

Forward**FOCUS**

A News Bulletin for Employees of Metro Nashville Public Schools

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Shawn Joseph

For the better part of the past year, my team has focused on our Strategic Plan and the roadmap for our district. We've outlined our goal areas and the actions and strategies that support each one – each of which support us in our work towards excellence.

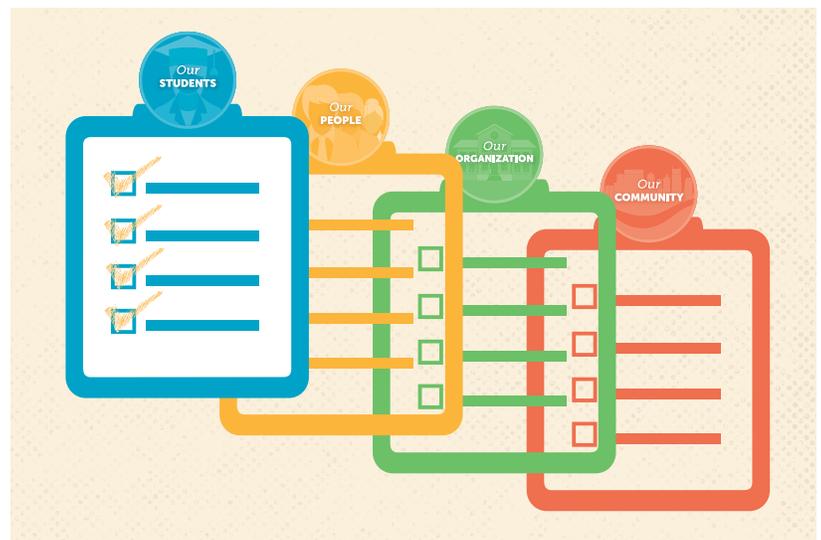
The next step in that process is to align our work with baseline targets (KPIs) that help us monitor and measure the overall impact and success of our work. We know that there is much work to do as we are laser-focused on our mission: to deliver a great public education to every student, every day.

Key performance indicators will help us monitor progress and impact on a district and school level. We will be able to quickly understand if we're creating real change and progress. And this isn't work schools, departments or offices will do in silos. This is a district-wide emphasis that will support the work you do everyday.

And finally - as we move into this Thanksgiving season, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you. I have witnessed the great work and sacrifices you've given on behalf of our children. I am grateful to be a part of Team MNPS.

Together – we will continue to exceed great expectations.

FEATURE STORY



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

District begins rolling out Key Performance Indicators linked to the Strategic Plan

As we near the one-year anniversary of the Strategic Plan, the district is beginning to create and implement annual baseline measures – as outlined in Phase III and Phase IV of the strategic planning process.

These annual baseline measures, key performance indicators (KPIs), will provide a common set of measures of progress and will guide us as we turn ideas into actionable project plans.

The Strategic Plan already outlines goal areas: Our Students, Our People, Our Organization and Our Community, and corresponding

strategies and performance measures for each area. School-level KPIs will help monitor progress and create common language so everyone understands what is needed and whether our work is effective and impactful, or whether we need to reassess and make changes to meet our goals. While KPIs are district-wide, each school will have flexibility to create plans unique to its students' needs.

Recognizing that schools need support and cannot do this work alone, central office staff will support

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(see "IMPROVEMENT" page 1)

schools to monitor and achieve the KPIs around student performance.

At the core of each goal area and every related strategy is one thing: our students. Each and every student deserves equitable access to a high-quality education and these KPIs will help us ensure the district's performance is providing the right support to schools to meet this goal. These indicators will help the district think critically and plan for the future and measure the effectiveness of our efforts.

Read more about the Strategic Plan here: mnps.org/strategicplan.



POLICY CORNER

Metro Nashville Public Schools has a number of policies that give instruction, set goals, assign authority and establish controls that make school governance and management possible. There are two types of policies within MNPS – policies tied to the operation of the Board of Public Education and district Standard Operating Policies that are approved by administration.

With this new feature, we hope to better educate you on MNPS' policies and procedures and share important updates. While this feature will only focus on one policy at a time, you can view every policy and procedure here: <https://www.mnps.org/policies-and-procedures/>.

POLICY

SP 6.117 - Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

All MNPS employees – regardless of location or position – are responsible for immediately reporting any suspicions of child abuse or neglect as it's suspected.

