

ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK





OFFICE OF THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

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Memphis-Shelby County Schools has created a data-driven culture that serves as the backdrop for strategic decision-making and informed solution-based decisions. The information gleaned from data, research-based strategies, and performance outcomes provides our district with amazing opportunities to offer high-quality educational options to every student.

A key staple within our rich data-driven culture is the identification and analyzation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These indicators are steeped in trends and practices that offer a roadmap leading to areas of opportunity that influence the advancement of our students.

When thinking of our mission which is to prepare all students for success in learning, leadership, and life, it is important to acknowledge our pursuit in closing achievement gaps and our commitment to move from a district of intervention to innovation.

The implementation of three strategic initiatives will help advance our efforts to achieve our goals. The initiatives are:

Strategic Initiative 1: Strengthen Early Literacy (K-2) and Continuing Literacy (3-12)

If our students are going to be successful, they have to be strong readers. This is why we are enhancing initiatives to strengthen early literacy in kindergarten through second grade, and continued literacy in grades 3-12.

Strategic Initiative 2: Recruit, Retain, Immerse, and Entrench

We aim to recruit and retain the best District leaders and teachers in the nation, immerse them in professional development to embrace and teach foundational literacy skills, and entrench them in the community and classroom.

Strategic Initiative 3: Relevant, Rigorous, and Equitable Academics

We are creating relevant and equitable academic choices and learning environments to ensure scholars are prepared for the global workforce.

This report, and the information contained therein, is a reminder of our areas of success and areas of growth. We are encouraged by the gains achieved during this past academic school year and intend to continue to pursue our ambitious and aggressive plans to ensure the success of the Memphis-Shelby County Schools students.

Our aim is to enhance the lives of those we serve, and as we continue to implement strategies that boost student productivity, we will experience a foreseeable future of continued growth and success.

Sincerely,

Tutional "Toni" Williams

Interim Superintendent

Memphis-Shelby County Schools

2022-2023 MSCS ACADEMIC LIFELINE FRAMEWORK

Memphis-Shelby County Schools Academic Division



In 2015, then Shelby County Schools (SCS now Memphis-Shelby County Schools or MSCS) announced a 10-year strategic plan, Destination 2025, designed to improve the quality of public education and create a more knowledgeable, productive workforce. According to Destination 2025, by 2025, 80 percent of seniors will be college- and career-ready; 90 percent of students will earn their high school diploma on time; and 100% of college- and career-ready graduates will enroll in a postsecondary opportunity. MSCS remains committed to these goals, but also recognizes the need to act decisively due to the educational gaps revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moving forward, the district will preserve the spirit of Destination 2025, while reimagining the key commitments that will drive the work, serving all students within the MSCS portfolio, in an updated vision called “**Reimagining 901.**”

THE THREE CORNERSTONES OF “REIMAGINING 901”

Reimagining Education	Reimagining Schools	Reimagining Communities
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Adult-Student Ratios • Transformative Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wraparound Supports • High-Quality Opportunities 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New 21st -Century Structures • Renovated Athletic Facilities • Investments in Efficiency and Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgraded Infrastructure 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Strategic Partnerships • Adult Literacy and Family Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Growth and Development • Maximizing Surplus Properties

TRANSFORMATIONAL CATEGORIES

The following categories of focus will support MSCS in a transformation aligned with **Reimagining 901** to support district improvement:

- 
Academics
 Provide all MSCS students with access to consistent, high-quality instruction and personalized supports delivered by teachers with knowledge of content and the standards.
- 
School Leadership
 Increase recruitment, coaching, and professional development of new and experienced school leaders to develop their skills as turnaround leaders.
- 
Teachers
 Attract, develop, support, and retain high quality teachers across the district, particularly in high-need schools.
- 
Students Engaged and Ready to Learn
 Deliver targeted support to address non-academic needs, such as social-emotional, mental, and physical health and wellbeing to help children be more ready to learn.
- 
Urgency of the Situation
 Collaborate with the school communities to make necessary changes and improvement in high-need and turnaround schools.
- 
Families and Alumni as Partners
 Empower and equip families and alumni to become informed advocates for the students.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Reimagining 901 is built upon the following guiding principles that are central to this work:

- Community Input / Buy-In
- Grounding in Student Achievement
- Embracing Values and Beliefs
- Continuous Improvement
- System-Wide Equity
- Commitment & Respect
- Effective Communication and Transparency
- Collective Action with Stakeholder Input

TIMELINE OF PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PLANNING EFFORTS

As MSCS continues to learn from the past, the district is committed to reimagining the future of our students. Listed below are key events that have occurred in MSCS that had a significant impact on the progress of implementing key initiatives with consistency so far.

