259-8755 TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AT A VANDERBILT HEALTH CLINIC.

HEALTH CLINIC LOCATIONS



Created by Student Assignment Services



Jamie Jenkins and Family

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL INSPIRED BY OWN MNPS TEACHERS

Before Dr. Jamie Jenkins became the assistant principal of Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet High School — he spent 13 years as a student in Metro Schools. During those years, Jenkins lived in poverty and often did not understand why school should be his priority compared to the other challenges he faced. His mindset changed with the help of some influential sixth grade teachers who showed him the value of education and inspired him with their confidence in his abilities. Those teachers directly led him to his own career as a Metro Schools teacher, a career that would allow him to help students like himself see their own potential.

“I am here with MNPS because of the population we serve,” Jenkins said. “Being a part of that population growing up I saw the effect education had on me and I want to share that with others.”

Jenkins has taken on many roles in the district, including a teacher, administrator and coach. With each role he uses the same mantra: give students a home at school while teaching strict rules about caring for others. He prioritizes building relationships with each student and providing them a safe space to share their thoughts or concerns. What keeps him here, and will continue to keep him here, is seeing his students leave his school better prepared to go to college and to overcome life’s most difficult situations.

Outside of school, Jenkins is a father of four. He teaches his children the same lessons on the value of education and the importance of having respect for others. He knows that children must understand how to work together before they can learn. Jenkins coaches his two daughters in track and is the soccer coach for his young son—teaching them dedication and servant leadership through sports.

“I have helped to create a new existence for my family through education,” said Jenkins. “This generation of Jenkins will not experience poverty, just as I hope my students will be able to do for themselves and their families.”

THE SCORES ARE IN

Dr. Joseph’s first evaluation from the Board of Education

Members of the Board of Education have given Director of Schools Dr. Shawn Joseph the highest possible score, Exceeds Expectations, in every category of his first evaluation. The Board, which met Tuesday, Feb. 14 to consider his evaluation, based their score on the five areas of focus for Dr. Joseph’s first 100 days on the job:

- Governance: Board of Education and Leadership Team
- Organizational Capacity and Alignment: District Executives and Senior Staff
- Student Achievement
- Communications and Public Relations
- Operations and Finance

These five priority areas were selected to help Dr. Joseph better understand the state of the entire district and to begin to lay a solid infrastructure to build necessary improvements.

Committee Chair Will Pinkston (Board Member, District 7) described this process during the Board meeting by saying: “Dr. Joseph told us what he was going to do, he did it by delivering on the plan and, through the evaluation process, he

told us how he executed it and provided the evidence.”

Over the last 100 days, Dr. Joseph and his team focused on a variety of immediate and long-term improvements in each of the five areas evaluated. A full report of actions completed in each area can be reviewed online at <http://www.mnps.org/what-we-learned>

Now that the first 100 days are behind us and the Transition Team report has been finalized, Dr. Joseph and his administration are focused on long-term strategic planning. Mike Casserly, from the Council of Great City Schools, attended the Board Meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 14, to coach the board through the next steps for creating effective summative and formative evaluations for Dr. Joseph and the district’s overall progress. This process will be done simultaneously with the development of the new district strategic plan. Casserly encouraged the Board to work collectively with Dr. Joseph to create a transparent evaluation process with well-defined criteria and measurements. The Board will begin these discussion at their next retreat in March.



Dr. Shawn Joseph



CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 24

Deadline for Albert Lee Wright Jr. Memorial Migrant Scholarship
Learn more: <http://bit.ly/2kqImnX>

FEBRUARY 28

Board of Education Meeting
5 p.m.
Central Office Board Room
2601 Bransford Ave. Nashville, TN 37204

MARCH 1

Priority Deadline for Read to be Ready summer grant applications
Learn more: <http://bit.ly/Read2bR>

MARCH 1

Deadline to apply for Herb Society of Nashville school grant
Learn more: www.HerbSocietyNashville.org

MARCH 3

Deadline to register MNPS Summer camps on MNPS.org.
<http://bit.ly/2kXi8NI> (MNPS Only)

MARCH 6-10

Kindergarten Registration Kick-Off Week

MARCH 27 - APRIL 7

Prekindergarten Application Period

APRIL 1

Kindergarten Readiness Fair
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Lentz Public Health Center

MAY 2

Save the Date: Teacher of the Year

NEWS BRIEFS

Predator Hockey Educator Appreciation Nights Feb. 21 and 23

All fans in attendance will receive a winning scratch-off card with \$5 million in prizes to be awarded throughout the season, including a \$5,000 Dillard's gift card.

WHEN: Tuesday, Feb. 21 vs. Calgary at 7 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 23 vs. Colorado at 7 p.m.

Carnegie Writer's Six Week Teen Author Workshop

Starting March 9, the Nashville Public Library Thompson Lane Branch will be hosting a Carnegie Writer's six week teen author workshop. Each meeting will be Thursdays 4:30-6 p.m. Learn more <http://www.carnegiewriter.org/>

Register here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HYRWW57>

WHEN: Thursdays, 4:30 - 6 p.m.
WHERE: NPL Thompson Lane Branch
380 Thompson Ln, Nashville, TN 37211

All-Star Laptops

It's almost time for eligible employees to purchase their All-Star Laptops. Consult your inventory lead at your school or department to make sure devices assigned to you are logged correctly in the inventory system. This is essential to avoid missing your opportunity to purchase your laptop. To be eligible to purchase your All Star Laptop, you must have completed all parts of the MNPS All-Star Training

that was offered in 2014 and 2015 and have been continuously employed by MNPS since that time.

More details to come in March.

Minerva's Closet: Free Prom Dresses for Students

Minerva's Closet is a boutique of new or gently-worn dresses and accessories for junior and senior high school girls – for free. The event includes a personal shopper for each student, an on-site seamstress, and a make-up artist. Students must bring a student I.D.

WHEN: March 4, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

WHERE: McGavock High School
3150 McGavock Pike

Tennessee Educator Fellowship

Applications for the Tennessee Educator Fellowship are now open. The Fellowship brings together a diverse group of educators from across the state who are passionate about their profession and student-focused education policy. During a one-year term, the Fellows learn about, reflect upon, and inform the policies, practices, and systems that affect student achievement and educator effectiveness.

DEADLINE: March 3

More details: <http://tnscore.org/programs-outreach/tennessee-educator-fellowship/>

Application: <http://www.bit.ly/TNedApp>



2601 Bransford Ave • Nashville, TN 37204
615-259-INFO (4636) • 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.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

MNPS PRINCIPAL RECOGNIZED FOR HIS LEADERSHIP



Congratulations to Dr. Shuler Pelham, the principal of Hillsboro High School, for being the 2016-2017 recipient of the William J. and Lucille H. Field Award in Support of Excellence in Tennessee Secondary School Leadership. The Field Award for Excellence in Secondary School Leadership is one of the most prestigious awards available to secondary school principals in Tennessee. It recognizes an outstanding secondary school leader who demonstrates leadership excellence through commitment to the values of civility, candor, courage, social justice, responsibility, compassion, community, persistence and service.