



# THE CHAIR'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 2025

SHELBY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION



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## Message from Chair Dorse Coleman

Dear MSCS Supporter,

Welcome to the latest edition of "The Chair's Report." This monthly e-newsletter provides activity highlights, offers updates on key issues facing the school District and shares the board's position with you.

### CHAIR CHAT RETURNS

I recently sat down with our interim superintendent Roderick Richmond, EdD, for our new episode of Chair Chat. We talked about Dr. Richmond's 30+ year career in MSCS and his vision as the interim superintendent. You can watch the full interview on MSCS' YouTube channel - @scsk12unified.



**Dr. Roderick  
Richmond, EdD**

### SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH

In January, Memphis-Shelby County Schools recognized School Board Appreciation Month and School Board Appreciation Week (January 26 – February 1). Various schools within the District have hosted activities to show their appreciation for our amazing board members. We appreciate our schools, educators and community members for their continuous support of the MSCS Board.

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## 2025 SCHOOL BOARD PARTNERS (SBP) NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

Board Members Natalie McKinney, Tamarques Porter and Sable Otey were selected as fellows for the 2025 School Board Partners (SBP) National Fellowship, Cohort 7.

Porter, McKinney and Otey will join more than 70 school board members from across the country to learn, grow and lead and to represent more than two million students in 63 districts across 30 states. This fellowship will provide training and mentorship in anti-racist policy-making, goal setting, school performance and resource management, which will help our board members better the MSCS District.

Congratulations, Board Members McKinney, Porter and Otey.

## BOARD MEMBER MICHELLE MCKISSACK ELECTED AS TREASURER OF TENNESSEE SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MSCS Board Member Michelle McKissack was recently elected to serve as treasurer of the Tennessee School Board Association Board of Directors. TSBA is a statewide organization that assists school boards in effectively governing school districts. They also provide school boards with a collective voice in legislative matters that concern public schools. McKissack will also chair the audit committee for TSBA at the Legal and Legislative Institute in Nashville. Congratulations, Board Member McKissack.

## DISTRICT 4 HIGHLIGHTS, TAMARQUES PORTER, BOARD MEMBER



(L-R) Belle Forest Community School Assistant Principals Jonathan Jones and Tosha Maples, Board Member Tamarques Porter and Belle Forest Principal Erron Henderson during Morning with Dad.

**Morning with Dad at Belle Forest Community School:** During the fall semester, Board Member Porter visited Belle Forest Community School and spoke to more than 300 fathers about the importance of being a father at the school's Morning with Dad event.

**School Board Legislative Agenda Training and Visit to State Capitol:** A few of our board members traveled to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend School Board Legislative Agenda Training hosted by the Tennessee School Board Association. They also visited the state capitol to meet with various local and state legislators.

## DISTRICT 5 HIGHLIGHTS, SABLE OTEY, BOARD MEMBER



Member Sable Otey with Y-Achievers program participants at LeMoyne-Owen College.

**Board Member Otey Welcomes Students Back to School:** To kick off the Spring 2025 semester, Board Member Sable Otey welcomed Cordova Middle School and Cordova Elementary School students back from winter break.

**Y-Achievers College Tour:** Board Member Otey recently accompanied 6–12 grade students in YMCA's Y-Achievers program on their college tour to the University of Memphis and LeMoyne-Owen College. The students explored the rich history of both institutions and fully immersed themselves in the college experience. Y-Achievers, one of the YMCA's signature programs, is dedicated to closing the achievement gap by equipping students in grades 6–12 with the skills, experiences and mentorship they need to succeed.



**Board Member Sable Otey at Macon Hall Elementary.**

**Valentine's Day Gift for Faculty and Staff at Cordova Elementary:** Board Member Otey recently catered lunch for the faculty and staff at Cordova Elementary for Valentine's Day. We appreciate our educators for all that they do for our students.




**Macon Hall Elementary Visit:** Board Member Otey recently visited Macon Hall Elementary to provide health care and sanitizing products to the teachers and staff to combat flu season.

## **DISTRICT 6 HIGHLIGHTS, KEITH WILLIAMS, BOARD MEMBER**

**Board Member Williams Announces MSCEA Retirement:** After many years of service, Board Member Keith Williams will retire at the end of this fiscal year from his role as executive director of the Memphis-Shelby County Education Association (MSCEA), one of two labor unions representing Memphis educators. We thank Williams for his unwavering dedication in advocating for our teachers and our students. Williams was elected to the MSCS Board of Education in August 2022 and will continue serving his four-year term.

## **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

The Memphis-Shelby County Schools Board of Education wants to stay connected to you. We have created social media platforms for you to follow the work of your school board directly. Follow us on:

- |  |           |              |
|--|-----------|--------------|
|  | Facebook  | mscsc12board |
|  | Instagram | mscsc12board |
|  | Twitter/X | mscsc12board |

Your school board members look forward to connecting with you.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

### **Board Retreat (Day 1)**

- February 28

### **Board Retreat (Day 2)**

- March 1

### **Spring Break**

- March 10–14

### **Students Return to School**

- March 17

### **March Board Work Session**

- March 18

### **March Board Business Meeting**

- March 25

### **Summer Learning Academy & Promotional Summer School**

- June 2–30

All Board Business Meetings and Work Sessions can be joined in person, viewed live online and on C19TV, or heard on 88.5FM.

## **ON A FINAL NOTE**

As we close out February, I want to take a moment to reflect on the significance of this month and the impact of our collective efforts in Memphis-Shelby County Schools. February is a time of celebration, recognition and progress. We honored Black History Month by uplifting the achievements and contributions of African Americans, reminding our students that they stand on the shoulders of greatness.

This month has also been about laying the foundation for the future. With new leadership in place, we are focused on stability, growth

and continued excellence in our District. Your commitment—whether as an educator, parent, student or community partner—makes all the difference in ensuring our children receive the education they deserve.

Let's continue working together, supporting one another and keeping our students at the heart of everything we do. Thank you for being an essential part of the MSCS family.

**Joyce Dorse Coleman, Chair,**  
**Memphis-Shelby County Schools Board of Education**