<p>The Achievement School District (ASD) was created to assume authority over a segment of the lowest performing schools in Tennessee.</p>	<p>2011</p>	
<p>Families and students experienced the exodus of six suburban towns from the newly consolidated Shelby County Schools system.</p>	<p>2013</p>	<p>The merger of Memphis City Schools, with 103,000 students, and Shelby County Schools, with 47,000 students, was the largest school district consolidation in American history.</p>
<p>The Tennessee General Assembly made a critical decision that the spring test results would not be used against students, teachers, and public-school districts. They agreed that the test results would only count if it benefited students, educators, and districts.</p>	<p>2014</p>	<p>State education officials approved new English and math standards (Common Core Standards for Tennessee). The TNReady Assessment was canceled for elementary and middle school grades.</p>
<p>The Tennessee General Assembly made a critical decision that the spring test results would not be used against students, teachers, and public-school districts. They agreed that the test results would only count if it benefited students, educators, and districts.</p>	<p>2016</p>	<p>State education officials approved new English and math standards (Common Core Standards for Tennessee). The TNReady Assessment was canceled for elementary and middle school grades.</p>
<p>The Tennessee General Assembly made a critical decision that the spring test results would not be used against students, teachers, and public-school districts. They agreed that the test results would only count if it benefited students, educators, and districts.</p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>State education officials approved new English and math standards (Common Core Standards for Tennessee). The TNReady Assessment was canceled for elementary and middle school grades.</p>
<p>The Tennessee General Assembly made a critical decision that the spring test results would not be used against students, teachers, and public-school districts. They agreed that the test results would only count if it benefited students, educators, and districts.</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>The COVID-19 Pandemic required MSCS to alter in-person schooling.</p>

FAULT LINES: AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR MSCS

The following metrics are the greatest areas of opportunity and growth for MSCS. These needs were identified by district leaders and will be monitored closely throughout **Reimagining 901**.

Academic Achievement

- **TCAP achievement rates** are improving but are **below State norms**.
- **Chronic out-of-school rates** have recently **increased** and are well **above State norms**.
- District average **daily attendance rate** by 20-day periods have **decreased** in comparison to the previous year.

Culture and Climate

- On the Panorama Student Perception Survey, **Classroom Engagement and Learning Strategies** received **unfavorable responses** from the 6-8 and 9-12 grade bands.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- **AP courses participation disparities** persist across race/ethnicity and economic status.
- **On-time completion rates in English I** disparities persist for Hispanic students.

Graduation and College/Career Readiness

- **ACT composites** are and have been **below average**.
- **ACT college ready rates** are and have been **below average**.
- **Graduation rates** have been **stagnant** recently.
- **Disparities** persist in **graduation rates between female and male** students.
- **Ready graduate rates** have **improved** but are below State norms.
- MSCS students' **industry recognized credentials** **increased** from 174 in 2016-17 to 6,697 in 2021-22. Thus, revealing **MSCS's untapped capacity** to generate 10,000 industry recognized credentials in 2022-23.

Professional Development

- **Teacher vacancies** on the first day of school are **lower than** in the previous year.

GOALS & VISION MOVING FORWARD



Transitioning from Fault Lines to Vision

Shelby County, Tennessee, is a diverse, thriving community of more than one million citizens. Shelby county's population has increased nearly 10% in a decade. Driving such growth, there is a county-wide commitment to literacy and education which began in 2021, a commitment called Reimagining 901.

A Reimagined District

Memphis-Shelby County Schools (a new name given to the reimagined District) has leveraged federal stimulus funding, local government dollars, and the commitment of the business and philanthropic communities. Memphis-Shelby County Schools has embarked on a journey to ensure that all students in the MSCS portfolio are performing on grade level by the time they enter middle school, graduating nearly all students who entered high school, and preparing graduates for success in college and careers.



