



ALIGNMENT[®] NASHVILLE ACTION REPORTS

Dear friend of public education,

We are proud to share our 24-25 Action Reports, which provide a detailed look at the goals, activities, and measurable outcomes of Alignment Nashville's Collaborative Initiatives and special projects, highlighting how we align community resources to support student success. While these reports capture data and progress, they can't fully reflect the powerful, intangible outcomes—like strengthened relationships, improved communication, and increased trust—that make this collaborative work possible and sustainable.

I want to begin with a heartfelt thank you to Kent Oliver, who has served with dedication and vision as Chair of the Alignment Nashville Board of Directors. His leadership has been instrumental in guiding our work, and we are deeply grateful for his service.

This year, we're proud to highlight the launch of ALIGN—a powerful new digital tool developed through the Nashville Technology Council's Hackathon with generous support from HCA Healthcare Foundation. ALIGN will help us more effectively map and mobilize the community resources that support Metro Nashville Public Schools, allowing us to target needs and scale solutions more efficiently than ever before.

We are also grateful to FirstBank and Finn Partners, whose investment in a messaging workshop has helped us clearly and compellingly communicate the impact of our work to new audiences and funders. Their partnership has already begun to yield powerful results.

Finally, we are honored to acknowledge and thank our 2024-25 funders, whose continued investment ensures that Alignment Nashville remains a strong, collaborative backbone for student success:

- Metro Nashville Public Schools
- Metro Nashville Government / Office of the Mayor
- Ingram Charities
- The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
- The Memorial Foundation

We are energized by what lies ahead and thankful to walk this path alongside such a committed and generous community.

With appreciation,

Melissa Jagers, President & CEO

24 25

BY THE NUMBERS

218 individuals engaged
representing **138** organizations
through **8** Collaborative
Initiatives

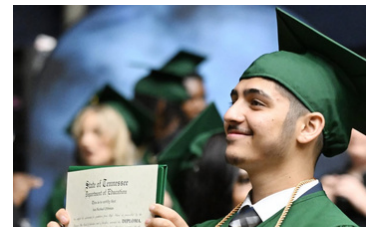
Resources aligned: **\$399,091** to
support MNPS students and
families



Students enjoying Out of School Time
programming



Panel of award winners speaking at
the 2025 Positive Schools Conference



MNPS Class of '25 graduate proudly
shows off his diploma

ACTION REPORT

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ACTION REPORT

ACADEMIES OF NASHVILLE
STEERING COMMITTEE

24
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The Academies of Nashville (AON) Steering Committee convened quarterly throughout the 2024–2025 school year to drive system-wide continuous improvement for career and college readiness in MNPS high schools. The committee focused on amplifying and sharing success stories from the Academies of Nashville and supporting the alignment of career pathways with high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand (H3) careers, student interests, and transferable skills.



Student ambassadors speak and guide tours at Overton High School during the spring 2025 Academies of Nashville Study Visit

ACADEMIES OF NASHVILLE STEERING COMMITTEE

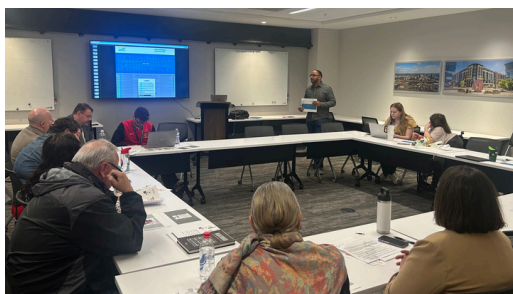
24-25 OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS

- There is a need for consistent training on AON across the district and community, especially for non-AON teachers and new stakeholders.
- The Pathway Evaluation Rubric has potential to improve clarity and equity in program decisions and helps streamline the application and review process.
- Steering Committee members play a vital role in adapting, vetting, and testing tools for implementation across AON schools
- There is potential for the H3 Dashboard showing where all the pathways are to inform decision making but help others better understand the full scope of the different AON Pathways.

Steering Committee outcomes for the 24-25 school year included:

- Updated the AON Professionalism Rubric to align with the Durable Skills Framework and ensure integration across CTE and academic instruction. Durable skills are in high demand across all jobs, regardless of education level, industry, or location. These skills combine how you apply what you know—such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity—with character traits like resilience, a growth mindset, and leadership.
- Collaborated with the Chamber to develop and refine an H3 Pathways Visualization Dashboard for school and partner use.
- Recommended process improvements to MNPS for program modifications and pathway addition application and process.
- Created a Pathway Evaluation Rubric to guide program modifications and ensure alignment with high-wage, high-skill, high-demand (H3) careers and student interest. This can be used to assess the alignment and viability of future pathways that may be added.
- Created a slide deck that was vetted by business partners that can be used to raise awareness about AON to external partners and community members.



