



# Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

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## February 1, 2008

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### **Small Learning Communities at MNPS**

In the fall of 2008, MNPS will take the next big step in a district wide educational reform movement known as Small Learning Communities (SLC). SLCs are simply this: a restructuring of the student body and teaching staff that will create smaller learning environments enabling students and teachers to forge closer relationships and create personalized learning environments. SLCs will provide students with more learning choices and therefore more opportunities to succeed in life.

The number one focus of Small Learning Communities is the student. In traditional high schools, students choose either an academic path or a technical path toward graduation. SLCs combine the two avenues providing more opportunity than ever for students. Small Learning Communities will maintain the same academic curriculum currently taught in MNPS, while providing students an opportunity to learn specific workplace skills in the context of a particular career, chosen by the student. Students will also gain practical experience through internships with local businesses.

Small Learning Communities are designed to prepare students for whatever life may bring them after high school, either college or career. Students will have a strong academic background, career skills and practical work experience. SLCs will equip students with an arsenal of tools to ensure their success in the global community.

### **2008-2009 Budget Work Continues**

This week, the Metro Nashville Board of Education had its first look at a draft budget for the 2008-2009 year. The budget preparation process began late last year when Board members submitted budget priorities to MNPS Administration. At the same time, MNPS administrators met with staff to review needs and challenges. Over a period of approximately two months, MNPS cabinet members met 16 times to work on the draft budget that was presented to the Board Jan. 29.

The Board Finance Committee will meet Feb. 5 at noon to begin discussions about the budget draft. A week later, Feb. 12, there will be a Board meeting (4 p.m.) and public hearing (6-7:30 p.m.) on the draft proposal. After that, there may be additional meetings to discuss changes before the budget is presented to Mayor Dean. Following Mayor Dean's review, the budget is reviewed and voted on by the full Metro Council.

The budget draft is available for review at [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org). Because the process begins early, MNPS does not yet have information that may affect the budget. These variables include mandatory teacher raises mandated by the state and projected revenues from different sources.

### **Dr. June Keel to Appear on More at Midday**

Set your recorders. Tuesday, Feb. 5 Dr. June Keel, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, will appear on Channel 4 News during More at Midday. Dr. Keel will be discussing MNPS's current need for qualified, inspirational teachers. She will be appearing in a live segment between 12:30 and 1 p.m.

### **National School Counseling Week**

This coming week, Feb. 4-8, the country will celebrate National School Counseling Week. The theme for 2008 National School Counseling Week is "School Counselors: Creating Pathways to Success." During the week, the nation, and MNPS, will turn its attention to the unique contributions of professional school counselors, highlighting the tremendous impact counselors have in helping students achieve success in school and plan for a career. On behalf of MNPS, thank you to all of our wonderful counselors.

### **International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme Seminar**

Tuesday, Feb. 5 at 6:30 p.m., parents, students, educators, and community leaders are encouraged to attend a special seminar explaining the IB program. The evening will be lead by Rick Arrington, IB Recruitment Coordinator from the University of Tulsa. Topics of discussion include: who should enroll in IB, how will colleges and universities view IB Diploma candidates, what are the benefits of an IB Diploma, does an IB Diploma offset weak test scores and lower GPA's, and how might teachers and parents support IB Diploma candidates in the higher education admissions process. The meeting will conclude at 8 p.m.

### **Spelling Bee Champs headed to the County Competition**

Congratulations to Judson Rogers, J.T. Moore Middle, and Andriana Johnson, Thomas Edison Elementary, for winning 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Metro-Kathryn C. Mitchell Spelling Bee for MNPS 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The students' wins earned them a spot in the Davidson County Spelling Bee. Judson, the first place winner, received a plaque, trophy and a \$500 check. Andriana, the runner-up, received a plaque, trophy and a \$250 check.

The next stop for both students is the Davidson County Spelling Bee, to be conducted Feb. 12 at the Towers Annex at Trevecca University.

### **Three MNPS Students' Artwork Displayed on Nashville Billboards**

Congratulations to three MNPS students who received first prize awards in the CBS Outdoors "Celebrate Art in Schools" second annual contest. Dianne Bounnman, Margaret Allen Middle, is

the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade winner; Jay Upshaw, East Literature Magnet Middle, is the 7<sup>th</sup> grade winner; and Preston Vienneau, West End Middle, is the 8<sup>th</sup> grade winner.