“The year is 2030, not even ten years from now”

Vision

To build a stronger 901, by 2030 schools will:

-  Serve as a staple of the community by promoting pride and building the history of 901.
-  Bring people together and help establish strong, trusting relationships.
-  Provide safe environments for learning.
-  Attract families and businesses which boost the economy and become community hubs.
-  Help students, parents, and teachers connect more easily.
-  Help develop students into leaders, who then, in turn, stay in the community and continue to build and nurture families and businesses.

Goals

Overall arching goals of Reimagining 901:

-  Increase and improve student achievement and growth by using effective and transformational strategies
-  Implement foreign language immersion opportunities for all students
-  Maximize digital 1:1 access
-  Connect students to the broader community
-  Improve learning facilities through new buildings and strategic combinations
-  Enhance community partnerships
-  Strengthen connections between District-run schools and charter schools, and share lessons from charter schools' best practices

KEY INITIATIVE 1: STRENGTHEN EARLY LITERACY AND CONTINUING LITERACY

As part of the **Reimagining 901** plan, the board and the administrative team selected three Key Initiatives that will guide progress. The first Key Initiative centers around literacy and strengthening literacy both for early learning (Grades PK-2) and beyond (Grades 3-12).

Why Literacy?

Literacy is vital to every child's education. Because the ability to read and write efficiently will greatly inform a child's future, it is imperative students are offered high-quality educational options that will improve their chances to succeed. Conversely, poor literacy acquisition may have negative effects that extend well beyond the school years. Learning deficits could have emotional and social impacts, lead to financial burdens, and impede college or career opportunities once a student graduates from high school.

Early Literacy

MSCS's early literacy strategies are focused on preparing teachers to teach students how to decode letters and sounds, create meaning as words are strung together in sentences, and then comprehend the concepts and ideas embedded in written text. Letter awareness, sound sensitivity, and phonological and phonemic awareness are critical aspects of teaching students to read.

Continuing Literacy

A focus on continuing literacy beyond Grade 3 will ensure students develop the capacity to make meaning, apply critical thinking skills, and retain knowledge from any type of complex text so that they reach their fullest potential in secondary schools, institutions of higher education, and the workforce.

STRATEGIES

MSCS's vision for improved literacy instruction relies on teacher preparation to support students in increasing their literacy development. MSCS has outlined the following strategies to ensure success in this Key Initiative:

-  Reduce adult-to-student ratio in K-12 English Language Arts
-  Engage deeply in the work of foundational reading skills instruction
-  Support literacy through virtual education and flawless logistics
-  Build teacher capacity to understand how children learn to read
-  Expose students and parents to the foundational tools of literacy
-  Ensure literacy-rich environments and learning opportunities for students
-  Provide consistent, intensive, and personalized tutoring
-  Plan a new and improved Summer Learning Academy for 2022-2023 school year

Grade-Level-Specific Literacy Supports

MSCS recently introduced district-wide initiatives that include the following components to support students, teachers, and leaders in delivering and receiving high quality instruction strategically designed to meet the cognitive demands of the literacy standards.

Elementary Supports

- 3rd Grade Commitment Team
- Ready Reading student workbooks
- Reading Prescriptions
- iReady
- Literacy Laureates
- Literacy Rich Environments Model
- Instructional & Educational Advisors
- Monthly professional learning for Specialized Education Assistants

Middle School Supports

- Senior Reading Advisors to execute Reading Horizons
- Reading Prescriptions
- iReady
- Ready Reading student workbooks
- ELA Question Bank
- Directed Teaching Model

High School Supports

- Senior Reading Advisors to execute Reading Horizons
- Reading Prescriptions
- Edgenuity
- FLVS students and teacher resources
- Common Lit student and teacher resources
- Directed Teaching Model

KEY INITIATIVE 2: RECRUIT, RETAIN, IMMERSE, ENTRENCH

The second Key Initiative centers around strategic recruitment, induction, sustaining, and engagement so MSCS can retain high-quality faculty, staff, and administrators. This initiative will help foster a diverse, engaged, and passionate workforce through professional engagement and community development.

Recruitment

MSCS HR recognize the importance of leveraging multiple strategies to attract and recruit individuals into the education profession. Our recruitment strategic plan includes heavy participation in key activities which are essential in creating a positive work environment and strengthening our employees' commitment to the MSCS culture of excellence. These strategies advance the District's goal of becoming an 'employer of choice.'