**Presentation of the
Career Pathways Interactive Map**



**Steering Committee members review the
draft Pathways Evaluation Rubric**

**ACADEMIES OF NASHVILLE
STEERING COMMITTEE**

**LEADERSHIP &
ROSTER**

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Daniel Phillips (MNPS)
Darryl Curry (Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce)
Alayna Cate (PENCIL)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Robert Robinson (Alignment Nashville)
Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

24-25 ROSTER

Deante Alexander (MNPS)
Lauren Brooks-Gregory, LP (Stansell Electric)
Heather Chalos (Nashville Hub)
Carl Carter (MNPS)
Shohreh Daraei (Ascension St. Thomas)
Jeremiah Davis (MNPS)
Jon Doerge (Deloitte)
Cara Harding (MNPS)
Kelby Garner, MNPS
Anne Henderson (Frist Art Museum)
Ray Holloman (F5 Solutions)
Bruce Jackson (MNPS)
Denise King (MNPS)

Patrica Knight (Hospital
Corporation of America- HCA)
Leesa LeClaire (Greater Nashville
Hospitality Association)
Courtney Morgan (MNPS)
Katie Petrole (The Parthenon)
Robert Rice (Nashville Music City
Center)
Margaret Steele (Nissan)
Evann Vrana-Gerber (Nashville
Area Chamber of Commerce)
Carrie Weir (MNPS)
Tyler Welch (MNPS)

ACTION REPORT

COLLEGE ACCESS & SUCCESS A-TEAM

24
25

The College Access & Success A-Team, established in fall 2023, has dedicated the year to enhancing college access and ensuring the success of students through collaborative efforts and strategic planning.

The team identified three core priorities to guide its 2024–2025 workplan: (1) expanding access and outreach, (2) increasing marketing and awareness, and (3) laying the groundwork for a case management system. Specific strategies included:

- Planning and launching a series of FAFSA workshops to be held from December through July, supported by a targeted media campaign and community-based partnerships
 - Designing outreach efforts that better engaged working families, undocumented students, and rising college freshmen through weekend events, virtual supports, and multilingual materials.
 - Engaging AON student ambassadors to co-develop school-based communications plans around postsecondary transitions, with training provided to high school staff.
- Beginning the development of a Best Practices Guidebook to support collaboration between MNPS schools and community-based organizations, with a focus on role clarity, communication protocols, and shared goal setting.



Photo from the first College Access & Success A-Team meeting of the school year

COLLEGE ACCESS & SUCCESS A-TEAM

**24-25
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- National shifts in federal priorities impacted the local college access landscape.
- The Best Practices Guidebook, developed to support school-community partnerships, emphasized role clarity, shared goals, and onboarding protocols.
- A panel with Overton's Advising Team Identified best practices for College Access partners, highlighting the importance of strong organizational structure, administrative support, and collaboration with community partners.
- MNPS's decision to restructure to better support and align college access efforts was due in part to conversations held in College Access & Success meetings.

National shifts in federal priorities impacted the local college access landscape, as demonstrated by the U.S. Department of Education's decision not to award Round 2 funding for the FAFSA Support Strategy—despite the team's collaborative effort to support a \$300,000 grant proposal with TNCASN, aimed at expanding FAFSA completion through partners like Oasis Center, Persist Nashville, and Martha O'Bryan Center.

College Access & Success outcomes include:

- Strategized a citywide FAFSA workshop series with a goal of 75% completion among attendees, supported by centralized outreach (texts, newsletters, shared calendars) and a \$300,000 federal grant proposal to expand advising via Oasis Center, Persist Nashville, and Martha O'Bryan, with Alignment Nashville leading communications
- Strengthened partnerships by hosting a best practices panel with John Overton High School's College and Career Advising Team to highlight collaborative efforts between the school and community partners to support college and career readiness among high school students
- Developed a best practice guidebook to formalize roles, responsibilities, MOUs, onboarding materials, and a shared vision for consistent school-community collaboration



Snapshots from 2025 MNPS high school graduation ceremonies, courtesy of MNPS Communications

