



Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

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State Releases 2008 Report Card

The annual State Department of Education Report Card for Metro Nashville Public Schools was released Nov. 10, and shows another year of growth in the number of students graduating from high school on time. MNPS shows a graduation rate of 72.6% for the 2007-2008 school year. This is an increase of 2.6 percentage points from the previous school year, and a gain of almost 15 percentage points in the past five years. MNPS also saw some significant gains in key study areas. In grades 3-8, reading and math scores both improved from a C to B. Fifth grade writing jumped a letter grade from a B in 2006-2007 to an A in 2007-2008. Eighth grade writing and 11th grade writing both maintained A averages from the previous year. K-8 science and social studies grades remained the same as in 2007. To view the complete report card, visit the district website at www.mnps.org and click on the Report Card icon in the right column.

Chadwell and Bellshire students receive more than 1,000 books

The Madison Kiwanis Club has collected more than 1,000 books to be divided between Chadwell and Bellshire elementary schools for distribution to students. Members from the Madison Kiwanis have been invited to the Dec. 4 Chadwell PTO meeting to make a presentation to let parents know of their support for both schools.

Hume-Fogg and Hunters Lane receive \$25,000 new digital microscopes

Hume-Fogg Academic and Hunters Lane High Schools received \$12,500 each from First Tennessee Bank to buy two sets of digital microscopes for their anatomy, chemistry and AP biology classes. CEO of First Tennessee Mike Edwards and Middle Market President of First Tennessee Tony Thompson presented checks to Principals Paul Fleming and Susan Kessler to purchase their microscopes. The



digital microscopes will replace the outdated microscopes for the schools. Congratulations Hume-Fogg and Hunters Lane and thank you First Tennessee Bank!

Overton Marching Band performs on the CMA Red Carpet

Overton High School Marching Band performed on the red carpet to kick-off the festivities at the 42nd Country Music Awards Nov. 12. The Overton marching Bobcats led a procession of limos, Chevy Tahoes and Suburbans that delivered artists and celebrities to the CMA Awards Red Carpet.

In addition to performing on the red carpet, Overton Marching Band has received numerous accolades this year including the 2008 Contest of Champions and the 2008 State Championship titles.

Cornerstone Church helps Chadwell Elementary School

The God Seekers Bible class at Cornerstone Church has been making a difference at Chadwell Elementary School. During the months of October and November, class members have been planting, digging, mulching, trimming, and painting at the school. They have replanted plants, cut dead limbs, trimmed hedges, power washed the brick and painted new tiger paw tracks on the front doors. They also went shopping and purchased clothing (shirts, pants, and socks) for the school's Clothing Closet that supplies students in need. Thank you, Cornerstone, for the hours of time and support for Chadwell.

MNPS and PENCIL Foundation seventh annual "Principal for a Day"

Principal for a Day was held at Metro schools Wednesday, Nov. 12. Community figures, businesses and organizations took on new roles as principal, learned more about public education and interacted with students at the school. The goal of Principal for a Day is to allow community leaders from local businesses and other organizations to continue their support of and involvement in the schools and the district throughout the school year. Acting principals finished the day with a luncheon held at the Martin Development Center sponsored by The Bank of Nashville.

Family Science Night at Cane Ridge High School

Vanderbilt Center for Science Outreach hosted Family Science Night at Cane Ridge High School, Nov. 11, for Antioch and Cane Ridge clusters' middle schools and all MNPS science teachers.

The Family Science Night offers more than 40 hands-on science activities for students and their families. Students and parents worked together conducting simple, inquiry-based, age appropriate science activities. The evening was designed to stimulate and build interest in science among middle students while involving the parents in the process. The activities were presented by science undergraduate, graduate and post doctoral fellows from several local universities and colleges including Vanderbilt University, Meharry Medical College, Tennessee State University, Fisk University and Austin Peay University.

School Board Meeting recognizes four outstanding MNPS students

Nov. 11, members of the school board congratulated and recognized four MNPS students on recent outstanding accomplishments.



Aaron Broder, a 10th grader at Martin Luther King Jr. Academic Magnet, is a Scholastic News Kid Reporter. He has covered many campaign events and met many people including John Edwards, Mitt Romney, Mike Huckabee, Bill Richardson, Ron Paul and Al Gore. Most recently, Aaron

reported live from the second Presidential debate held at Belmont University.

Three seniors recently placed as national semifinalists in the 2008 Siemens Competition, which rewards exceptional achievement in science, math and technology.



Hana Ekrou, a student at Nashville School of the Arts and enrolled at Vanderbilt School for Math and Science, is working in the laboratory of Louise Rollins-Smith in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology. Ekrou's research paper is "Antimicrobial Peptides that inhibit HIV and protect Beneficial Lactobacilli."



