

Forward **FOCUS**

A News Bulletin for Employees of Metro Nashville Public Schools

IN THIS ISSUE: AWARD-WINNING LEAD PSYCHOLOGIST • PENCIL SUPPORTS MNPS • IMPORTANT PAY STUB CHANGE



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Shawn Joseph

Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. Who looks outside dreams. Who looks inside awakens. – Carl Jung

The board of education has drafted a new mission statement, vision statement, and set of core values for our school system. This is an important step for us as we work to be clear about our work over the years to come.

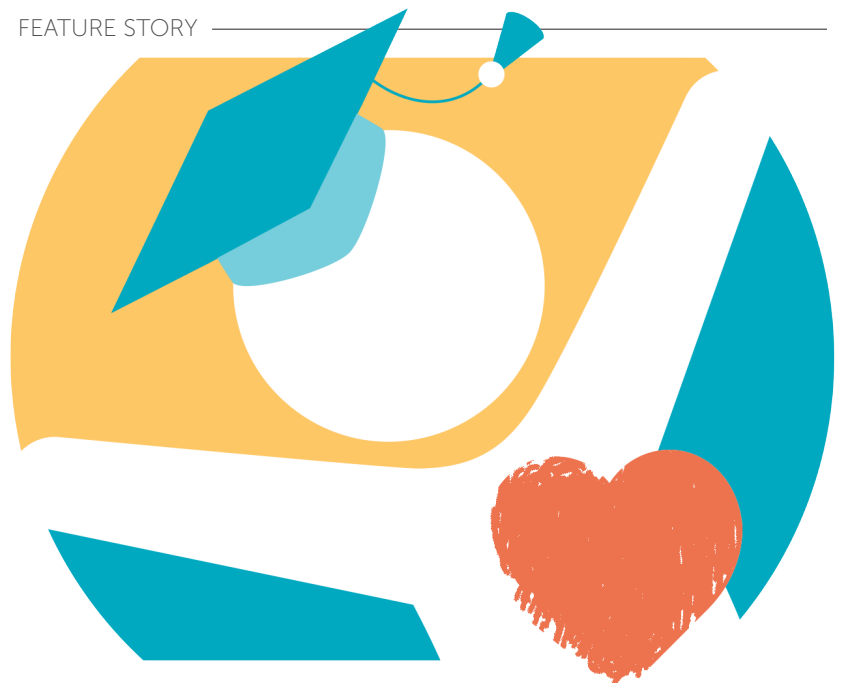
MISSION | We provide a world-class public education to every student, every day. We do this by: developing a culture that strives for excellence for all students; offering rich curriculum with enrichment opportunities for all students; using data to improve performance; delivering high-quality professional development and support for all employees; guaranteeing consistency in, and quality of, resources for all schools; and respecting and responding to the concerns of students and families.

VISION | Metro Nashville Public Schools is the fastest-improving urban school system in America, ensuring that every student is prepared for success in college, career and life – and that every school is a great school.

Does this resonate with you? What do you think needs to be added or excluded? We want to hear from you. If we are going to exceed great expectations, you will need to be actively involved. If you have not done so, please take a minute to give us some feedback. Together, we will create a great future for our school district.

www.mnpsdirector.org

FEATURE STORY



CREATING A STRATEGY FOR METRO SCHOOLS' FUTURE

Share your thoughts on our mission, vision and values

Throughout the last 100 days, Dr. Joseph, the transition team and the Board of Education have spent countless hours analyzing the immediate and long-term needs of Metro Nashville Public Schools. Together, they have worked to build a foundation for the future of Metro Schools, which will start with a strategic plan designed to ensure the community, families, and every employee of MNPS is working towards the same goal – a world-class public education for every student every day.

The prevailing theme from these first few months has been the value of community and staff input. The Listen and Learn sessions, Voice sessions and school visits have proven that Dr. Joseph and his team are committed to listening to your concerns and hopes for the future of Metro Nashville Public Schools.

That's why you will play an important role in the strategic planning process. Dr. Joseph, the Board of Education

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and district leadership wants your input on key elements of the strategic plan, starting with a new vision, mission and core values statements for the district.

Over the last four months, the Board of Education has worked collaboratively with Dr. Joseph and other members of the administration to draft an ambitious new vision, mission, and core value statements.

Through Dec. 9, all employees are encouraged to review the mission, vision and core values and provide their feedback using the survey link

published below. Your feedback will be reviewed and each statement will be revised based on common trends in the feedback. Once revised, the Board will vote to formally adopt these visionary statements on Tuesday, Dec. 13. Throughout the entire strategic plan process, we will continue to share strategies to implement the new mission and vision and you will have the opportunity to give input at every step of the planning process.