**COLLEGE ACCESS &
SUCCESS A-TEAM**

**LEADERSHIP &
ROSTER**

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Sanjana Ballal-Link (MNPS)
Bob Obrohta (Tennessee College Access & Success Network)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Robert Robinson (Alignment Nashville)
Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

24-25 ROSTER

Sigfredo Amaya (Conexión Américas)
Nekesha Burnette (MNPS- Antioch HS)
Morgan Campey (Martha O'Bryan Center)
Jaclyn Coleman (MNPS- Pearl-Cohn HS)
Melissa Cornejo-Nell (MNPS)
Dr. Megan Cusson-Lark (MNPS)
Brenda Diaz (MNPS- Big Picture HS)
Kevin Edwards (MNPS)
Lee Gray (Oasis Center)
Dr. Joe Gordon (MNPS)
John Paul Gray (MNPS GEAR UP- Gaining Early
Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate
Programs)
Karina Gutierrez-Molina (YMCA)

Laura Herrell (Nashville Area Chamber of
Commerce)
Jackie Herrera (Oasis Center)
Jennifer Hill (Persist Nashville)
Dr. Joseph Kelly (MNPS AVID)
Jozef Lukey (Belmont University Bell Tower
Program)
Lanedria Marshall (MNPS- Maplewood HS)
Laura Moran (Nashville State Community
College)
Sherica Clark Nelms (Martha O'Bryan Center)
Nicole Newman (MNPS- Whites Creek HS)
Benjamin Smith (Southern Word)
Beth Wilson (MNPS- Overton HS)

ACTION REPORT

ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

24
25

The purpose of the English Learners Collaborative (formerly known as the English Learners Advisory Board) is to strengthen the collaboration between the EL office and community partners serving our international families. Community partners have strong connections with families and students, and MNPS aims to leverage that connection to ensure that families know their rights, understand the resources and programs that are offered to them, and what kind of education and support their child is receiving in school. Community partners are also able to share the needs they are seeing in the communities they serve to inform the MNPS EL Office's programming and initiatives.

The primary focus of the 24-25 school year was aligning the Collaborative's efforts with the MNPS EL Department's newly established Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Collaborative prioritized four core goals:

- Fostering shared responsibility for EL education across all levels of MNPS staff
- Ensuring meaningful access to standards-aligned, language-integrated instruction
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment that supports both academic and social-emotional growth
- Deepening family and community engagement

ALIGNMENT NASHVILLE

NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

The goal of this publication is to highlight partner updates and community needs related to Nashville's EL families and their support systems. We are dedicated to meeting the goals of our [Strategic Plan](#) and appreciate your support in this effort.

Thank you for helping make Nashville more welcoming to all who call it home!



Header for the quarterly EL Collaborative
Newsletter, which the collaborative
uses to share community updates with one another

ENGLISH LEARNERS COLLABORATIVE

**24-25
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- Ongoing communication and collaboration between schools and community partners strengthens supports for international families.
- Collaborative members participated in a Vanderbilt University study that underscored the need for stronger coalition-building, candid dialogue, and community-driven solutions to overcome funding gaps, policy misalignment, and service silos.
- The fear and uncertainty of the current political climate is directly linked to increased levels of student absenteeism, even among EL families with lawful status or work authorization.

Throughout the year, the Collaborative structured its meetings to spotlight these goals, sharing updates, identifying challenges, and developing coordinated action steps. Representatives of relevant community initiatives and a Vanderbilt University Assistant Professor were invited to share resources and opportunities for collaboration.

In 2025, the English Learners Collaborative responded to a rapidly changing landscape marked by new immigration-related policies, increased community anxiety, and ongoing uncertainty around state and federal funding. These shifts created both immediate challenges and long-term implications for the organizations supporting English learners and their families.

In response to this crisis, the Collaborative took deliberate action to support its partners and the communities they serve. These efforts included gathering input from members through surveys and facilitated discussions to better understand emerging concerns, identify resource gaps, and uplift community-informed strategies. The Collaborative prioritized building trust, expanding access to essential services, and promoting the well-being of immigrant and refugee families through coordinated planning, shared data, and consistent communication. Collectively, these actions reinforced the Collaborative's role as a central hub for advocacy, strategic alignment, and responsive innovation in support of English learners across Nashville



Snapshots of programming held this year by EL Collaborative member organizations
From L to R: Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, Hispanic Family Foundation,
Nashville International Center for Empowerment

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Vanessa Lazón (MNPS)
Molly Hegwood (MNPS)
Monica Reyna (MNPS)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

