

Forward**FOCUS**

A News Bulletin for Employees of Metro Nashville Public Schools

IN THIS ISSUE: STAY INVOLVED IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN • HOW TO LOG INTO THE ESS • CATHEY SPOTLIGHT



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Shawn Joseph

Last week, we shared some of the findings from my transition team's work. The findings signaled that we are in the midst of a dynamic change within our school district. We have much to celebrate, but we also have much work to do.

In the coming month, you will receive the full transition team report. The recommendations from the transition team, along with recommendations that were made through reports like Project Reset and observations that I continue to make as I visit schools, will shape the short-term and long-term goals that will emerge in our future strategic plan.

These next few months will be critical for us as a school district. As we begin to think about our long-term work, it is clear to me that we must place considerable attention on strengthening our infrastructure to serve schools. We will begin to prioritize steps that strengthen supports that directly impact classroom instruction. I want to explicitly state that this work cannot be executed with excellence all at once. It will take time. We will need to prioritize our short-term and long-term goals and execute with excellence over the course of the next four to eight years.

I want you to know that with every minute of each day, I think about you. I have witnessed you giving your all to our children and their families, and I appreciate your willingness to give of yourselves to make this community stronger. As we enter this holiday season, I pray that you renew your spirits by sharing laughs and love with your family and friends. Take time to rest and reflect upon how your work is making the city of Nashville a better place. You are powerful. Rejoice and recommit to continuing to make an impact.

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FEATURE STORY



Buena Vista students in their donated coats.

IN THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Generous donations bring joy to MNPS

With the holidays just a week away, not only are schools hosting their own in-house donation drives and fundraisers for others, they have been overwhelmed with generous donations from the Nashville community to MNPS students. Our community partners are ensuring our families have warm winter coats, holiday dinners, presents under the tree and any basic necessities they may be lacking.

It is hard to pinpoint each holiday activity at all 170 schools, so we have collected a handful of these positive stories to share with you

before winter break. This is just a small sample of the many good things happening at MNPS from the community and by our students, because regardless of their own needs, our students still use their time and efforts to give back to others.

MNPS is thankful for our community partners who so graciously invest in our schools by sharing their time and donations. We are equally as thankful for our school staff who work every day to teach our students the joys of giving back.

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ANTIOCH HIGH SCHOOL

Antioch is holding a hat, glove and scarf drive for the homeless in the Bell Road and Harding Place area.

Long Hollow Baptist Church donated approximately 20 holiday food bags with \$10 Kroger gift cards for students and their families.

ANTIOCH MIDDLE PREP

Antioch is collecting donations that will be given to Thriftsmart.

Bass Berry and Sims donated grocery store gift cards to HERO families and others in need. They're also collecting donations of clothing and other items for students.

BUENA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A collection of community partners donated more than 90 Thanksgiving baskets (and 15 turkeys!) to families.

The residents of Werthan Lofts and Taylor Place Flats hosted a silent auction and computer stations for attendees to purchase items from the school's wishlist. They received \$4,500 in donations and countless in-kind items, including food, coats, clothing, school supplies and more.

Alpha Kappa Alpha created more than 60 Winter Kits for students with the basic clothing they will need for winter, including underwear, socks, long sleeve shirts, gloves, hats and more.

Anonymous donors gave a coat to every child in the building and a brand new washer and dryer for families to use.

A collection of donors raised money to give every kindergarten, first grade and fourth grade student holiday gifts, including books, warm pajamas, hats/gloves and one toy off of each child's wish list.



UPS is donating its yearly Christmas for pre-K students. Students will receive a coat, toys, books, hats/gloves, etc. As a fun bonus, the volunteers come dressed up as Santa and his elves.

Buena Vista is impacting its community, too. They're hosting their own "Kid-Friendly" Food Drive to send large food bags home with every family before the long winter break.

COLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Cole Elementary School organized a Holiday Gift Assistance Program that provided 50 families, including more than 250 children, with gifts for the holidays.

Lipscomb Elementary donated more than 100 coats to Cole students.

Woodmont Hills Church of Christ and Brentwood Hills Church of Christ donated more than 200 bags of Thanksgiving food.

The Family Resource Center provided 10 Cole families with gifts.

DUPONT HADLEY MIDDLE PREP

Students are holding a food drive for the Second Harvest Food Program and AVID students are collecting shoes and clothing.

Brandywine Women's Club of Old Hickory is providing Christmas for 20 plus families and DuPont Hadley staff members will also provide Christmas for four to five more school families.



GLENCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL

In conjunction with the community coat drive, the Bass Adult Learning Center is hosting an in-house coat drive competition within the 9th-grade academy at Glenclyff.