Induction

The MSCS HR Office of Induction and Development has implemented the Teacher Comprehensive Induction Program (TCIP) that begins with all new hires attending the New Teacher Academy (NTA) prior to starting in any MSCS school or workplace. The TCIP also includes wraparound induction supports in partnership with our partner EPPS.

Sustain and Engage

MSCS will ensure that there is intentionality in ensuring that high-impact strategies are implemented to sustain (strengthen/support) employees so they can be retained. As a critical lever within the overall talent strategy, the teacher retention component includes intensive leader development and retention accountability at the school level (retention and workplace culture/climate data). MSCS HR will work publicize a multitude of district level employee wraparound service offerings to equip leaders with tools to address wellness and engagement needs.

STRATEGIES

Faculty, staff, and administrator recruitment initiatives should ensure students have access to high-quality, diverse, and motivated educators. The following strategies will support MSCS in this initiative:

-  Maximize existing partnerships with teacher residency programs like Teach for America
-  "Grow-Our-Own" teacher and principal pipelines
-  Provide mentoring and support for employees to obtain licensure and post-secondary degrees
-  Identify professionals in other fields who wish to change careers to become teachers
-  Create teaching pipelines that start with existing MSCS students
-  Reduce adult-to-student ratios in K-2 classrooms
-  Expand partnerships with education training programs at local colleges and universities
-  Create central office pathways for current MSCS employees seeking a principalship or other administrative opportunity
-  Create innovative strategies to communicate wellness and engagement supports to all employees

Examples of Key Activities (*ESSER FUNDED)

Strategic Recruitment

- Enhanced Attraction and Marketing Strategy: Teach Today, Reach Tomorrow Campaign **
- Residency Partnerships (TFA, MTR, and Aspiring Teachers Program Relay)
- TDOE Grow Your Own Programs
- MSCS Special Education and Spanish Teacher Pipeline **
- CCTE Teaching as a Profession High School Pipeline (dual enrollment)**
- 'School Leader Pipeline Programs**

Comprehensive Induction

- New Teacher Academy (all employees)**
- 1:1 Mentoring Program (enhanced investment in mentoring stipends, supports and accountability) **
- Aspiring Teacher Program Induction Supports (Permit check-ins, Praxis and EdTPA tutoring/supports) **
- Monthly Mentor and School Leader mandatory PD **

Sustain and Engagement

- Retention Task Force (Cross-functional team dedicated to driving the direction/accountability of the overall retention strategy)
- Leadership Retention Support PD and Targeted Cohort
- Induction and Retention Plan required for all schools (Leader Guide Provided by HR)
- Total Rewards (Employee Wellness, Engagement and Wraparound Support Plan)

KEY INITIATIVE 3: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, AND EQUITABLE ACADEMICS

The third Key Initiative centers around preparing students with 21st Century skills and ensuring they are college- or career-ready in our current global environment. Importantly, this Key Initiative requires MSCS to evolve and innovate alongside modern industry and post-secondary institutions.

Student Engagement

To instill a love of learning in our students, MSCS will ensure that the students will connect to the relevance in what they are learning, how they are learning, and where they are learning. Instructional content will support students in their learning and will connect closely to the world around them. Notably, students will engage in “global classroom,” an idea that classrooms can be more than the four walls of a building, and learning can extend beyond school boundaries. Traditional classroom learning can limit a student’s access to a variety of programs and courses, particularly at the secondary level.

Family Engagement

MSCS will work to maximize the agency that families have in their student’s learning and overall academic trajectory. The goal of MSCS is to ensure all four-year-old children have access to quality Pre-K by the 2031-32 school year.

Upgrades & Redesign

Major building projects will support this district initiative. Learning spaces across the district will be updated or redesigned to create high-quality school facilities.