24-25 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

American Muslim Advisory Council
Catholic Charities
Conexión Américas
EdTrust
Elmahaba Center
Hispanic Family Foundation
Legacy Mission Village
Mayor's Office—Education
MNPd Family Intervention Program
MNPS
Nashville Public Library
Nations Ministry Center

NICE (Nashville International
Center for Empowerment)
Oasis Center
PENCIL
Planned Parenthood of
Tennessee and North
Mississippi
Rolling Hills Community Church
Siloam Health
Tennessee Immigrant and
Refugee Rights Coalition
Urban Promises Nashville

ACTION REPORT

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS STEERING COMMITTEE

24
25

The Family & Community Partnerships Steering Committee supports the work of the Office of Family & Community Partnerships at MNPS. This team previously mainly supported the work of Community Achieves but expanded in recent years to support all FCP programs to coincide with each of the programs being brought together under the Family and Community Partnerships umbrella. This department comprises 5 teams: Community Achieves, Family Engagement, Extended Learning, Grants & Data, and Partnerships, Impact & Engagement, which support enhancing relationships and partnerships among MNPS, the schools, and community partners.



Steering Committee members collaborate to review newly developed partner toolkit & FAQ

The focus areas for the year were

1. Establish a shared understanding of the newly merged FCP department
2. Co-design and support a framework for cluster-level school partnerships across MNPS
3. Develop resources and provide support for the new District Partner Agreement (DPA) process and system

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS STEERING COMMITTEE

**23-24
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- Cluster-level supports are a new focus of MNPS to ensure that all schools in a cluster have access to needed resources regardless of the supports found in their school building.
- MNPS is launching a new process and system, the District Partner Agreement (DPA) to streamline partnerships for schools and partners while also incorporating additional supports and resources to enhance this experience
- This year, the Steering Committee started off supporting Cluster-Level Support Strategies, but was able to successfully pivot and refocus their attention to support a more pressing priority that arose for the school district in the DPA.

Family & Community Partnerships Steering Committee outcomes for 2024–2025 include:

- Members learned about the new mission and vision of the recently created Office of Family & Community Partnerships within MNPS, expanded team structure (including the new PIE and Grants & Data teams), and cluster-level support as a priority strategy moving forward.
- The Steering Committee created a community-focused partner engagement toolkit and an FAQ developed to support the rollout of MNPS’s new District Partner Agreement (DPA) and CRM to streamline the partnership process. The Steering Committee was able to provide valuable insights to adapt these to ensure they included information that partners needed to hear regarding the DPA and CRM rollout.
- The Steering Committee also provided valuable input on draft messaging and communications strategies for the rollout of MNPS’s new tiered partnership system. Discussions helped refine the language and elevator pitch for clarity, inclusivity, and impact.

Snapshots of Family & Community Partnerships programming in the 24-25 school year



Extended Learning programming at Casa Azafrán



FCP staff assisting with food donation packaging at Second Harvest Food Bank



Resource fair at the 2nd annual College & Career Readiness Summit

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Makeda Watson (MNPS)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Robert Robinson (Alignment Nashville)

Morgan Tubbs (Alignment Nashville)

24-25 ROSTER

Kashonda Babb-Hilliard (MNPS)

Destini Burns (F.I.N.D. Design)

Tiffany Carter (MNPS)

Melissa Cornejo-Nell (MNPS)

Sarah Finney (Family and Children's Service)

Lee Gray (Oasis Center)

Kay Higgs (STARS Nashville)

Dr. Yolanda Jackson (MNPS)

Micah Kimble (Backfield in Motion)

Jami Oakley (Unicycle)

Kawema Orita (Communities in Schools)

Tiffany Patton (Communities in Schools)

Jenny Runyan (United4Hope)

Lauren Scarborough (Community
Resource Center)

Whitney Slovic (MNPS)

Jack Stell (Second Harvest Food Bank)

Tiffany Turner (Soles4Souls)

ACTION REPORT

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME COLLABORATIVE

24
25

The Out of School Time (OST) Collaborative, was formed during the 2022-2023 school year, with a purpose of creating a network of MNPS and community youth service providers operating in the out-of-school time space. The collaborative seeks to enhance the capacity of youth service providers and ensure that all Nashville youth (K-12) have access to high-quality programming.