TAKE THE SURVEY HERE:
<http://svy.mk/2fLg1dP>



Dr. Joseph greets students at a school visit during his first 100 days.

GUIDING STATEMENTS

What are mission, vision and core values? It's important to understand the purpose of each one as you review the content and provide your feedback. An organization's mission is a high level statement briefly outlining its purpose and function — what we do. The vision conveys where we want to be in the future and is intended to be aspirational. Our core values drive and focus our collective commitments.

MISSION

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We do this by: developing a culture that strives for excellence for all students; offering rich curriculum with enrichment opportunities for all students; using data to improve performance; delivering high-quality professional development and support for all employees; guaranteeing consistency in, and quality of, resources for all schools; and respecting and responding to the concerns of students and families.

VISION

Metro Nashville Public Schools is the fastest-improving urban school system in America, ensuring that every student is prepared for success in college, career and life — and that every school is a great school.

CORE VALUES

Equity | We believe public education exists to ensure equal access and opportunities for all students from early childhood through graduation.

Excellence | We believe all students benefit from rigorous instruction and high expectations in the classroom.

Relevance | We believe students learn best when they are inspired by real-world challenges that promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Talent | We believe a robust teacher and leadership recruitment pipeline and effective teacher and leader retention efforts are essential.

Literacy | We believe what research shows: A child who can read at or above grade-level by third grade is more likely to graduate and succeed in life.

Whole Child | We believe a well-rounded education means focusing on social and emotional learning, providing opportunities for mental and physical nourishment, and cultivating a safe and caring environment for all students.

Diversity | We believe students from different ethnic, religious, language, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds learn from, and inspire, each other.

Individualized Learning | We believe in meeting each child at the point of need and maximizing individual limitless potential.

Innovation | We believe teaching and learning is enhanced through creative thinking in areas such as the arts as well as science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Collaboration | We believe our partnerships with parents and other stakeholders will lead to better outcomes for all of our students and benefit the broader Nashville community.



Cindy Minnis, Lead School Psychologist

MINNIS SETS THE GOLD STANDARD

In 1997 Cindy Minnis started as an intern with Metro Schools. Almost 20 years later she is an award-winning lead school psychologist still sharing her talents with MNPS. This year she was presented with the Beth Stokes Best Practices Memorial Award, an honor given by the TN Association of School Psychologists.

Minnis is known for her implementation of preventive, data-driven practices. She pioneered Hillwood High School's positive behavior support system. This system develops staff into the best preventative school psychologists they can be with the use of data and trends. After Hillwood, Minnis took the model to other schools including MNPS' Murrell School.

"Cindy quickly showed us how much more we could do, and increased our positive interactions with our students, while decreasing their inappropriate behavior," said Susan Siegel, the principal of Murrell. "We are much more data-driven because of her work with us."

As a lead psychologist, she shares her methods district-wide and works to develop leaders at the school level who can then implement programs with intention and expertise. Her favorite part is seeing each school collaborating to support student's mental health- not just counselors.

"I want everyone at schools to think, 'what can we do to be more proactive to prevent behavior problems instead of reacting to them?'" said Minnis.

She attributes her success and love of her job to her coworkers and the support they have shown her over the years. Although she shares the spotlight with her department, it seems Minnis' work is already a guiding light for others.

"Mrs. Minnis not only provides exemplary services for her students, she is the model of professionalism for others to follow," said Tony Majors, the executive officer of Student Support Services. "She is the gold standard for what a school psychologist should be."

PENCIL PROVIDES INVALUABLE SUPPORT TO MNPS

MNPS is the second largest employer in Nashville, but with more than 86,000 students and such a large task at hand- giving those students a world class public education- we cannot do it alone. Community partnerships are invaluable to our district and we are lucky enough to have many helping hands to support our students and staff. PENCIL is one of our partners that has had an immeasurable impact on MNPS since 1982.



PENCIL connects business and community partners with schools to support instruction.

PENCIL supports MNPS by recruiting businesses, communities of faith and universities to partner with MNPS to bring volunteers into the schools to engage with students and impact their academic achievement. PENCIL manages these partnerships on an on-going basis to assure the relationships are strong and link to each school's strategic plan. PENCIL also runs a free teacher supply store, which provides donated supplies to teachers and students.

"Maplewood is grateful for the community partnerships, resources and services provided through PENCIL," said Dr. Keely Jones-Mason, principal of Maplewood High School. "The supports provided to meet the needs of our students and families are exceptional!"

