

Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ Academic Plan 2025-2030	1
<b>Introduction</b>	3
<b>Executive Summary</b>	5
<b>Data Narrative Introduction</b>	8
Birth to 2nd Grade Data Narrative	8
Grades 3–5 Data Narrative	11
Grades 6–8 Data Narrative	14
Grades 9–12 Data Narrative	16
Homeless Students’ Data Narrative	19
Charter School Data Narrative	21
<b>Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Design</b>	23
<b>Professional Learning to Drive Instructional Excellence</b>	37
<b>Academic Vision and Instructional Theory of Action</b>	57
<b>Executing the Instructional Core: Students, Teachers, Content, Leaders, and System</b>	59
Implementation: Student Arm of the Instructional Core	59
Implementation: Teacher Arm of the Instructional Core	61
Implementation: Content Arm of the Instructional Core	63
Implementation: Leadership	66
Implementation: System	68
Implementation: Family and Community Engagement	70
<b>Student Agency Framework: Owning the Path to Excellence</b>	73
<b>Aligned Coaching and Support</b>	77
Teacher Coaching Framework	78
Principal Coaching Framework	83
School Support Framework	88
<b>Talent and Retention Pathways: Growing, Elevating, and Keeping Excellence in Memphis</b>	93
<b>Leadership Framework</b>	96
<b>Leadership Development</b>	102
<b>Differentiated Leadership Coaching Model</b>	108
<b>Glossary</b>	113
<b>Appendix A: ELA Walkthrough Tool</b>	117
<b>Appendix B: Math Walkthrough Tool</b>	120

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

2

<b>Appendix C: Science Walkthrough Tool</b>	123
<b>Appendix D: Pre-K Culture &amp; Climate Walkthrough Tool</b>	126
<b>Appendix E: Foundations Walkthrough Tool</b>	129
<b>Appendix F – GRR</b>	131
<b>Appendix G – 5Es</b>	139
<b>Appendix H – See It, Name It, Do It</b>	142
<b>Appendix I – Weekly Data Meeting</b>	144
<b>Appendix J – CompStat and SDIS</b>	146

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Introduction

Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) launches the 2025–2030 Academic Plan as a blueprint for equity-driven transformation, one designed not merely to improve a school system, but to confront and dismantle the structural forces that have long stratified opportunity in our city.

Rooted in the belief that brilliance is evenly distributed but opportunity is not, this plan advances the work begun in the Superintendent's 100-Day Entry Plan by codifying instructional coherence, establishing a bold theory of action, and translating shared vision into measurable change.

MSCS serves over 110,000 students across 220+ schools, making it Tennessee's largest school district and one of the 25 largest in the nation. The overwhelming majority of students are Black or Brown and economically disadvantaged. In a city where over 40% of children live in poverty, many in neighborhoods like 38126, where the child poverty rate exceeds 72%, public education must do more than instruct. It must liberate.

The urgency for redesign is clear. In 2024, only 27.5% of third graders met grade-level expectations in reading. Chronic absenteeism impacted more than 30,000 students. Fewer than one in five graduates earned an ACT score of 21 or higher, the benchmark for access to HOPE scholarships and selective postsecondary pathways. These statistics reflect not a crisis of student ability, but a failure of systemic design.

In response, MSCS will implement the *Pathway to Greatness* framework: a PK–12 vertically aligned model that unifies early literacy, rigorous secondary learning, and postsecondary readiness under one coherent instructional strategy. At the center of this model is the Instructional Core, the dynamic intersection of teacher expertise, student engagement, and high-quality content.

This work is grounded in four imperatives:

1. Leadership: Building deep bench strength across school and district leadership to drive sustained instructional excellence.
2. Teacher Effectiveness: Clarifying and supporting the delivery of Tier I instruction through curriculum alignment, coaching, and walkthrough tools.
3. Student Engagement: Restoring joy, belonging, and relevance through culturally responsive teaching and purposeful learning experiences.
4. Equity of Access: Guaranteeing that all students, regardless of race, ZIP code, disability, or language, experience rigorous instruction and meaningful, accelerated pathways.

This plan is informed by both community wisdom and nationally validated research, including contributions from TNTP, the Council of Great City Schools, Hanover Research, NAEP, Paul Bambrick-Santoyo's instructional leadership frameworks, and the University of Virginia's 90-Day Planning Model. It also reflects the voices of students, educators, families, and civic partners who shaped the district's vision for coherence, relevance, and equity.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

To ensure impact, implementation will roll out in strategic phases, led by the Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, Deputy Chief of Academics and Regional Superintendents through quarterly milestone reviews.

Sustainability will be ensured through mechanisms such as university residencies, principal pipelines, and real-time data tools that support adaptive monitoring and responsive support. Aligned to the MSCS Board of Education's goals and guardrails, this plan builds a system where governance, talent, instruction, and resources operate in concert. It affirms that our work is not merely about reforming policy, it is about redesigning systems so that they amplify, rather than limit, student brilliance.

If we align instruction to high-quality content, build teacher and leader capacity, and ensure that all students, especially those furthest from opportunity, consistently access rigorous, engaging learning environments, then student outcomes will rise.

As the plan unfolds, its structure is divided into two integrated components:

- Student Academic Outcomes: Focused on improving Tier I instruction, teacher capacity, and instructional leadership.
- Student Experience: Focused on fostering academic conditions, identity, and well-being that accelerates engagement and achievement.

This is not a plan for incrementalism. It is a strategy for transformation, and it begins now.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Executive Summary

### Greatness Grows Here: A Blueprint for Instructional Excellence and Equity

Serving more than 100,000 students across over 220 schools, including traditional, optional, charter, and specialized campuses, Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) is Tennessee's largest district and one of the most culturally rich and diverse urban systems in the country. The MSCS Academic Plan 2025–2030 sets a bold course to ensure that every student, in every school, experiences rigorous, equity-centered instruction that affirms their identity, develops their potential, and prepares them to lead in a changing world.