The Assistance League of Nashville, Macy's, Soles 4 Souls, Rodan & Fields, and Our Lady of Guadalupe collected, delivered, and donated more than 500 new and gently used coats to Glenclyff High School.

IT CRESWELL MIDDLE PREP SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Meharry's American Medical Association is providing holiday meals and gifts for the children of five families.

MAPLEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

The automotive department, in partnership with Victory Church and Give me 10, donated 80 turkey baskets to the FRC for families in need for Thanksgiving and they plan to do the same with Christmas gifts.

Maplewood also hosted a holiday celebration featuring student performances. Clothing and winter coats were given to families.

MCGAVOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Grace Church of Nazarene, Donelson Church of Christ, Sheraton Music City, St. John's Lutheran Church and a Radio 101 employee are all donating gifts and food to students. Lebanon Road Church of Christ, in partnership with Two Rivers Middle Prep Food Pantry, will donate food boxes to families during winter break.

NAPIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Midtown Church gave a Thanksgiving food box to HERO families and members will also host a teacher appreciation brunch as a holiday treat for the faculty and staff.

Harpeth Hills will provide a holiday celebration for every classroom and donate a new winter uniform for each student.

Multiple community partners are working to provide each child with a winter coat. Other partners have donated small gifts and wrapping paper for Napier's Holiday Store, which gives students an opportunity to shop for someone at home.

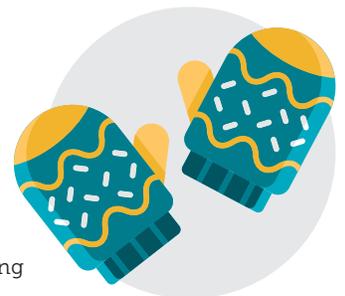
WHITSITT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Thanks to the Nashville Fire Department's Operation Warm Coat, every student will receive a winter coat on Dec. 15. The fire department will distribute the coats and Mayor Barry is invited.

Woodbine United Methodist Church provided every student with hats and gloves. The Church at Woodbine sponsored school spirit t-shirts for every student and staff member.

The nonprofit "Starts with Soap" chapter at Lipscomb University held a supply drive for teachers and students.

The Creative Artists Agency is sponsoring several families over the holidays.



HANDS-ON LEADERSHIP



Dr. Damon Cathey

Dr. Damon Cathey, a recently promoted executive lead principal, believes a sense of calling drives people to work in education. He found his own calling while spending his free hours volunteering at an inner-city school when he first started a career in architecture. After years immersed in that school on a part-time basis, he knew he had to return to school to pursue a career in education in order to have a full-time impact.

"I love great stories," said Cathey, "In my job I get to change students' life stories for the best—by giving them the tools they need to be learners for life."

Years later Cathey has many stories to share from his time teaching and leading in schools, with the majority of those years spent at MNPS. Cathey left the district briefly, but has since happily returned. He attributes his draw to MNPS to the employees he sees making a difference even in times of their own hardships.

"The people here have big hearts and want to do the right thing," said Cathey. "Many have been through tough experiences in their own lives and still want to give back to others."

This year, Cathey looks to provide equitable support to his 12 principals. Whether they are new to MNPS, new to their career, or an experienced principal—he tunes into the diversified supports they require. To achieve this, he visits his schools seven to eight times a week. He knows that immersing himself in each school's culture will allow him to lend deep-seated guidance. Cathey attributes his success to being intentional with resources and instruction, while reminding his staff that improvements come not from an "I" but a "we" mentality. When he is not at work, he tends to his animals, a group that includes a dog, a cat, donkeys and 17 chickens.

Dr. Joseph's column continued from page 1

When we return from the holiday, I want you to amplify your voices. Join us in our efforts to raise expectations and achievement for our students. Your work in our schools, our offices, and our communities matter. Join your colleagues and me to form a powerful coalition that will be relentless and strategic in building a better future for our children.

Below is a video by Clint Smith. It reminds us of the power we have when we amplify our voices.

Enjoy your holiday and I look forward to continuing to support you in the coming months.

<http://bit.ly/1lnkSzc>

EMPLOYEE SELF SERVICE (ESS) INSTRUCTIONS



Last week, we announced the transition to electronic paystubs starting Jan. 13. As a result, it is important that all employees set up their Employee Self Service (ESS) portals as soon as possible. The ESS portal is available to all MNPS personnel and gives you immediate access to view and update personal information.

On the first-time login to ESS (www.ess.Nashville.gov), you will use a unique temporary password to access the portal. After the first log in, you MUST set up a permanent password and security questions.

FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW TO LOGIN TO ESS FOR THE FIRST TIME:

GETTING STARTED

- Go to ESS.Nashville.gov to get started. You will need your employee number to log in.

USER ID

- First letter of your first name and first letter of your last name, followed by the last four digits of your employee number. (Example: John Doe's employee number is 123456. His User ID is JD3456.)

