

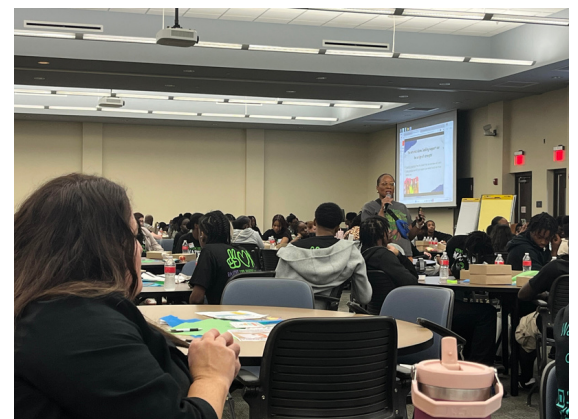
ACTION REPORT

YOUTH HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

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The Youth Health Collaborative (YHC) brings together Metro Nashville Public Schools, Metro Public Health Department, nonprofit organizations, and community partners to improve the health and well-being of Nashville's children and youth. The Collaborative strives to share resources and to support collaborations to help students access health and well-being services, as well as promote stronger coordination between schools and community partners to support improved health and academic outcomes.

As the district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), the Collaborative serves as a forum for strengthening partnerships, sharing best practices, and identifying opportunities to better align resources in support of student success. During the 2025–2026 school year, the Collaborative focused on strengthening authentic school-community partnerships, supporting implementation of the Student Voice Toolkit, advancing adult wellness, and exploring how data can be used to better align resources with student and family needs.



YHC Co-Chair Shannon Key speaks to students at the second annual district-wide Youth Mental Health Summit in fall 2025

YOUTH HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

25-26 OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS

- Student voice is most impactful when it is intentionally embedded into planning, programming, and decision-making rather than treated as a standalone activity.
- Supporting adult wellness requires organizational commitment, leadership, and systems that promote collective care, not solely individual self-care.
- Practical tools and shared resources help schools and community organizations implement new strategies more consistently.
- Existing district and community data provide valuable insight into student needs and opportunities for stronger resource alignment.

A major focus of the year centered on strengthening relationships between schools and community organizations to improve coordination and better connect students and families with available supports. Throughout the year, partners shared emerging needs, highlighted promising practices, and explored opportunities to improve communication, reduce duplication of services, and better align community resources with school priorities. Conversations consistently reinforced that meaningful improvements in student health and well-being require coordinated action across schools, healthcare providers, behavioral health organizations, nonprofits, and public agencies rather than isolated efforts.

The Collaborative also prioritized elevating student voice as an important component of healthy school communities. Building on the Youth Mental Health Summit hosted in the fall and the development of the Student Voice Toolkit, members explored practical ways to incorporate student perspectives into school improvement efforts, youth-serving programs, and mental health supports. Partners also identified strategies for creating more authentic opportunities for students to provide feedback, influence decisions, and help shape the programs designed to support them. Throughout the spring, members were encouraged to pilot toolkit strategies within their own organizations and share lessons learned to strengthen future implementation.

Adult wellness was another significant priority throughout the year. Recognizing that educators and youth-serving professionals are better equipped to support students when they feel healthy, supported, and connected, the Collaborative engaged in conversations around how we could shift the adult wellness conversation beyond individual self-care to explore organizational practices that promote collective care and sustainable workplace cultures. These discussions resulted in the development of shared Adult Wellness Values and a draft Adult Wellness Resource Guide designed to help schools and community organizations better support staff through practical resources, shared language, and leadership practices that embed wellness into everyday work.

YOUTH HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

25-26 OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS

- Community organizations benefit from clearer pathways for understanding school priorities and connecting services to identified needs.
- Building on existing systems and partnerships is often more effective than creating new initiatives.
- Ongoing collaboration and shared learning strengthen relationships, improve communication, and increase collective capacity to support student health and well-being.

The Collaborative also expanded its focus on data-informed decision-making by examining how existing data sources, including the Collaborative Referral System, Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), Panorama surveys, and other district and community data could be used to better understand student needs, identify service gaps, and strengthen partnerships. Rather than creating new systems, partners emphasized improving communication, building upon existing structures, and developing practical approaches that make it easier to connect students and families with the services they need. These conversations laid the foundation for future work focused on resource alignment, coordinated referrals, and stronger collaboration across organizations.

Overall, through shared learning, discussions, and collaborative problem-solving, partners developed practical tools, strengthened relationships, and identified opportunities to better coordinate supports for students, families, and educators.



YHC member Calley Crews presenting at the 2026 Positive Schools Conference



Snapshots from the final YHC meeting of the 25-26 school year, when YHC members participated in an adult wellness activity making essential oil rollers to take home

YOUTH HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

LEADERSHIP & ROSTER

25-26 LEADERSHIP

Shannon Key (MNPS)
Ashford Hughes, Sr. (MNPS)
Yolonda Radford (Metro Public Health Department)

25-26 ALIGNMENT STAFF

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

25-26 ROSTER

Jonna Alexander (Trustpoint Hospital)
Kyle Alexander (MNPS)
Paul Augustyniak (American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention-TN Chapter)
Nicole Boyle (MNPS)
Carol Brown (MNPS)
Simyka Carlton (MNPS)
Nautica Caswell (MPHD)
Sarah Cermak (MNPS)
Amie Coleman, (MNPS)
Calley Crews (Caron Treatment Centers)
Mary Crnabori (MNPS)
Danielle Duke (MPHD)
Brittany Edmondson (MNPS)
Edwina Freeman (DYMON)
Tracy Glascoe (Vanderbilt Behavioral
Health)

Melissa Gordon (MNPS)
Kathy Gracey (Vanderbilt)
Kristen Hammond (Mental Health
Cooperative)
Maria Heerdt (MNPS)
Terrence Henderson (MPHD)
Shamika Higgins (Metro Action
Commission)
Kay Higgs (STARS Nashville)
Johnsie Holt (MNPS)
Charity Ingersoll (Vanderbilt
University Medical Center)
Kanesha Jones (MNPS)
Ashley King (Hope Clinic for Women)
Michael Kirshner (TN Voices)
Amy Kraus (MNPS)

Vanessa Lazon (MNPS)
Hailey Nutter (The Renfrew Center)
Kate Presnell (Goodwill Industries of
Middle Tennessee)
Riki Rattner (Be Well)
Michaya Reeves (MPHD)
Catherine Sakarapanee (MNPS)
Whitney Salyer (Centerstone)
Laseanda Sanders (MNPS)
Beth Schroeder (MNPS)
Whitney Slovick (MNPS)
Jen Starsinic, Girls Write Nashville
Ariell Tillman (MNPS)
Amara Townes (ARCH Academy)
Sheldon Walker (MPHD)
Jace Wilder (NAMI Davidson County)
Joseph Wilson (STARS Nashville)