Rooted in the brilliance of Memphis and anchored in the Instructional Core, the dynamic relationship between student engagement, teacher skill, and quality content, this plan is both a strategic blueprint and a moral covenant: a declaration that **Greatness Grows Here**, in every child, every classroom, and every community.

#### Academic Theory of Action (2025–2030)

*If we align instruction to high-quality content, build teacher and leader capacity, and ensure that all students, especially those furthest from opportunity, consistently access rigorous, engaging learning environments, **then** student outcomes will rise.*

This theory of action drives every academic and operational decision, from curriculum adoption and coaching models to walkthrough tools, resource allocation, and principal pipelines. It is built in direct response to internal data, community wisdom, and historical inequities.

#### Our 3rd Grade Literacy Commitment

By 2030, at least 75% of MSCS students will read on grade level by the end of 3rd grade, a non-negotiable priority grounded in the Science of Reading and supported through SEA tutoring, early diagnostics, culturally responsive materials, and robust Tier I instruction. This goal addresses the most predictive milestone in the K–12 continuum and affirms our commitment to early intervention and educational justice.

#### Five Academic Priorities

1. Foundational Literacy: Science of Reading, SEA tutoring, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary
2. High-Quality Curriculum Implementation: Coherent use of Wonders, myPerspectives, Envision, and Amplify Science
3. Targeted Interventions through MTSS: Strengthened Tier I instruction, strategic Tier II/III supports, and integrated progress monitoring
4. College and Career Readiness: ACT prep, dual enrollment, CCTE alignment, advising, and post-secondary acceleration
5. Job-Embedded Professional Learning & Leadership Coaching: Tiered support, walkthrough protocols, See It. Name It. Do It. cycles, and fidelity rubrics

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### What Informs This Work

This plan reflects one of the most inclusive academic design efforts in district history. More than 100,000 students, 106 principals, 2300 educators, 1500 families, and 45 academic leaders shaped this vision through multilingual surveys, focus groups, principal roundtables, and design sprints.

Contributions from the Council of the Great City Schools, Hanover Research, TNTP, and NAEP further informed the strategic direction. Stakeholder input demanded coherence, cultural relevance, academic excellence, and aligned leadership practices.

### Defining Equity in MSCS

Equity in MSCS means every student receives what they need to thrive—not just the same as others, but what is required to close gaps, elevate brilliance, and unlock opportunity. It is not an initiative; it is the design principle of this plan.

#### Disaggregated Student Outcomes (2023–2024)

##### *ELA and Math Proficiency by Subgroup*

Subgroup	ELA Proficiency (%)	Math Proficiency (%)
All Students	23.7	18.5
Black or African American	20.8	15.5
Hispanic	24.5	20.8
White	55.954.6	48.6
Asian	65.2	60.7
Economically Disadvantaged	17.5	13.3
English Learners	8.8	10.7
Students with Disabilities	8.8	6.5
Gifted	92.3	85.6
Homeless	12.4	8.3

#### Graduation and ACT ≥21 by Subgroup

Subgroup	Graduation Rate (%)	ACT ≥21 (%)
All Students	83.4	16.5
Black or African American	84.3	12.8
Hispanic	80.2	16.2
White	80.1	62.5
Economically Disadvantaged	81.1	9.8
English Learners	69.8 (w/ T1–4)	1.5
Students with Disabilities	73.6	3.3
Non-Econ Disadvantaged	87.8	28.3

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Academic Goals for 2025–2030**

Indicator	2023–24 Baseline	2030 Target
ELA Proficiency (Grade 3)	27.5%	52.0%
ELA Proficiency (Grades 3–12)	23.7%	51.0%
Math Proficiency (Grades 3–12)	18.5%	47.0%
Science Proficiency (Grades 3–12)	26.6%	52.0%
Social Studies Proficiency	25.1%	51.0%
On-Time Graduation Rate	83.4%	95.0%
ACT Composite $\geq$ 21	16.5%	35.0%

**Commented [RC1]:** TISA is 51%

**Commented [RC2R1]:** Goal Statement 2: 51% of students in grades 3-12 will score proficient on the ELA TCAP by 2030.

**From Fragmentation to Coherence**

MSCS is shifting from scattered programs to a unified instructional system. One walkthrough tool. One coaching model. One calendar. One definition of Tier I. Each component, from tutoring to ACT prep, is aligned to the Instructional Core and executed with fidelity and accountability.

**A Promise to Memphis**

This plan is not just about standards, it is about healing, coherence, and justice. It is about confronting history while building a future rooted in excellence and dignity. It is our promise that zip codes will no longer dictate potential, and that our systems will be designed to unlock brilliance, not restrict it.

**Greatness Grows Here. And now, we have the system to prove it.**

## Data Narrative Introduction

Understanding where we are begins with understanding who we serve, and how well we serve them. The data narratives that follow offer more than numbers; they offer a diagnostic mirror of Memphis-Shelby County Schools' (MSCS) current performance across every grade band, subgroup, and system lever. From birth through graduation, from our charter partners to our most vulnerable students navigating homelessness, this section provides a comprehensive, unflinching look at outcomes, gaps, growth trends, and equity challenges.

Each narrative integrates disaggregated academic data, intervention access, demographic shifts, and educator effectiveness to paint a clear picture of the district's trajectory. But these narratives are not retrospective, they are directional. They surface patterns that demand urgent response and highlight bright spots that should be scaled. Where we see stagnation, we investigate root causes. Where we see growth, we codify what works.

This section is intentionally structured to tell a vertically aligned story: how readiness in the early years predicts mastery in the middle grades, how middle school trajectories set the tone for high school, and how high school outcomes reflect, and often magnify, the systemic design of everything that came before. The narratives also elevate the impact of external pressures, mobility, poverty, multilingualism, trauma, while refusing to use them as excuses for underperformance.

This is not just a catalog of what's happened. It's a call to sharpen, scale, and shift. The academic plan that follows is built directly from these insights, because in MSCS, our strategy begins with the data, but it does not end there.