This should be reported in the following order:

- Contact Department of Children's Services at 1-877-237-0004
- Notify the executive principal of the school or the assistant principal
- Notify the executive officer of student services, via the MNPS Department of Children's Services disclosure form
- In the event a child has expressed a fear or refusal to go home, the Executive Principal should also call MNPD if DCS has not responded prior to two (2) hours of school dismissal or the child disclosed within two hours of school dismissal

Read the complete policy at: <http://bit.ly/MNPSpolicycorner>

FINDING SOLUTIONS

Community collaborates to discuss discipline in MNPS

Nashville Organized for Action and Hope (NOAH), is a faith-led coalition of congregations, community organizations and labor unions with three primary areas of focus – affordable housing, economic equity and criminal justice. The group recently hosted four community conversations to discuss discipline numbers within Metro Nashville Public Schools. These meetings, one in each of the four district quadrants, were designed to examine current discipline data, discuss disparities and how discipline can influence the ultimate success of a student.

District staff attended and presented information about discipline codes, staff training and discipline interventions and the ways MNPS is working to eliminate discipline disparities in our schools. Presenting from MNPS were:

- Dr. Tony Majors, executive officer of Student Services
- Lorraine Stallworth, coordinator of restorative practice

The group also heard from MNEA President Dr. Erick Huth, district

students who shared their own disciplinary experiences, a former MNPS teacher and Tom Ward, president/CEO of the Oasis Center. During the first meeting, held at St. James A.M.E. Church, Dr. Joseph spoke to the crowd of approximately ninety attendees calling the conversation "timely and important."

"A lot of people are working on this issue but our data is clear," Joseph said. "What can we do to change our data? How do we collectively and collaboratively come together to address discipline disparities?"

As a district, we must continue to work towards changing this data. You can read more about our efforts in these blog posts on Children First: <http://bit.ly/MNPSblog>

STARTING THE CONVERSATION

District leaders share capital needs with Metro Council ahead of budget season

Metro Schools' capital spending needs was the main topic of a joint meeting between district leadership and the Metro Council Budget and Finance and Education Committees on Nov. 9. Board Chair Anna Shepherd, Director of Schools Dr. Shawn Joseph, Chief Operating/Chief Financial Officer Chris Henson, Director of Government Relations Mark North and representatives from the district's Facilities Planning and Construction and Maintenance divisions represented MNPS.

The meeting was designed to provide Council Members, who must approve the district's capital and operating budgets, an overview of current needs and answer questions. Included in the list of district needs is more than \$300 million in

deferred maintenance. In addition to maintenance of buildings and new construction are the annual needs to replace school buses and to upgrade and replace technology for students and employees, as well as network infrastructure.

Metro Schools maintains more than 14.5 million square feet in 166 buildings. The average facility age is 48 years.

To learn more about our district's capital needs, read this Capital Needs Fact Sheet: <http://bit.ly/MNPScapitalneeds>



OUT OF THE BOX AWARDS

The following employees were honored with the Out of the Box Award at the Administrative and Supervisory meeting on Oct. 26:



MELISSA BENTLEY
*EL Specialist,
Office of English
Learners*



CYNTHIA CATIGNANI
*Instructional
Specialist,
Stanford Montessori*



ROOSEVELT SANDERS
*Director of Athletics,
Athletics*



SUZANNE THOMAS
*Administrative
Assistant,
Office of School
Counseling Services*



SUSAN YORK
*Manager,
Family Information
Center*

Do you know an employee with Out-of-the-Box characteristics? Nominate a co-worker here: http://bit.ly/OOTB_MNPS



WEST END MIDDLE SCHOOL PARAPROFESSIONAL 'WILL MOVE MOUNTAINS' TO HELP STUDENTS

Metro Schools employs more than twelve-thousand employees, and no matter their job title, each individual has his/her own distinct impact on our students.

Advocate, supporter, defender, intercessor, friend: these are a few descriptors of one job title at MNPS – an educational paraprofessional. But for Sedrick Pillow, an exceptional education paraprofessional at West End Middle School, he simply describes himself as a champion for his students.

“Whatever my students need to help them progress in their academic or personal lives, I will move mountains if necessary,” said Pillow.

Prior to joining West End Middle, Sedrick worked in a day home. It was

there that he met three children with special needs and immediately felt called to work with them full time.