STRATEGIES

Teaching and instructional initiatives should create learning spaces that provide equitable, relevant, and rigorous education for all students in the MSCS portfolio. The following strategies will support MSCS in this initiative:



Expanded emphasis on social-emotional learning and attendance supports



Enhance community engagement supports



Expand opportunities for creativity, arts curriculum, theater, and performance



Increase the effectiveness of and access to English language instruction



Create innovative high school programming and expand access to advanced courses



Enhance ACT preparation opportunities for students pursuing post-secondary education



Develop transition programs for Elementary-to-Middle and Middle-to-High School



Expand access to digital devices to create equity in technology

Instructional Innovation

- Expand student access to a diverse selection of virtual course offerings
- Expand outdoor Learning Spaces
- Expand the Foreign Language program
- Expand the Theatre and Visual Arts program
- Elementary to Middle and Middle to High School Transition Program

Innovative Initiatives

Community Engagement

- Provide academic and non-academic wraparound services to support students and families in under-resourced communities
- Build a strategic focus on challenges and solutions for recruiting new students, retaining current students, and reclaiming students who have left MSCS managed schools

College and Career Readiness

- Expand access to advanced academic offerings
- Expand access to College, Career, and Technical Education programs of study
- Expand internship and apprenticeship opportunities for students.
- Enhanced student preparedness for and access to post-secondary opportunities.

ACCOUNTABILITY



Building a Data-Driven Decision-Making Culture

- MSCS leaders will engage school and district-level staff in building a districtwide culture of inquiry that values the use of data for sound decision-making.
- MSCS will engage in discovering the power of data for promoting student growth and achievement.
- Data-driven decision-making will be based on gathering data to understand if a school or district is meeting its purpose and vision.
- MSCS leaders will review data in quarterly STAT meetings, Stock Take meetings, and the ongoing review of dashboards.

“As the strategies are implemented, accountability will move to the next level.”

Data Meetings

MSCS leadership has planned the following data meetings to be held across the district. Data meetings will ensure that district and school leadership and staff are held accountable for student learning.

Superintendent's Academic Leadership Team (SALT)

Goal: The Executive Leadership Team will utilize the SALT meeting forum as an opportunity to examine instructional data to understand who's succeeding in MSCS, who's not, and why.

Cabinet Leaders Sessions

Goal: Chief of Staff will utilize the stat sessions with Cabinet Leaders each week to discuss the top ten strategies to ensure that we have Return on Investment with key strategies.

Audit/Finance Meeting

Goal: Chief of Finance will update the Superintendent and board monthly using the structure of the Audit/Finance meeting to discuss key strategies associated with ESSER.

STAT Meetings

Goal: The Deputy Superintendent along with the Chief Academic Officer, Chief of Schools, and the Executive Director of Accountability will review data and action steps in quarterly STAT Meetings.

School Walks

Goal: The Deputy Superintendent along with the Chief Academic Officer, Chief of Schools, and the Executive Director of Accountability will conduct school walks.

Data Week

Goal: ILDs and principals will participate monthly in “Data Week” to review school-wide data.

EXPECTED YEAR OVER YEAR OUTCOMES

Indicator	State 2018-2019	MSCS 2018-2019	State 2019-2020	MSCS 2019-2020	State 2020-2021	MSCS 2020-2021	Milepost 2024-2025	Goal 2030
Students graduate on time.	89.7%	79.3%	89.6%	77.7%	NA	77.7%	82.0%	90.0%
Students earn Tennessee's Ready Graduate designation.	40.7%	20.9%	40.5%	20.7%	NA	NA	45.0%	80.0%
Students read on grade level before entering middle school.	35.5%	24.3%	NA	NA	31.4%	14.7%	40.0%	74.0%
Students' math skills are on grade level before entering middle school.	45.4%	34.5%	NA	NA	32.2%	9.8%	35.0%	70.0%



Please use the QR above or visit <https://tinyurl.com/MSCSESSER> to access our ESSER Literature link or Briefs compendium. This document contains full reports on the performance of critical strategic framework initiatives.

Success in MSCS comes from the strategic action taken by all District stakeholders as we work together to Reimagine 901. The following appendix provides a look at the comprehensive, strategic map of our Lifeline Initiative Framework.



SPRING 2022 TCAP RESULTS

ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY SCORES FOR MEMPHIS-SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS, THE ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE STATE OF TENNESSEE.

ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY SCORES

	ELA	MATH
	22%	13%
ASD (STATE-RUN)	9%	6%
TN	36%	30%

#TRENDING UP



OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IS ALREADY SHOWING RESULTS. MSCS STUDENTS ARE GROWING, OVERCOMING LEARNING LOSS, AND ACHIEVING IN MATH AND READING ACROSS ALL GRADE BANDS.

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