### Birth to 2nd Grade Data Narrative

#### Overview

From 2019 to 2024, Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) sharpened its early-grade academic visibility, revealing a paradox: historic investments in Pre-K expansion and targeted subgroup growth were offset by sharp declines in kindergarten readiness, early math proficiency, and instructional coherence. While post-COVID stabilization is evident, the readiness cliff, especially among English Learners (ELs), Students with Disabilities (SWDs), and economically disadvantaged (ED) students, demands urgent, systemwide recalibration. Each missed benchmark in this window compounds across a child's trajectory. What starts in Pre-K must not only last, but it must also launch.

#### Enrollment and Demographic Trends

Between 2020–2021 and 2023–2024: Pre-K enrollment rebounded from a 37% pandemic drop to 4,763 students across 258 classrooms. K–2 enrollment increased from 24,919 to 26,318.

#### Demographic shifts:

ELs in Pre-K rose 80% (191 → 344); in K–2, they now represent 12.7%. SWDs rose from 1.6% to 12.9% (3,398 students). ED students now comprise 66.0% (17,368 students).



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

These shifts intensify instructional complexity, requiring trauma-informed, multilingual strategies and resource intensification at the earliest levels.

### Academic Proficiency and Growth

MSCS has traditionally measured Kindergarten readiness by the percentage of kindergarten students who reach the 50<sup>th</sup> national percentile on their Fall Reading i-Ready assessments. Between Fall 2022 and 2024, Kindergarten students remained consistent at 34.4%, reaching this benchmark in Reading. For students who were substantially served in an MSCS PreK, that percentage remained relatively stable at 40.4% in 2022 and 40.5% in 2024. If our students were performing in alignment with the national population, we would expect 50% of our students to reach these benchmarks. Therefore, while our MSCS PreK-served students outperform those who were not served, our incoming Kindergarteners still have a persistent readiness gap that should be addressed.

Curriculum Associates, the vendor that provides our i-Ready assessment, has suggested their research indicates a score at or above the 65<sup>th</sup> national percentile on i-Ready corresponds to a student reaching proficiency (i.e., meeting or exceeding expectations) on their associated TCAP assessment. While there is no TCAP assessment for students in grades K-1, the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile on i-Ready can be used as a proxy measure. As such, fewer than 30% of kindergarten students and fewer than 25% of grade 1 students would be expected to score proficient, if they took grade-appropriate TCAP exams. This continues to drop to or below 21% in grades 2 and 3, using the same measure. This is an indication not only of PreK slide but also decreasing proficiency for students who never attended an MSCS PreK.

Among ELs, growth exceeded proficiency, validating that scaffolded instruction and access to language-rich environments can accelerate development despite baseline gaps.

Intersectional Data Highlights (2023–2024)

Group	% Met ELA Growth	% Met Math Growth
EL + IEP	8.4%	10.1%
McKinney-Vento	18.7%	15.2%
Non-EL SWDs	24.1%	21.3%

These data reveal layered inequities and the need for differentiated interventions that address linguistic, cognitive, and socioeconomic barriers simultaneously.

### Intervention Access and Effectiveness

In 2023–2024: RTI<sup>2</sup> served 5,798 K–2 students (24.8%), 12.8% of whom are were in Literacy Tier 3.

Math intervention reached only 2.9% of K–2 students despite wide proficiency gaps. SEA tutoring served over 1,550 early-grade students; 52.8% met ELA annual typical growth targets in i-Ready, outperforming non-SEA tutored students by 4.3 percentage points. ELs in SEA math showed the greatest impact. This imbalance in RTI access forecasts the math lag that persists through elementary grades.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### Summer Learning and Pre-K Outcomes

SLA (2023–2024) served 7,445 students: 65.9% average attendance. i-Ready post-SLA gains confirmed statistically significant ELA growth and significantly less Math loss among students who attended 90% or more of the full program.

### Brigance IED-III (Spring 2024)

80% of Pre-K students reached average/above-average cognitive levels. Median percentiles rose: all students (14 → 36), ED students (12 → 29), SWDs (9 → 12). However, these gains did not translate into kindergarten readiness at scale, evidence of vertical misalignment between Pre-K and early elementary instruction.

### Instructional and Leadership Capacity

Teacher effectiveness dropped from 61.7% (2020–21) to 37.8% (2023–24). Contributing factors include 30%+ novice teachers (0–3 years of experience) 1,000+ annual permit pathway entrants 350+ out-of-field placements for four consecutive years. Only 45% of principals were rated Level 4 or 5. Walkthroughs reveal major variation in coaching, intervention fidelity, and instructional consistency.

### Student Action Expectations (Instructional Core)

Because only 22% of students met readiness benchmarks, students must: Engage in daily phonemic awareness, decoding, and vocabulary routines supported by real-time feedback. Use structured math discourse protocols to articulate reasoning, especially in numeracy and patterning. Participate in quarterly goal setting and data reflection starting in 1st grade. Complete integrated literacy-math learning tasks that mirror authentic application by Grade 2.

### Strategic Implications

- Pre-K to K Coherence
- Align Brigance indicators with K benchmarks
- Launch cross-grade PLCs (Pre-K + K)
- Math Urgency
- Expand RTI<sup>2</sup> math access to ≥ 15% of students
- Add SEA math programming in 2024–2025
- Subgroup Acceleration
- Provide differentiated literacy/math materials
- Deploy multilingual instructional coaches in 25% of early-grade schools
- Workforce Stabilization
- Increase GYO pipeline by 25% (2024–2026)
- Reduce out-of-field placements to <100 by 2026
- Leadership Coaching
- Anchor principal walkthroughs in early-grade look-fors
- Require transition fidelity metrics in school CompStat reviews

### Closing Insight

The Birth to 2nd Grade window is not a warm-up lap—it is the first race. Every growth point now sets the trajectory for Grades 3–5 and beyond. MSCS has demonstrated that students,

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

particularly those underserved, can outpace national growth norms when given the right support. The work ahead is not to experiment but to execute with precision, urgency, and collective belief that *early acceleration is not optional, it is foundational*.