PASSWORD (TEMPORARY ON YOUR FIRST LOGIN)

- The temporary password is TMP# + last four digits of your social security number. Once you have successfully logged in, you will be prompted to change your password to something that is unique to you. (Example: John Doe's Social Security Number is 123-45-6789. His temporary password is TMP#6789.)

CHANGE PASSWORD

- Once in your ESS, locate the Password Management link located in the Helpful Links section on the right side of the screen. This takes you to the Password Management website. Sign into this website, using your temporary login information, and then follow the instructions to create your permanent credentials.



QUESTIONS?

- For questions about logging into ESS, contact Metro Government's ITS Help Desk at 615-862-4357 or email ITHELPDESK@Nashville.gov. (please note this is not the MNPS Help Desk)
- For questions about the paystub transition: EmployeeResourceCenter@mnps.org or EmployeeCompensation@mnps.org





CALENDAR

DECEMBER 13

Board of Education Meeting
5 p.m.

Central Office Board Room
2601 Bransford Ave, Nashville, TN 37204

DECEMBER 15

Department of Education ESSA Town Hall
5 p.m.

Pearl Cohn High School
904 26th Ave. N, Nashville, TN 37208
Hillary.Knudson@tn.gov

DECEMBER 16

Deadline for CMA Music Teacher of Excellence Application
<http://bit.ly/2ejwoOf>

DECEMBER 19–JANUARY 2

Winter Break (For school based staff)
Central Office closed Dec. 22–26 and Jan. 2

DECEMBER 30

Last paper paystub
(Paystubs can be reviewed electronically at www.ess.nashville.gov)

JANUARY 3

Central Office Retreat
Trevecca University

JANUARY 4

Professional Development Day

JANUARY 4

Family Engagement Summit
8 a.m.–4 p.m.
Lipscomb University

NEWS BRIEFS

Scholastic Book Fair Warehouse Sale

WHEN: Dec. 9-17
Weekday hours: 10 a.m.–7 p.m.
Saturday hours: 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
Closed Sundays

WHERE: 216 Waldron Road
La Vergne, TN 37086

Opportunity to Donate to Neely's Bend Family

A GoFundMe account has been established to help the family of a Neely's Bend kindergarten student who tragically was killed two weeks ago in a fire that also claimed the life of his little sister and father. Anyone who would like to contribute can do so at <http://bit.ly/2hj7kni>. Donations are also accepted at the Fire Halls in Madison (Station 31 on Madison Street and Station 38 on Larkin Springs Road) as well as at Neely's Bend Elementary School.

Opportunity NOW

Employer recruitment for Opportunity NOW, the Mayor's initiative to provide meaningful, paid summer employment and internships for youth aged 14 to 24, is in full swing. There are many ways to engage. Visit Nashville.gov for more information on how you can help. The portal for youth sign-ups will open in early 2017.

2015-16 LOE Scores Now Available in TNCompass

As of Friday, Dec. 2, finalized 2015-16 Level of Effectiveness (LOE) scores are available in TNCompass. Where applicable, this includes individual and school/district-wide TVAAS scores. Please review these scores in TNCompass.

Tuition-Free Summer Programs

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is offering tuition-free summer programs for educators. Participants will receive stipends to help cover travel and living expenses. Programs are one or five week study opportunities focusing on topics, texts and questions in the humanities. The application deadline is March 1, 2017. Learn more at www.neh.gov.

Video Contest for MLK Day

High school students can enter to win a chance to be featured in Nashville's MLK Day Youth Rally on Jan. 16, 2017. The Judge's Choice winner will also be featured at Vanderbilt University's MLK Day keynote event.

HOW TO ENTER:

Students produce a Spoken Word video about how they create social change, upload it to YouTube and fill out the form found at mlkdaynashville.com.

DEADLINE: Jan. 5, 2017

STRATEGIC PLAN INPUT REMINDER

Dr. Joseph and the Board of Education are working to build a foundation for the future of our schools, starting with a strategic plan that will ensure the community, families, and employees are working towards the same goal – a world class education for every student in the district.

You play an important role in this process. Your involvement and feedback will help create and implement a strategic plan that will guide Metro Schools for the foreseeable future. As parts of the plan are drafted, we will continue to share updates and you will have the opportunity to give your input at every step of the planning process.



STAY ENGAGED WITH THE STRATEGIC PROCESS PLANNING PERIOD BY VISITING MNPSDIRECTOR.ORG AND JOIN THE CONVERSATION WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

[FACEBOOK.COM/METROSCHOOLS](https://www.facebook.com/METROSCHOOLS)
 [#MNPS100](https://twitter.com/METROSCHOOLS)



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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.