2025 funders panel

From left to right: Nathan Shulman, Scott Perry (Memorial Foundation), Angela Goddard (Joe C. Davis Foundation), Anna Harutyunyan (Nashville After Zone Alliance), Joseph Gutierrez (Maddox Fund), Erika Burnett (Community Foundation of Middle TN), Shamika Higgins (Metropolitan Action Commission), Hayley Sulfridge (GivingMatters/Community Foundation of Middle TN), Tiffany Carter (MNPS), Robert Robinson

Functioning as a community of practice, the OST Collaborative has set several goals, including: fostering collaboration, addressing service and equity gaps, establishing a vision for OST in Nashville, leveraging partner strengths, and improving overall youth program quality. By convening quarterly, the collaborative aspires to achieve long-term outcomes such as enhancing school and community data sharing, increasing collaboration between MNPS and providers, and improving overall outcomes for youth in Nashville.

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME COLLABORATIVE

**24-25
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- Over 95% of parents were very or somewhat likely to enroll their children in OST programs for 2024–2025.
- The most important factors for parents when considering an OST program were location, transportation, timing, cost, and special needs accommodations.
- Philanthropic funders value programs that are year-round, data-driven, youth-centered, and built on collaborative partnerships.
- Conducted and analyzed multiple datasets including a citywide parent survey, MNPS family focus groups, and an OST provider survey (in collaboration with Elevate Consulting). These efforts informed planning around service coverage, geographic equity, and the alignment of program offerings with parent preferences and student needs.
- Developed a new digital mapping system, A.L.I.G.N. (Analyzing Local Infrastructure and Gaps in Nashville), using ArcGIS. This tool allowed partners to visually identify service deserts, layering OST programs with demographic and school data to improve planning, collaboration, and transportation efficiency.
- Convened a panel of local philanthropic leaders to help providers better understand funding priorities, best practices for grant applications, and alternative forms of engagement with funders. Funders emphasized the value of youth leadership, year-round impact, data-driven programming, and cross-sector collaboration.
- Improved systems for OST partner registration, facility access, and student data sharing through centralized forms, early communication about meal programs, and creation of a new digital incident reporting tool for OST programming on MNPS campuses.



Snapshots of summer programming offered through a collaboration of Martha O'Bryan Center, Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency, and POWER Youth

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Tiffany E. Carter (MNPS)
Makeda Watson (MNPS)
Melissa Cornejo-Nell (MNPS)
Anna Harutyunyan (Nashville After Zone Alliance)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Robert Robinson (Alignment Nashville)
Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

24-25 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Aspiring Youth Encouragement
Backfield in Motion
Be Natural Company
Belmont Fast Forward
Bethlehem Centers
Beyond the Natural Foundation
Blacks in Technology
Boys and Girls Club of Middle Tennessee
Cafe Momentum
Catholic Charities of TN
CodeX Academy
Community Achieves
Conexion Americas
Corner to Corner
DYMOM in the Rough (Dynamic Young
Minorities of Nashville)
Elijah's Heart
Elmington Elevates Extended Care
Empowerment Inc.

Free Hearts
Girls Write Nashville
GlobalN Outreach Developments Int'l
Harmony CORE-alition
Homework Help Online
Huggs
In Full Motion
Juvenile Court
Martha O'Bryan Center
Mayor's Office
Mentor A Kid
Midtown Fellowship
MNPS
Moves and Grooves
Nashville After Zone Alliance
Nashville Children's Theater
Nashville Gov
Nashville Public Library
Nations Ministry Center

Oasis Center
Park Community Center
Persist Nashville
Preston Taylor Ministries
Project for Neighborhood Care
Project Transformation
RocketTown
Salama Urban Ministries
Small World Yoga
Southern Word
The F.I.N.D. Design
Transformation Life Center
United Way of Greater Nashville
United Ways of Tennessee
YMCA of Middle Tennessee
Young Life
Youth Encouragement Services
Youth for Christ Nashville
YWCA of Nashville and Middle TN

ACTION REPORT

2025 POSITIVE SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

24
25

The 2025 Positive Schools Conference, a cornerstone event for Metro Nashville Public Schools educators and professionals, took place on July 17, 2025, at James Lawson High School. This year's conference drew in more than 330 attendees, presenters, exhibitors, volunteers, and MNPS leadership.

The event kicked off with an inspiring keynote address from motivational speaker Jonathan Grant Brown. Throughout the day, attendees participated in a variety of workshops and breakout sessions, all aimed at building and enhancing a positive school culture in each school building across the district. The diverse range of topics ensured that there was something valuable for everyone, from teachers and administrators to counselors and support staff. The day ended with a panel featuring the 2025 Positive Schools Award winners.