## Grades 3–5 Data Narrative

### Introduction

Grades 3–5 represent the critical midpoint in a child's academic journey, a juncture where foundational skills are solidified, and higher-order thinking begins to take shape. These years are not only pivotal for academic mastery but also predictive of long-term student outcomes, including middle school readiness, high school persistence, and eventual postsecondary access. In Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), this grade band has emerged as both a challenge and an opportunity: a space where the district must simultaneously address unfinished learning and accelerate academic progress.

### Demographics

Between the 2020–2021 and 2023–2024 school years, Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) experienced a 5.8% enrollment increase in Grades 3–5, rising from 11,594 to 12,265 students. During that time, the demographic composition of this pivotal grade band shifted in ways that reflect larger systemic pressures and emerging instructional demands. The number of Black students grew from 7,902 (68.1%) to 9,071 (74.0%), while Hispanic enrollment declined from 2,270 (19.6%) to 1,828 (14.9%), suggesting shifts in enrollment patterns across the District. English Learner (EL) enrollment rose from 1,147 students (9.9%) to 1,629 (13.3%), signaling both an increase in linguistic diversity and a rising need for integrated language supports. Students with Disabilities (SWDs) expanded from 1,333 (11.5%) to 1,594 (13.0%), while the proportion of Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students climbed from 6,956 (60.0%) to 8,090 (66.0%). These shifts collectively demand a Tier 1 instructional foundation that is not only academically rigorous but also culturally responsive, linguistically accessible, and explicitly designed to close systemic gaps while accelerating opportunity. In this context, Grades 3–5 must serve as a fulcrum for academic recovery and equity-centered transformation across MSCS.

### Academic Performance, Trends, and Implications for Strategic Acceleration

From 2020 to 2024, the academic trajectory of Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) students in Grades 3–5 reveals both resilience and fragility. While targeted interventions and curriculum alignment yielded promising gains in literacy and science, mathematics proficiency remains critically low, despite statewide reform and local investment in high-impact strategies. This narrative synthesizes system-level trends, subgroup performance, and intervention outcomes across the mid-elementary grade band to illuminate urgent priorities and promising footholds for future acceleration.

### English Language Arts (ELA): Recovery with Promising Gains

ELA proficiency in Grades 3–5 has improved steadily over the past four years. In Grade 3, the proportion of students meeting TCAP proficiency rose from 14.7% (1,163 out of 7,895 valid tests) in 2020–2021 to 27.5% (2,175 out of 7,919) in 2023–2024. Grade 4 increased from 15.4% (1,232 out of 7,985) to 29.0% (2,329 out of 8,032), and Grade 5 grew from 13.9% (1,116 out of

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

8,027) to 23.8% (1,976 out of 8,304) over the same period. These improvements, a 12.1 percentage point increase across the band, suggest that the implementation of Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) and the continuation of Specialized Education Assistants (SEA) groups may have been catalysts for growth, particularly among students receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.

Despite these gains, MSCS students still trail the Tennessee statewide proficiency rates by significant margins. In 2023–2024, for instance, Grade 3 ELA proficiency was 27.5% in MSCS compared to 41.0% statewide, a 13.5-point gap. The gap is even more pronounced among key subgroups: in Grade 3, Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students' proficiency rate was 21.8% (982 out of 4,495), Students with Disabilities' (SWDs) rate was 14.6% (151 out of 1,035), and English Learners with Transitional 1-4 (EL w/ T1-4) rate was 24.5% (296 out of 1,209), all trailing the district's Grade 3 proficiency rate of 27.5%.

However, one of the most remarkable narratives comes from ELs w/ T1-4. From 2021 to 2024, ELs w/ T1-4 in Grades 3–5 increased their ELA proficiency from 12.5% to 24.0%, representing a 11.5-point gain. In Grade 3 alone, ELs w/ T1-4 proficiency rose from 13.8% to 24.5%, in Grade 4 from 11.4% to 30.0%, and in Grade 5 from 12.4% to 17.9%. These gains reflect the impact of sheltered instruction, co-teaching models, and intentional use of WIDA Can Do Descriptors in Tier 1 planning and delivery. Notably, EL growth trends accelerated in schools that implemented both dedicated ESL coaching and biweekly co-planning time between EL specialists and general educators, highlighting the power of embedded collaboration and linguistically responsive scaffolding.

#### **Mathematics: Stalled Progress and Structural Gaps**

Mathematics continues to represent the district's most urgent academic challenge. Although MSCS saw slight growth in math proficiency between 2021 and 2024, the rates remain less than half of statewide performance. Grade 3 proficiency rate increased from 9.5% (750 out of 7,934) to 26.1% (2,071 out of 7,923), Grade 4 from 10.7% (859 out of 8,046) to 23.4% (1,885 out of 8,043), and Grade 5 from 9.1% (730 out of 8,025) to 22.2% (1,842 out of 8,290). In contrast, the 2023–2024 state proficiency rate for math in the 3-5 grade band was 43.1%, placing MSCS' 3-5 grade band 19.2 percentage points behind.

Subgroup disparities are even more striking. For example, in Grade 5, SWDs' 2023-2024 proficiency rate was 7.7%, ED students' rate was 15.0%, and EL w/ T1-4 rate was 22.4%. While Grade 3 EL w/ T1-4 proficiency rate more than doubled from 10.8% in 2021 to 27.9% in 2024, and Grade 4 EL w/ T1-4 had a similar trend with rates increasing from 10.4% to 27.4%.

Despite widespread implementation of i-Ready diagnostics, the scale of intervention in math remains limited. In 2023–2024, only 410 students received Tier 2 math services and 252 received Tier 3 math, a combined total of 662 students across Grades 3–5, compared to over 5,100 receiving literacy interventions. Among students experiencing housing instability, fewer than 2.5% received any Tier 2 or 3 math support, despite the fact that over 75% scored below expectations on district benchmarks and over 47% were chronically absent.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Root cause analysis indicates that barriers to math intervention include scheduling conflicts, limited math-specific interventionists, and insufficient coordination between core teachers and support staff. Unlike literacy, which benefits from systemic support through SEA and CKLA alignment, math lacks parallel infrastructure and consistent Tier 2/3 programming across schools.