PENCIL helps create and sustain a vital link between the private sector and public education. Today, more than 800 PENCIL partners are involved

in our schools and that number continues to grow. Partners engage in a number of ways including as Academy PENCIL Partners, as Reading Partners, as donors and volunteers at the LP PENCIL Box, as mentors in NAZA (Nashville After Zone Alliance) and PACE (PENCIL Academic & Career Enrichment) programs and as support for MNPS Family Resource Centers. (Learn more about each program at www.PENCILforSchools.org) Last year, community investment of time and resources totaled more than \$3.6 million.

"PENCIL provides essential support in the process of identifying, maintaining, and sustaining business partnerships within the school system," said Brad Meyers a Hunters Lane High School academy coach. "Without PENCIL, many of these partnerships would not be possible."

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

NOVEMBER 29, 2016

- reviewed a number of contracts related to school renovations and awarded seven purchases and contracts to various vendors.
- appointed eight members to serve on the Collaborative Conferencing management panel alongside representatives from the professional organizations that met a 15% threshold.
- adopted three changes to the Director's evaluation process, including two policies and one methodology for the January 2017 director evaluation.
- adopted a resolution in opposition to use the TCAP Data for teacher evaluations and student grades for the 2016-2017 school year.



CALENDAR

DECEMBER 8

New Teacher Academy Fall Meet Up
5–7 p.m.

The Martin Center

DECEMBER 12

Trevecca Grad Degree Information Session
6 p.m.

*Quick Lecture Hall in the Waggoner Library
Trevecca University
333 Murfreesboro Rd., Nashville, TN 37210*

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 pay stub (moving to electronic)

JANUARY 4

Professional Development Day



**METRO NASHVILLE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
Exceeding Great Expectations

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.



NEWS BRIEFS

Paper Pay Stubs Will Be Eliminated Jan. 2017

New year, new changes! Effective with the Jan. 13, 2017, paycheck, MNPS employees will no longer receive paper pay stubs. The last paper pay stub will be distributed on Dec. 30. Metro Government moved to this paperless method two years ago and most organizations have already implemented a digital paystub because of the efficiency of the electronic method. Eliminating paper paystubs will save employee time and approximately \$60,000 in yearly printing and distribution costs.

The electronic version of your pay stub can be accessed using the Employee Self Service Portal (ESS) at www.ESS.Nashville.gov. All pay-related information currently found on your paper pay stub will be listed on the digital pay stub located in the ESS. You can also access additional information, update personal information, cancel direct deposits and complete other actions using the ESS. Do not wait until Dec. 30, it is important that you set up your ESS now so you will be ready for the change. Additional instructions will be available in the next Forward Focus.

Employee Discount for Monster Jam

Discounts are available for MNPS employees for the upcoming Monster Jam Show at the Bridgestone Arena. To purchase tickets call (866) 248-8740 and choose option 1. Email JJohnson@feldinc.com with questions.

WHEN: Jan. 7–8

WHERE: Bridgestone Arena
501 Broadway
Nashville, TN 37203

Family Engagement Summit Speakers Announced

Less than 100 seats are left for the MNPS Family Engagement Summit. A long with differentiated workshops and group planning time, Dr. Candice McQueen, Mayor Barry, and our District Leadership will be coming to share words with the participants. Register here: <https://bit.ly/2dPgnhq>

WHEN: Jan. 4
8 a.m.–4 p.m.

WHERE: Lipscomb University

Free Materials for Teachers Available

Modern Woodmen of America sponsors a Youth Education Program that offers free materials educating students in ecology, civics, financial literacy, health and wellness, and communications.

If you are interested, email Terrell.Perry@mwarep.org for a product guide. Teachers can order

whatever amount they need of the offered materials. The orders will be sent directly to the school at no cost.

Medical ID Cards Coming Soon

All enrollees in the Certificated Employee Health Plan can expect to receive a new Cigna ID card in the mail before year-end. If you haven't received your card by January 1, call 1-800-Cigna24 (1-800-244-6224) to request one.

For this reason and to ensure you always receive important information from MNPS about your benefits, keep your address, email and phone number up to date. You can make changes at ESS.Nashville.gov. You'll need your employee number to log in. Contact the ITS Help Desk at 615-862-4357 if you need help.

Provide Feedback on Vision, Mission and Core Value Statements

Throughout the last 100 days, Dr. Joseph, the transition team, and the Board of Education have analyzed the immediate and long-term needs of MNPS. Together, they have worked to build a foundation for the future of our schools, starting with vision, mission and core value statements that will guide the strategic plan. You can review the draft statements and tell us what you think of them by taking an online survey available at MNPSDirector.org. As an MNPS employee, we strongly encourage you to take this survey. Your feedback is important in the strategic planning process.