Elizabeth Wei, a student at Hume-Fogg and enrolled at Vanderbilt School for Math and Science, is working in the laboratory of Chris Williams in



Gastroenterology. Wei's research paper is "Creating an inducible expression system where the role of MTGB in colorectal cancer can be better understood."

Charlie Xie, a student at Martin Luther King Jr. Academic Magnet, produced a research paper on the "Identification of the Molecular Targets Affecting the Action of Amphetamine in the Dopamine Pathway."

Congratulations students and keep up the good work!

Two MNPS football players named finalists for Mr. Football

Hillsboro football player Eric Gordon and Maplewood football player Romario Cathey are among the 23 high school football players named finalists for the 2008 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards. Gordon is a Back finalist and Cathey is a Lineman finalist. The winners will be announced at a luncheon scheduled for Dec. 1 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Murfreesboro.

Mayor Karl Dean Tours Glenview



Thursday, Nov. 6, Mayor Karl Dean toured Glenview Elementary School. Mayor Dean ate lunch and conversed with students in the cafeteria. He also visited Glenview's new VH1 piano lab, where music is incorporated into the curriculum of the school, and watched as student performed. Glenview was excited to host Mayor Dean and look forward to many more community members visiting the school.

Maplewood High School plans groundbreaking for \$11 million renovation

Maplewood High School will break ground for its \$11 million renovation Monday, Nov. 17, at 1:45 p.m. The renovation will include a new gymnasium, six new classrooms, a lecture hall and an enclosed breezeway connecting two buildings.

Una Elementary is getting parents involved with Monthly Family Fun Nights

Una Elementary hosted a Family Fun Night for all first grade students and their families. The theme for the night was "Bringing Books to Life." First grade teachers presented a variety of hands-on activities for parents and students to become actively engaged in reading at home. Participants were

given the opportunity to read with their child and take Accelerated Reader (AR) tests in Una's new computer lab. A Una parent donated dinner for the evening and every family was given a new book. Families were provided childcare for younger siblings by the Una PTO. Una is looking forward to its next event.

Vanderbilt, Metro Nashville Public Schools, community agencies partner to win \$3.4 million

Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of education and human development, in partnership with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools and other community agencies, has won a three-year, \$3.4 million federal grant to enhance language and literacy skills in pre-kindergarten classrooms. The project is one of just 31 funded nationally by the U.S. Department of Education through its Early Reading First grant program. A second Tennessee project, centered in Chattanooga / Hamilton County, was also funded.

The Nashville project, Enhanced Language and Literacy Success, will provide professional development, literacy coaches, classroom materials and other programmatic supports for pre-k teachers and their students. Classroom implementation will begin in January 2009. Over three years, the project will serve approximately 700 children enrolled in 13 pre-k classrooms in seven Metropolitan Nashville elementary schools: Alex Green Elementary, Cumberland Elementary, Glenn Enhanced Option, Glenview Elementary, Kirkpatrick Elementary, Stratton Elementary and Warner Elementary. The Vanderbilt-based project team will collaborate with pre-k teachers and principals in these schools, and Tywana Peoples, MNPS pre-k coordinator, to implement the program.

Croft Middle and Una Elementary students among 2009 Cat Calendar Contest Winners

Two students from Croft Middle School and a Una Elementary School student's artwork will be part of the 2009 Baker & Taylor Cat Calendar. Baker and Taylor is a national distributor of books to libraries and retail outlets. This year's theme for the calendar is "Baker and Taylor On Vacation."

Calendars will be available in late November. To view the students' pictures for Baker and Taylor, click on this link http://www.btol.com/pub_details.cfm?id=390. Sasha B. and Loreley F., both Croft students, and Minuet T. at Una, will receive 20 copies of the calendar to share with family and friends. In addition, the winning artists' school or public library will receive a \$500 credit for its Baker & Taylor account. Congratulations to the students at Croft and Una!

Make 1000 Friends of Metro Schools before the end of the year

Friends of Metro Schools is a coalition of community residents and organizations working to make education a top priority during the state and local budget process. This local organization is trying to reach a goal of 1,000 people signed up by the end of the year. To help, download a sign-up sheet <http://www.stand.org/page.redir?target=http%3a%2f%2fwww.stand.org%2fDocument.Doc%3fid%3d1389&srcid=662&erid=0> and get everyone you know to become a Friend. Please fax sheets to 254-3766 or mail to 209 10th Avenue South, Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37203. Members receive regular updates and information about opportunities to influence the school budget.