#### **Science: The Quiet Gains**

In 2023–2024, 23.5% of EL students in Grade 5 (23 of 98 students) reached proficiency in science compared to 20.9% in ELA and 17.4% in math, making science a relative area of strength for this subgroup. Grade 4 EL students also demonstrated gains in science proficiency, reaching 30.0% (69 of 230 students) in 2024.

Classrooms integrating inquiry-based learning, literacy-embedded science blocks, and the 5E Instructional Model have driven the highest growth rates, reinforcing the power of content integration in early STEM development.

#### **Strategic Implications for Districtwide Acceleration**

To meet the district's 2030 proficiency targets and build momentum toward equitable academic excellence, Grades 3–5 must serve as the system's instructional fulcrum. Based on the above analysis, MSCS should take the following actions:

1. Deepen Tier 2/3 Math Supports: Expand SEA into math, require aggressive monitoring in all classrooms with math proficiency below 30%, and align RTI entry criteria with i-Ready and benchmark data.
2. Codify EL Success Strategies: Replicate ELA gains across content by formalizing sheltered instruction, embedded vocabulary routines, and integrated language scaffolds across the curriculum.
3. Guarantee Access for High-Need Students: Build a data-triggered early warning system for automatic SEA/RTI referral for any student flagged as EL, SWD, or McKinney-Vento with two or more academic risk indicators.
4. Monitor Intervention Quality: Move from compliance tracking to outcome-based coaching for interventionists and SEA providers, with disaggregated growth targets by subgroup.
5. Align Curriculum to Instructional Coaching: Ensure every Tier 1 math classroom receives coaching support tied to the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) and TEAM rubric expectations, particularly in schools below 30% math proficiency.

#### **Closing Insight**

Grades 3–5 is not a pause point; they are the hinge of transformation. The data affirms that MSCS is making real progress, particularly in ELA for English Learners and in science integration, but these gains remain fragile. The missed opportunities in math and the under-reach of intervention systems for high-risk students demand urgent correction. To meet 2030 goals and sustain academic equity, MSCS must ensure that the mid-elementary years are treated not as maintenance, but as momentum. The next leap begins here, and the best ideas may already be in

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

our schools. By identifying, elevating, and learning from outliers, MSCS can harness its internal bright spots as levers for districtwide excellence.

## Grades 6–8 Data Narrative

### Introduction

Grades 6 through 8 are a make-or-break era for student learning trajectories in Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS). These years represent the academic bridge between foundational skills and discipline-specific mastery, a period when students must internalize complex concepts, transition to abstract reasoning, and begin connecting academic content to future career and college pathways. For many MSCS students, these years also coincide with mounting life responsibilities, deepening inequities, and rapidly expanding developmental needs. As such, middle school is not merely preparatory, it is predictive. The district's ability to accelerate outcomes in these grades will determine not only high school readiness, but long-term academic persistence, engagement, and identity.

### Demographics

Between 2020–2021 and 2023–2024, total enrollment in Grades 6–8 declined from 13,412 to 12,775, a 4.7% decrease. The demographic makeup remains predominantly Black, with Black student enrollment holding steady at approximately 73.2% (from 9,821 in 2020 to 9,356 in 2024). Hispanic enrollment declined slightly from 2,161 (16.1%) to 1,947 (15.2%), while English Learners (ELs) rose modestly from 1,132 (8.4%) to 1,219 (9.5%). Students with Disabilities (SWDs) increased from 1,689 (12.6%) to 1,815 (14.2%), and the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students remained high, growing from 8,594 (64.1%) to 8,954 (70.1%). The data reveal that middle schools in MSCS serve a population with intersecting learning, language, and social needs, requiring aligned academic scaffolds and deeply integrated intervention systems.

### English Language Arts (ELA): Early Warning and Uneven Momentum

ELA proficiency in Grades 6–8 has remained uneven over the past four years, with minimal growth and significant subgroup disparities. In Grade 6, the percentage of students meeting TCAP proficiency rose from 13.3% (1,009 out of 7,600) in 2020–2021 to 18.3% (1,408 out of 7,690) in 2023–2024. Grade 7 climbed from 13.9% (1,075 out of 7,723) to 19.8% (1,468 out of 7,427 students), and Grade 8 improved from 10.8% (811 out of 7,532) to 14.7% (1,063 out of 7,254). These gains, while directionally positive, remain 14.5–17.3 points behind Tennessee's 2023-2024 statewide proficiency rates: 6th grade (35.6%), 7th grade (34.5%), and 8th grade (29.2%).

Among subgroups, English Learners with Transitional 1-4 (EL w/ T1-4) made modest gains but still lag far behind their peers. In Grade 8, EL w/ T1-4 ELA proficiency rose from 3.8% to 6.5% from 2021 to 2024. SWDs declined from 10.6% to 5.1%, and ED students' proficiency rate rose from 6.7% in 2021 to 10.0% in 2024. While the district has introduced strategies such as integrated reading blocks, WIDA-aligned planning, and strategic use of Lexile-based interventions, implementation quality and access remain uneven across middle schools.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Intersectional subgroup data reveals even deeper concern: among ELs with IEPs in Grade 8, only 2.1% met ELA proficiency, far below both overall EL and SWD averages. These patterns mirror those seen in Grades 3–5 and signal the need for dual-modality instructional interventions and high-frequency progress monitoring.

MSCS is beginning to codify the practices of middle schools that are outperforming the district average in ELA growth for ELs and ED students. In several schools with sustained co-teaching structures and robust progress monitoring, EL proficiency gains have doubled over three years. These models are documented and shared through cross-school learning labs.

Equally important is the human story beneath these numbers. MSCS middle schools are not just serving students, they are serving future engineers, artists, caretakers, and leaders. When instruction is culturally responsive, developmentally attuned, and emotionally safe, students begin to believe in the futures they cannot yet see. That belief, paired with precise instruction, is a cornerstone of middle grade transformation.