Jonathan Grant Brown delivers his keynote address to the crowd



Panelists representing the 2025 Positive Schools Award winners participating in the closing plenary panel

2025 POSITIVE SCHOOLS CONFERENCE

**24-25
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- More than 330 MNPS staff & contractors, presenters, exhibitors, volunteers, and MNPS leadership were in attendance.
- Providing this level of professional development for that many educators through a traditional conference model could cost the district upwards of \$500,000 in registration, travel, and logistics. But by aligning our local resources and lifting up our own expertise, we've created a high-impact, accessible experience that's customized for our schools and students.

A highlight of the conference was the presentation of the 2025 Positive School Awards

These awards recognized outstanding contributions to positive schools within the MNPS community. The award winners, celebrated for their dedication and innovative practices, include:

- Community Partner winner = Metro Nashville Police Department
- Department winner = Advanced Academics Department
- High School winner = Cane Ridge High School
- Middle School winner = Isaac Litton Middle School
- Elementary School winner = Old Center Elementary School
- Non-Traditional School winner = The Academy at Hickory Hollow
- Navigator Award High School winner = James Lawson High School
- Navigator Award Middle School winner = H.G. Hill Middle School
- Navigator Award Elementary School winner = Dan Mills Elementary School
- Overall Navigator School winner = McMurray Middle School



2025 Positive Schools Conference Award winners



Conference attendees visit exhibitor tables



A presenter addresses session participants

**2025 POSITIVE
SCHOOLS CONFERENCE**

**LEADERSHIP &
SPONSORS**

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Dr. Jaime Lomax (MNPS)
Roger Dinwiddie (STARS Nashville)
Dr. Simyka Carlton (MNPS)
Inta Sanford (MNPS)
Kathy Gracey (Vanderbilt University Medical Center)
Tracy Glascoe (Vanderbilt Behavioral Health)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Heather Chalos (Alignment Nashville)
Morgan Tubbs (Alignment Nashville)

2025 SPONSORS

TAADAS
Oasis Center
University of Tennessee
Knoxville-
College of Social Work
AVID Center
Metro Nashville Education
Association

The Renfrew Center
Vanderbilt Behavioral
Health
TN Voices
Mental Health Cooperative
Sown to Grow
Newport Healthcare
Rogers Behavioral Health

EmbraceU
American Book Company
Autism Tennessee
Committee for Children
Facing History and
Ourselves
Destination Knowledge
STARS Nashville

ACTION REPORT

SCHOOL CULTURE & CLIMATE A-TEAM

24
25

For the 2024-2025 school year, MNPS brought together two previously separate initiatives—the School Climate A-Team and the Student Voice A-Team—into a single, unified team. The School Climate A-Team, established to build shared understanding and solutions around school climate, focused on strengthening relationships between school leaders, staff, and community partners. The Student Voice A-Team concentrated on enhancing student engagement, completing a pilot at Margaret Allen Middle School, supporting a district-wide campaign, and developing a toolkit to embed student voice into daily classroom practice.



Photo from the first School Culture & Climate A-Team meeting after merging the School Climate & Student Voice A-Teams

The merger of these two teams aimed to increase synergy, eliminate duplication, and more effectively position student voice and engagement as key strategies for improving school culture and climate. This unified approach enabled the team to identify additional strategies, align districtwide efforts, and continue reviewing policies such as the parent and student handbook to support a more inclusive and proactive learning environment.

SCHOOL CULTURE & CLIMATE A-TEAM

**24-25
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- The Student Voice Pilot conducted at Margaret Allen Middle School was a success and informed the creation of a toolkit for use in schools & classrooms district-wide.
- Trauma experienced by young people at home or in the community often shows up as behavioral incidents in schools; juvenile court data has shown recent increases in behavioral incidents involving younger students, pointing to the need to continue community-based solutions in partnership with schools.