The three students each received a certificate and a backpack filled with prizes for their beautifully created cityscapes of Nashville. Their award winning artwork will also be displayed on billboards around the Nashville area. The billboards will be located at Lebanon Pike, just west of Spence Lane; Gallatin Pike, just north of Briley Parkway; and White Bridge Road, just south of Charlotte Pike.

### **MNPS Students win Scholastic Arts Competition at Cheekwood**

Three students from I. T. Creswell Arts Magnet Middle School placed in the Scholastic Arts Competition at Cheekwood. Jasmine Offei-Nkansah and Breana Jolly, 8<sup>th</sup> graders, received the Silver Key Painting Award and Brandon Brown, 8<sup>th</sup> grader, received the Gold Key Painting award. Brandon's painting will also be submitted in the national competition this spring in New York. The students are currently taught by Carrie Bryant, I.T Creswell Visual Arts teacher.

### **Glenclyff High 4-H Success**

Congratulations to Merjema Malovic of Glenclyff High School for placing first in the Davidson County 4-H Public Speaking Contest on Saturday, Jan. 19. Ms. Malovic will now compete in the regional competition in Murfreesboro, TN on Feb. 2.

Casey Jones of Glenclyff High is vying to participate in 4-H State Congress held in Nashville. If selected to participate, Ms. Jones will conduct a business session at the State Legislature and receive dinner on the General Jackson. Selections are based on student essays.

Also at Glenclyff, a group of students are preparing to compete in the 4-H LifeSmarts competition. In 2005-2006, Glenclyff High was the only Metro high school to compete, and the team placed third in the state. The students hope to this year win the state title. Good Luck!

### **Student wins \$1,000 for Bordeaux Enhanced Optional Elementary**

Samson Gaynon, a 4th grade student at Bordeaux Elementary, won second place in the city-wide Red River Service Corporation art contest. Gaynon's award-winning artwork earned \$1,000 for Bordeaux's art program.

### **Julia Green Broadening Horizons!**

In celebration of the Chinese New Year, the students at Julia Green are taking learning to a new level. Beginning Wednesday, Feb. 6, they will experience several Chinese New Year traditions such as lantern decorations, traditional food, calligraphy, music and dance, and folktales.

Additionally, several classes will benefit from our diverse group of parents as their students learn about Chinese and Korean celebrations. The activities will take place throughout the days of Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the coming week.

Julia Green students have been learning Mandarin Chinese through MNPS's Chinese language program. Their study has also included Chinese culture and arts this year. In addition to twice-a-week language classes, students were exposed to Chinese art at the Frist Museum in the fall and many social studies units have explored Asia and its people. Chinese is widely thought to be one of the critical languages our country's students need to be learning as China becomes a larger

economic and political presence. Studying Chinese culture will further enhance our understanding of the World's most populous country.

### **Family Math Night a Huge Success**

Tuesday, Jan. 22, approximately 80 students and parents enjoyed Family Math Night at Shayne Elementary. Students and their families enjoyed an evening of number games and games involving common household items. The night's theme was Word Problems. Shayne's previous Family Math Nights have covered place value, addition and subtraction, and probability. The school has three more Family Math Nights scheduled for this school year: Feb. 19, Geometry Night; March 25, Measurement and Fractions Night; and April 22, Time and Money. All events are from 6:30-7:30 p.m. and include activities for Shayne students grades K-2 and 3-4.

### **East Literature Student Elected to Mayor's Task Force**

Tyler Samuel, a sophomore at East Literature Magnet School, has been selected to serve on the Mayor's Task Force on Special Education. Tyler will be the student representative for all MNPS students with disabilities. Tyler is also a member of the Met Singers Honors Choir and was recently accepted into the Governor's School for the Arts. Congratulations, Tyler.

### **Cameron Teacher Publishes Novel**

Congratulations to Cameron Middle School's 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts teacher, Daniel Killman. Mr. Killman recently published his first novel entitled *The ROW and the BOULEVARD*. The fictional novel describes an intriguing story that takes place in our very own Music City.