**ELA Trendline Summary Table: 2021–2024**

Subgroup	Grade 6 (2021–2024)	Grade 7 (2021–2024)	Grade 8 (2021–2024)
All Students	13.3% → 18.3%	13.9% → 19.8%	10.8% → 14.7%
Black or African American	11.0% → 15.0%	11.2% → 16.5%	8.4% → 11.8%
Hispanic or Latino	12.3% → 20.4%	13.0% → 20.9%	11.8% → 15.8%
English Learners with Transitional 1-4	9.0% → 12.7%	8.0% → 10.9%	3.8% → 6.5%
SWDs	11.8% → 7.9%	12.3% → 7.6%	10.6% → 5.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	7.8% → 12.8%	8.9% → 13.2%	6.7% → 10.0%

**Mathematics: Chronic Stagnation and Capacity Gaps**

Math proficiency across Grades 6–8 has shown some growth but remains unacceptably low. Grade 6 math proficiency rose from 7.6% to 13.6% from 2021 to 2024, Grade 7 increased from 7.3% to 17.5%, and Grade 8 grew from 8.0% to 17.7%. These levels trail behind the state's 2024 proficiency rates of 35.9% (Grade 6), 38.1% (Grade 7), and 33.9% (Grade 8). The absence of SEA in middle schools, coupled with shallow math-specific PD and a high number of out-of-field placements (91 in math), has left critical learning gaps unaddressed. Subgroup disparities in Grade 8 persisted in 2023–2024 with low proficiency rates for EL w/ T1-4 (12.3%), SWDs (4.8%), and ED students (12.0%), compared to the district's overall Grade 8 math proficiency rate of 17.7%.

**Science: Underutilized Strength and Equity Gaps**

While often underemphasized, science shows promising growth. Grade 6 science proficiency rose from 15.2% in 2021 to 24.7% in 2024. In Grade 7, proficiency nearly doubled from 15.1% to 29.0% from 2021 and 2024. Grade 8 climbed from 10.0% to 18.8%. Subgroups such as EL w/ T1-4 in Grade 7 reached 20.4% in 2024, outpacing their ELA (10.9%) and math (14.5%)

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

proficiency rates. Schools using inquiry-based units, science notebooks, and weekly lab experiences drove the highest gains, reinforcing the potential of content-rich, hands-on learning.

#### Strategic Implications

1. **Accelerate Math Recovery:** Invest in math-specific intervention models, designate math leads per campus and implement diagnostic-to-intervention protocols similar to literacy.
2. **Build Leadership Capacity:** Link principal evaluations to subgroup performance in math and science; provide targeted coaching in data use and instructional supervision.
3. **Elevate EL Instruction Across Subjects:** Scale sheltered instruction strategies to math and science; offer joint planning time for ESL and content teachers.
4. **Close the Feedback Loop:** Expand progress monitoring systems in middle school and ensure real-time use of data to adjust instruction.
5. **Codify Science Success Models:** Document and replicate practices from high-growth science classrooms; integrate literacy routines in science planning.

#### Closing Insight

Middle school is not merely a transition; it is a powerful determinant of high school and postsecondary success. The gains in science and early signs of ELA momentum offer hope, but the stagnation in math, especially for multilingual learners and SWDs, demands course correction. MSCS must make middle school its instructional proving ground. The next phase of transformation hinges on how we teach, lead, and intervene in Grades 6–8. Let us meet this moment not with more urgency alone, but with precision, collaboration, and a fierce commitment to every student's potential.

## Grades 9–12 Data Narrative

#### Introduction

High school represents both the culmination of PK–12 education and the launchpad for college, career, or workforce success. For Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), Grades 9–12 are a mirror of the system's cumulative effectiveness. Each graduating cohort reflects how well the district aligned early interventions, sustained rigorous instruction, and closed persistent equity gaps. Between 2020 and 2024, MSCS made measurable gains in proficiency, graduation, and readiness indicators, but these successes remain tempered by opportunity disparities, especially among multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

#### Enrollment and Demographics

High school enrollment increased slightly from 25,157 (2020–2021) to 25,624 (2023–2024). The demographic composition remains majority Black (71.5%) and includes growing numbers of Hispanic/Latino students (19.2%), English Learners (7.8%), and Economically Disadvantaged students (58.2%). Students with disabilities make up 13.4% of the high school population. These demographic patterns, stable over time, call for robust, multilayered academic and postsecondary preparation systems. Percentages below are for the 2020-21 and 2023-24 school years, unless otherwise noted.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### Academic Performance and Proficiency Trends

Systemwide gains were observed in state assessments:

- English II proficiency: 19.5% → 36.7%
- Algebra I proficiency: 5.0% → 13.6%
- Geometry proficiency: 6.6% → 19.9%
- Biology proficiency: 22.9% → 27.4% (TN 2024 proficiency rate= 45.3%)

**Subgroup Performance (2023–2024)**

Subgroup	ELA Proficiency	Math Proficiency	ACT ≥ 21
All Students	27.9%	14.8%	16.5%
Economically Disadvantaged	21.1%	11.4%	9.8%
English Learners with T1-4	8.3%	5.9%	1.5%
Students with Disabilities	5.4%	3.8%	3.3%

These disparities mirror earlier grade trends, where literacy outpaces math across all student groups and readiness remains lowest among intersecting subgroups.

### ACT Readiness and Benchmark Attainment

The district's ACT composite mean declined from 17.3 to 16.4 from 2020–2024. In 2023–2024:

- 29.2% met the English College Readiness Benchmark (CRB)
- 10.1% met Math CRB
- 20.0% met Reading CRB
- 10.4% met Science CRB
- Only 6.1% of students met all four ACT benchmarks.