The team's focus for the 2024–2025 school year included:

- Integration of student voice across the district through implementation and support of the Student Voice Toolkit
- Develop and implement additional strategies to support the work of the MNPS Positive Schools Supports Department
- Annual review and update of the MNPS Student/Parent Handbook

School Culture & Climate outcomes include:

- Authored a Student Voice Toolkit, including a case study on the Student Voice Pilot at Margaret Allen Middle School, and translated the information into one-page guides for school administrators and teachers
- Identified key areas of improvement such as peer belonging, family engagement, educator needs, and after-school access barriers
- Generated actionable recommendations including inclusive language revisions, expanded community partnership strategies, and tools to support both student and staff well-being
- Facilitated an MNPS handbook review process, incorporating student, parent, educator, and legal feedback to inform discipline policies



Alignment Nashville & MNPS collaborated to present on the Student Voice Toolkit at the 2025 Positive Schools Conference

One-page guide created to support the Student Voice Toolkit, geared toward classroom teachers

Student Voice Overview

At a glance
Student voice is essential for fostering an inclusive, engaging, and student-centered learning environment. Schools that actively incorporate student perspectives create a more responsive educational experience, enhancing student engagement, leadership, and school culture.

STUDENT VOICE CONTINUUM FRAMEWORK
Student voice ranges on a spectrum from minimal to full engagement. Each of the six stages builds upon the last.

- 1 **Expression**
- 2 **Consultation**
- 3 **Participation**
- 4 **Partnership**
- 5 **Activism**
- 6 **Leadership**

THREE SIGNATURE PRACTICES
The SEL 3 Signature Practices are one tool for fostering a supportive environment and promote SEL, social emotional learning. They intentionally and explicitly help build a habit of practices through which students and adults enhance their SEL skills.

[Click Here](#) [Click Here](#) [Click Here](#)

Welcoming Rituals **Engaging Practices** **Optimistic Closure**

LISTENING SESSIONS
Listening sessions with both teachers and students is an invaluable tool for receiving honest feedback about a school's relationship to Student Voice culture and potential for further development.

Teacher Listening Sessions.
Listening sessions help principals and school leaders collect honest, constructive feedback from teachers. When teachers feel unheard or unclear about their role, it can undermine efforts to build a positive, student-centered school culture.

Student Listening Sessions
The Student Listening Sessions Protocol offers a structured way to gather student feedback. It creates a safe space for students to share their views on school culture and their role in it. When ready, students can also lead listening sessions with their peers.

Ready to get started?
The Student Voice Readiness Guide helps schools assess their readiness to incorporate student voice and engagement activities. It includes a series of questions and checklists to evaluate current practices and identify actionable steps to enhance student participation.

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Dr. Jaime Lomax (MNPS)
Magistrate Jennifer Wade (Juvenile Court of Metro
Nashville and Davidson County)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Robert Robinson, Alignment Nashville
Nathan Shulman, Alignment Nashville

24-25 ROSTER

Tiffany Adwaters (MNPS)
Taylor Biondi (MNPS)
Captain Steve Bowers (Metro Nashville
Police Department)
Destini Burns (The F.I.N.D. Design)
Todd Campbell (Backfield in Motion)
Thomas Chappelle (Backfield in Motion)
Tasha Coleman (Raphah Institute)
Mary Crnabori (MNPS)
Joe Gordon (MNPS)

Marcel Hernandez (My Brother's Keeper)
Quincy Ingle (MNPS)
Debra McAdams (MNPS)
Avery Patton (MNPS)
Nasheba Pritchett (MNPS)
Ashley Thomas (MNPS)
Kenisha Wallace (MNPS)
Derrick Williams (MNPS)
Stephen Williams (MNPS)
Reginald Young (MNPS)

ACTION REPORT

YOUTH HEALTH
COLLABORATIVE

24
25

The Youth Health Collaborative (YHC) brings Nashville-focused stakeholders together to ensure all students have the resources and support they need to be healthy. YHC serves to build and sustain relationships and communication between stakeholders across the community.

Data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) has shown that, overall, the following groups of students in Metro Nashville Public Schools tend to exhibit more risky behaviors:

- Female students
- LGBTQ+ students
- Students with mental health needs
- Students who have experienced one or more ACE (adverse childhood experience)



Table promoting **MNPS for Her**, one of the programs funded by the CDC grant that YHC supports

YOUTH HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

**24-25
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- **Relationships are key:** in order to ensure students and families can access high-quality, streamlined resources, we must work to cultivate true and authentic connections between schools and community partners that truly embed the work of partners into the everyday operations of schools.
- **Students want to be heard:** we must also ensure that students have a voice in the services offered to them.
- **Healers must be healthy too:** Adult wellness is critical; the teachers, administrators, and staff working with students need resources and support for their own health and well-being in order to ensure they have the ability to meet the needs of the students and families they serve.

The members of the YHC began the year with a four-month data journey, seeking to learn more about the overall health and well-being of our students. Following that, they sought to understand more about services currently offered to students and families, both in and out of school, in an effort to find ways to increase the access to and availability of these services.