Alex Green Elementary hosts Family Literacy Celebration

Alex Green Elementary will host a Family Literacy Celebration Saturday, Nov. 15, from 8:45 -11 a.m. Parents will have an opportunity to attend two interactive 30 minute sessions with their children to learn strategies on how to increase literacy in the home.

Several Alex Green teachers are donating their time and expertise to host a session for the parents. Also, several community stake-holders are supporting this event, including Bringing Books To Life

with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Library; Knowledge Tree Mortgage & Joe Spicer Allstate Insurance, who have each donated 300 books from Scholastic; Bordeaux Public Library will be present to sign parents up for library cards; Senator Thelma Harper has agreed to come and support the event; Tennessee Voices for Children will hand out information about available programs/resources; Parent-Teacher Store (Rivergate), O'Charley's, and Barnes & Noble Bookstore (Opry Mills) have donated door prizes. For more information, please contact Tanisha Wesby at 615- 859-8950 ext. 1012.

MNPS responds to recent media reports on principal salaries and ELL staffing

This past week, MNPS has been the focus of two troubling stories from a local news station—one targeting the district's compensation of principals and a second questioning our hiring practices for ELL teachers. There is some important information MNPS would like to share regarding these two topics.

The report regarding principal pay failed to look at three key areas. First, MNPS pays teachers, principals and all other staff based on an approved salary scale according to the position held, education earned and years of service. This is typical of other school districts and government in general. While pay or raises are not based on performance, employees are evaluated and can be reassigned or terminated if performance does not meet expectations. Next, No Child Left Behind sets forth multiple benchmarks and requires that all of them be met for a school or district to be in good standing. So, while a school may not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), it does not necessarily mean the school did not show improvement. Finally, there was no mention of the multiple factors that impact student test scores that cannot be solved by one person, such as challenges tied to high percentages of students who are English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged or special education.

It is important to note that the staff and administration of Metro Nashville Public Schools know that all students can learn and succeed and it is the goal of this district to ensure that occurs. Nothing written here should be construed as an excuse for not meeting federal benchmarks. We have been working and will continue to work to look at the data and put in place the programs, interventions and support our students need to overcome any challenge they may bring into the classroom, or encounter while at school, to meet their fullest potential. Through earlier recruitment efforts, we are seeking the most talented teachers for our classrooms. Through professional development, we are preparing all of our staff to better meet the needs of students. We are benefiting from the assistance of the State Department of Education and consultants hired by the state and are seeking and implementing best practices that have been successful in other urban districts.

The second report stated that MNPS employs a high number of ELL teachers who are not highly qualified and inferred that test scores of our ELL students are negatively impacted as a result. As for the statements alleged in the report, had the reporter interviewed MNPS staff, he would have learned that 95% of the ELL teachers listed as teaching on waivers last year were considered highly qualified until being moved into a self-contained ELL classroom and that successfully completing six courses or passing the ELL Praxis exam are the requirements needed for them to become highly qualified. MNPS provides tuition assistance to these teachers for them to complete the requirements.

Our ELL population continues to grow dramatically. MNPS currently serves 26% of the total ELL student population in the state. It is difficult to find enough ELL teachers with the highly qualified designation to meet our needs. For this reason, we do provide a one-time bonus of \$4,000 for highly qualified ELL teachers who come to MNPS, as well as the tuition assistance mentioned above for those teachers who are on waivers.

It is difficult for students who are still learning English to take a test entirely in English; however, we have seen progress. In the past year, we have expanded our ELL Center and the resources it provides to students and their families, opened the International Newcomers Academy for students who need an opportunity to transition to an American classroom, and hired additional teachers and translators to provide the support and instruction necessary for success. We have expanded our outreach efforts to our non-English speaking parents and community to assist them in gathering the information they need to access the resources and programs that will benefit their children.

Other Upcoming Events

- Nov. 15 Family Literacy Celebration, 8:30 a.m.
- Nov. 17 Maplewood High School groundbreaking ceremony, 1:45 p.m.
McGavock Strings Concert, 7 p.m.
Thomas Edison Elementary School 1st Grade program, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 18 Tusculum Elementary School Troubadours Publix Holiday Festival, 4 p.m.
Meigs Magnet 5th and 6th grade General Music and String Concert, 6 p.m.
- Nov. 20 Hume-Fogg Jazz Concert, 7 p.m.
Tom Joy Elementary School 2nd grade Program, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 24-28 MNPS Fall Break



To request an accommodation, please contact your building principal or department head. (Interpreters for the deaf or hard of hearing must be requested forty-eight [48] hours prior to the event.) Questions or concerns may be referred to the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Customer Service Center, 615/259-4636.

Si usted necesita información adicional o si usted tiene alguna pregunta, por favor llame o contacte al director de su escuela.

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