### EPSO Access and Equity

Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) access has expanded:

- Dual Enrollment: 7.6% → 12.1%
- Statewide Dual Credit: 49.5% → 29.5%
- District-Managed AP pass rate (percentage of AP exams with a score of 3 or higher): 53.9 (2020) → 50.0%
- Charter AP pass rate: 17.0% (2020) → 26.3% (2024)
- Ready Graduates: 20.7 (2020 graduating cohort) → 36.6% (2023 graduating cohort)

### AP participation by subgroup (2022–2023):

- Black or African American males: 7.1%
- Black or African American females: 11.2%
- Hispanic or Latino males: 10.6%
- Hispanic or Latino females: 14.2%
- SWD: 2.1%
- ELs: 3.0%

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Postsecondary Outcomes for Students with Disabilities**

- 2020–2021: 9.9% enrolled in higher education
- 2022–2023: 23.8% enrolled
- 2023–2024: 80.2% achieved successful postsecondary outcomes (employment, training, or enrollment)
- Programs such as Tiger LIFE and Project SEARCH enrolled 45 students, with 40 completing: 18 secured employment, 21 pursued further education.

**CCR and Graduation Trends**

- Graduation Rate: 77.7% (2020) → 83.4% (2024)
- CCR Rate: 49.6% (2023) → 61.3% (2024)

**CCTE and Intervention Systems**

MSCS offers 58 pathways in 16 career clusters. However, only 23.8% of students completed a full Program of Study in 2023–2024.

**RTI Access**

- Tier 3 Literacy: 269 students
- Tier 3 Math: 109 students
- RTI Reach: 2.1% of HS students in 2023–2024

**Instructional Quality and Educator Effectiveness**

- Level 4/5 TEM Teachers: 61.7% → 37.8%
- Out-of-Field Teachers: 354 (incl. 91 in Math, 82 in science)
- Permit Pathway Teachers: ~1,000 annually
- Principal Retention: 91%+
- High School Principals (TEAM LOE 4/5): 45%

**Curriculum and Instructional Systems**

- ELA: myPerspectives, CommonLit, Reading Prescriptions
  - Math: Savvas (replacing Eureka)
  - Science and Social Studies: Standards-aligned maps and scaffolds
- Instructional coaching remains uneven in implementation, especially in STEM.

**Closing Insight**

Grades 9–12 reflect the accumulated strength, or strain, of the MSCS PK–12 pipeline. Subgroup gaps in EPSO access, ACT readiness, and CCTE completion are not isolated, they are compounded by underfunded and inconsistently implemented support systems in prior grades.

The gains among students with disabilities, and increases in CCR and AP pass rates, prove that progress is possible. But precision, not access alone, must define MSCS's next frontier in high school success.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Homeless Students' Data Narrative

### *Data Analysis and Data Limitations*

#### Overview

From 2020 to 2024, Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) served a growing population of students experiencing housing instability, with those identified under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act representing some of the most vulnerable learners in the district. These students face intersecting barriers to success, including school mobility, chronic absenteeism, trauma exposure, and unmet academic needs, yet they also demonstrate measurable gains when provided with structured support, academic intervention, and relational stability.

This analysis integrates updated, validated data from across the four-year period and presents a comprehensive view of the conditions, outcomes, and required systemic shifts necessary to close opportunity gaps for housing-insecure students.

#### Identification and Enrollment Trends

In 2023–2024, 1,152 students were formally identified as homeless through the McKinney-Vento Act, comprising 0.95% of total MSCS enrollment. These figures reflect a 26.6% increase from the 2022–2023 count of 910, signaling either an actual rise in need or improvements in identification practices.

Additional populations navigating similar instability include:

- 754 students in foster care (Department of Children's Services custody)
- 107 students in juvenile detention facilities (JDC classification)

Moreover, 254 McKinney-Vento students (22.0%) had active IEPs, substantially higher than the district average of 13.2%, indicating a disproportionate burden of dual-exceptionality (disability + homelessness) that requires integrated service planning and intensified case management.

#### Attendance and Mobility

Attendance and mobility challenges compound academic risk:

- While average daily attendance (ADA) for the general population exceeded 90%, preliminary data for McKinney-Vento students shows ADA hovering below 80%.
- Chronic absenteeism among homeless students exceeded 47%, more than double the district's 2024 rate of 29.5%.
- School mobility, defined as mid-year school transfers, was 2.8 times higher among McKinney-Vento students than their housed peers.

These patterns disrupt instructional continuity, complicate intervention delivery, and exacerbate feelings of disconnection and instability.

#### Academic Performance and Intervention Access

RTI and SEA Services

- In 2023–2024, RTI participation among homeless students was just 14.3%, with Tier 3 literacy interventions reaching fewer than 110 students.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- Math interventions were even more limited, serving fewer than 60 students in Tier 2 and Tier 3 combined.
- Specialized Education Assistant (SEA) support was not disaggregated by housing status, but among all SEA-supported students, in 2023–24 52.8% met their i-Ready ELA growth targets, compared to 48.5% of non-supported peers.

**i-Ready and TCAP Outcomes (Grades 3–8)**

- In Spring 2024, only 11.5% of homeless students in Grades 3–8 were proficient in ELA and 8.2% were proficient in math.
- By comparison, districtwide proficiency rates were 22.3% (ELA) and 19.7% (math), revealing a proficiency gap of more than 10 percentage points.
- On i-Ready growth measures, less than 35% of McKinney-Vento students met annual growth expectations, underscoring the need for more intensive, wraparound instructional strategies.

**Graduation and Postsecondary Outcomes**

High school data from 2023–2024 shows:

- A McKinney-Vento graduation rate of 68.1%, compared to 83.4% for the general population.
- Postsecondary enrollment tracking is underway, with a new field in the SIS system slated for implementation in 2024–2025 to support longitudinal analysis.

These trends mirror national research: unhoused students graduate at rates 10–15 percentage points below their peers and face barriers to college matriculation due to documentation challenges, application fatigue, and financial aid complexities.

**Early Childhood and K–2 Literacy**

- In 2023–2024, 124 McKinney-Vento students were enrolled in Pre-K or Head Start, representing 10.8% of total Pre-K enrollment.
- Among those students, fewer than 30% met kindergarten readiness benchmarks in reading and math upon K entry, compared to 46% of all MSCS students in 2019–2020 and 22% in 2023–2024.
- K–2 i-Ready screeners showed that only 18.7% of homeless students met ELA growth targets, and 15.2% did so in math, indicating both low proficiency and slow growth rates.