A key area of study and continued work will be how community partners can best support MNPS' Collaborative Referral System (CRS). This internal process is intended to streamline referrals for students and families to resources offered both in and out of school. Looking ahead to the 25-26 year, the YHC will continue to work towards:

- Creating up-to-date, easy-to-access lists of needed resources for school staff, including a process for matching resources to specific needs
- Encouraging students/families/community partners to use the Collaborative Referral System
- Using aggregated data from completed CRS forms to inform future resource needs

The Collaborative members also spent time throughout the year planning a community partner summit, which is currently planned for September 2025, where we will work to build connections between school and community partners. We are grateful to the Maddox Foundation for their financial support for this upcoming event!



YHC members such as DYMOM shared overviews of their programming with the collaborative throughout the year



MNPS support services, such as advocacy coaches pictured here, also shared overviews of their programming with YHC to better connect and streamline internal and external services for students

YOUTH HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

LEADERSHIP & ROSTER

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Shannon Key (MNPS)
Melissa Gordon (MNPS)
Yolonda Radford (Metro Public Health Department)

24-25 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Melissa Jagers, Alignment Nashville
Morgan Tubbs, Alignment Nashville

24-25 ROSTER

Jonna Alexander (Connections Wellness Group)
Paul Augustyniak (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention-TN Chapter)
Simyka Carlton (MNPS)
Nautica Caswell (Metro Public Health Department)
Sarah Cermak (MNPS)
Mary Crnabori (MNPS)
Brittany Edmondson (MNPS)
Edwina Freeman (DYMON)
Tracy Glascoe (Vanderbilt Behavioral Health)
Kathy Gracey (Vanderbilt University Medical Center)

Latissa Hall (Metro Public Health Department)
Maria Heerdt (MNPS)
Vanessa Helbig Johnson (YWCA Nashville)
Shamika Higgins (Metro Action Commission)
Kay Higgs (STARS Nashville)
Charity Ingersoll (Vanderbilt Institute for Medicine and Public Health)
Ashley King (Hope Clinic for Women)
Michael Kirshner (TN Voices)

Amy Kraus (MNPS)
Vanessa Lazon (MNPS)
Shatina Marshall (MNPS)
Hailey Nutter (The Renfrew Center)
Catherine Sakarapanee (MNPS)
Whitney Salyer (Centerstone)
LaSeanda Sanders (MNPS)
Jen Starsinic (Girls Write Nashville)
Sheldon Walker (Metro Public Health Department)
Makeda Watson (MNPS)
Lauren Williams (MNPS)
Joseph Wilson (STARS Nashville)
Natasha Yokley (Meharry Medical College)

ACTION REPORT

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The Nashville Hub provides events, coaching, and support to communities that are working to transform the K-12 experience to prepare all students for college, career, and life. Nashville Hub started in 2011 by providing opportunities for communities to visit Nashville and learn about the Academies of Nashville. The success and growth of these study visits led to the demand for consultation and professional development to help other communities implement the Academies model with fidelity.



**Welcoming activity at the
Spring 2025 Academies of Nashville Study Visit**

The Nashville Hub draws on the experience and expertise of practitioners that have been deeply involved in the visioning, implementation, and sustainability of the successful Academies of Nashville, Community Achieves, and more. These practitioners bring their experiences and lessons learned to the development and provision of impactful professional development and coaching.

**24-25
BY THE NUMBERS**

- Served **15 communities** across the U.S. and internationally
- Hosted **50+ trainings**
- Held **2 Academies of Nashville Study Visits**

The 2024-2025 school year was a banner year for the Hub with more than 50 trainings held across 15 communities. The Hub also hosted Academies of Nashville Study Visits in Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 for a combined 25 communities. Additionally, the Hub financially supported the 2024 Career Fair for Metro Nashville Public Schools and the 2025 Academies of Nashville Awards with a combined contribution of more than \$42,000.

The Hub became a designated Ford Next Generation Learning Hub in 2013 and its partnership with Ford NGL is still strong today. The Hub is also active with Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE), and the National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC).



Snapshots of Hub trainings held in Fort Wayne, IN (left), Agua Fria, AZ (middle), and Albuquerque, NM (right)

24-25 LEADERSHIP

Heather Chalos (Vice President of Alignment Nashville)

Morgan Tubbs (Manager of Nashville Hub)

Starr Herrman & Alison Colyar (Co-Directors of Consulting for Nashville Hub)