“I knew I was meant for this when I first observed a student have a breakthrough,” Pillow said. “The student did not like being with groups of kids their age but after months of encouragement, I now beam with pride when I see them interacting in groups and at times, even providing input in class.”

Paraprofessionals like Pillow make an immeasurable impact with our students and with our schools every day. We’re looking for more paraprofessionals who can make a difference in our schools. Interested applicants can learn more at: mnps.org/careers.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MIGRATION

What you need to do to prepare for this transition

Metro Schools is in the process of replacing SchoolNet with a new professional learning management system that serves all employees – Performance Matters: True North Logic. This system gives the district the ability to manage learning and training by office, department and school to help create a culture of collaboration and shared accountability in professional growth.

To prepare for this transition, employees should review their SchoolNet profile and complete the following:

DOWNLOAD CURRICULUM RESOURCES
Instructional Materials and resource documents provided by the district or uploaded by employees will no longer be available after November. Anyone who wants access to Instructional Materials

and/or resource documents after this date must download these materials now.

VERIFY YOUR PD RECORDS
Verify your professional development records are correct in the event you need this information for licensure and other job-related functions in the future. Use the link on the SchoolNet homepage if your record is inaccurate.



CALENDAR

NOV. 22-24

Thanksgiving Holiday

Schools Closed

Nov. 22-24

Central Office (12-month employees) Closed

Nov. 23-24

NOV. 28

Board of Education Meeting

DEC. 2

SAT national test date

DEC. 2

Certificated Job Fair

Interested candidates may register here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/lS7jVKnKodLuZCvm2>

DEC. 7

Administrative & Supervisory Meeting

DEC. 9

ACT national test date

DEC. 12- 14

Half day for exams grades 9-12

DEC. 15

Half day for all students; end of first semester

JAN. 22

School Choice Festival

5-7 p.m.

Nashville Fairgrounds

500 Wedgewood Ave.

Nashville, TN 37203

NEWS BRIEFS

Lyft Offering Discount for MNPS Employees

Looking for a ride for upcoming holiday events? MNPS has partnered with ride-sharing service Lyft to provide all MNPS employees an exclusive discount until the end of 2017. How does it work? Download the Lyft app on your phone and enter code MNPS25 under "Promos" to save 25% on 5 rides.

Download the app here:

<https://www.lyft.com/app-sms>.

Data Warehouse 101: data to guide instructional decision-making

A series of training opportunities specific to tier levels will be offered at the Martin Center for employees who would like to learn more about how to use the data available in Data Warehouse for instructional decision-making.

Sign-up in [SchoolNet](#).

Literacy Studies Ph.D. Program at Middle Tennessee State University

Applicants with master's degrees in education and related disciplines are eligible for admission with MTSU's Literacy Studies Ph.D. program. Courses are available in the evenings and weekends and two types of assistantships are available

Priority Application Deadline: Feb. 1, 2018 (for the 2018 academic year)

Learn more: <http://bit.ly/2AtOCE5>.

Continuing Education Programs for K-12 Educators at Austin Peay

VESi is now offering online, self-paced, continuing education courses offered cooperatively with Austin Peay State University.

Learn more: www.virtualeduc.com. Questions: info@virtualeduc.com.

Response to Active Aggressor Free Training

This class is a full day course for administrators, teachers and staff to learn responsive techniques to handle active aggression inside of schools. It will focus on the major incidents inside schools and provide recommendations on response. This will be a high intensity class with role play and exercises.

Register for the next training (Jan. 26, 2018) on [SchoolNet](#).

Equity and Diversity Training and Celebrations

The Equity and Diversity Department is launching Brown Bag Lunch & Learn Sessions and Cultural Celebrations for Central Office employees (and other employees able to attend.) These sessions are open to anyone who wants to increase their capacity to engage with students and families effectively and equitably. Every month, Equity and Diversity will host at least 1-3 sessions, ranging from cultural celebrations to workshops.

Review the calendar here: <http://bit.ly/2hgтуZw> and RSVP.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS



Kessler Featured for Student Engagement Strategies

Susan Kessler, Executive Principal at Hunters Lane High School, was recently featured in Education Dive where she shared her strategy for creating authentic student engagement.

Read more about her strategy here:

<https://www.educationdive.com/news/6-administrators-share-strategies-to-gain-and-maintain-student-engageme/510034/>.



**METRO NASHVILLE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
Exceeding Great Expectations

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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.