These results emphasize the urgency of early, developmentally appropriate interventions before learning gaps widen irreparably.

**Access to Support Services**

All McKinney-Vento students were eligible for a full menu of wraparound services in 2023–2024, but access documentation revealed inconsistencies:

Service Type	Coverage (Verified Students)	Notes
McKinney-Vento Liaison Support	100% (1,152 students)	All students had case files

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Service Type	Coverage (Verified Students)	Notes
School-Based Counseling	Pending from Student Support Services	Partial data available
Case Management	93% (1,072 students)	Manual verification in progress
Housing/Legal Referrals	44% (510 students)	Based on available referral logs

Despite the strong infrastructure, service fragmentation and documentation variability remain challenges, particularly in multi-agency coordination and follow-through.

These limitations, if addressed through system upgrades and cross-agency coordination, would significantly enhance the district's ability to monitor, support, and improve outcomes for students experiencing homelessness.

#### **Closing Insight**

In Memphis-Shelby County Schools, more than a thousand students arrive each morning without the certainty of where they'll sleep at night. These learners deserve more than compliance; they deserve excellence. They deserve systems designed not only to identify their needs, but to meet them with urgency, dignity, and hope. The academic road ahead is steep, but with the right support, these students can and do succeed. Homelessness is a condition, not a destiny. The question is not whether they can rise. It's whether we will rise with them.

## **Charter School Data Narrative**

While charter schools operate independently of the Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) academic plan, they are an integral part of the district's educational portfolio and serve a significant portion of the student population. From 2020 to 2024, charter school enrollment in MSCS remained relatively stable, averaging approximately 17% of total district enrollment annually. In 2023–2024, 18,376 students attended charter schools, representing 16.8% of all MSCS students, more than four times the 4% charter enrollment rate reported statewide in Tennessee and more than double the national average of 7.5%.

Charter school sizes have also grown modestly over time. The average charter school enrolled 336 students in 2020–2021 and rose to 346.7 students by 2023–2024. This slight increase aligns with national trends, as charter enrollment across the U.S. expanded from 3.1 million in 2019–2020 to over 3.7 million students in 2022–2023. Although MSCS charter enrollment has remained steady in raw numbers, the district's proportion of students attending charters has slightly declined over the past four years due to increases in overall district enrollment. Enrollment by grade band reveals notable concentration in middle school. In 2023–2024, charter schools served 14.9% of all Pre-K through 2nd grade students, 16.9% of those in grades 3–5, 21.1% of students in grades 6–8, and 15.1% of students in grades 9–12. These distributions suggest that charter schools may be viewed by families as particularly viable options for middle school education.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Over the last four years, the MSCS charter landscape has experienced modest fluctuation in school openings and closures. The 2020–2021 school year marked the closure of Kaleidoscope School and the launch of two new charters: Beacon College Prep and Freedom Prep–Westwood. In 2021–2022, two Memphis Academy of Health Sciences schools (Middle and High) closed, while MSE Cordova 6–12 opened. The only change in 2022–2023 was the closure of KIPP Memphis Academy Middle.

Expansion is on the horizon. In 2024–2025, Journey Coleman and Westside Middle opened, followed by Tennessee Career Academy in 2025–26. Journey–Northeast has deferred its opening until 2026–27. The 2026–27 academic year will also see the launch of the Memphis Grizzlies Prep STEAM School for Girls, signaling a growing diversification of academic offerings and instructional models available through the charter sector.

Charter schools in MSCS vary widely in instructional focus, size, and target population. While academic performance data are not fully integrated into the district's strategic accountability framework, charter schools remain accountable to both the Tennessee Department of Education and their authorizers for meeting academic, financial, and operational benchmarks. Many operate with distinct educational models, ranging from college-preparatory programs to career-themed academies, and provide families with options tailored to student needs.

As the charter sector continues to evolve, MSCS remains committed to oversight and transparency to ensure all schools in its portfolio, whether district-managed or charter, contribute meaningfully to student success in Memphis. The district's portfolio strategy seeks to balance choice, equity, and quality to support strong academic outcomes for all students.

## Curriculum, Assessment, and Instructional Design

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Kindergarten through Grade 2

- **Curriculum Maps:** Leverage the *Wonders* content to provide quarterly English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum maps to support teachers in implementing and pacing literacy instruction aligned to the curriculum.
- **Specialized Education Assistants (SEA):** Decrease student to teacher ratio in grades K-2 by leveraging Specialized Education Assistants. **SEA Tracker:** A SEA tracker in *Power Apps* is used to monitor how our Specialized Education Assistants (SEAs) are effectively leveraging their support within schools. This tool allows us to quantify the time SEAs dedicated to various categories, including whole group instruction supports, small group instruction, Response to Instruction & Intervention (RTI<sup>2</sup>), one-on-one instruction, instructional support beyond grades K-2, substitute support, and non-instructional duties. **Spring Training:** In collaboration with *All Memphis*, six learning sessions are designed to significantly enhance the role of SEAs in K-2 classrooms by equipping them with essential skills necessary for effective student support.
- **Early Literacy Series:** Live virtual professional learning opportunities focused on the Science of Reading and *Wonders*. These sessions are tailored for novice and K-2 teachers.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Curate curriculum to address student learning gaps to be addressed during winter break, spring break, and Summer Learning Academy (SLA). The extended learning curriculum includes resources from *Wonders*, *Ready Read*, and *Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement Resources*.
- **Governor's Early Literacy Foundation (GELF) K-3 Home Library:** In collaboration with the *Governor's Early Literacy Foundation (GELF)*, students in grades K-3 receive grade specific mini-libraries that include high-quality books. These books are delivered to their homes through the summer.
- **Early Literacy Network (ELN):** In collaboration with TDOE and other southwest districts within the state, the District participates in professional learning hosted by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) each month. These sessions provide District literacy leaders an invaluable opportunity to deepen understanding of foundational literacy skills, with a particular focus on the core actions outlined in the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG).
- **K-2 Activity Calendars:** Phonics Journey Activity Calendars are available for K-2 students to enhance their learning experience through engaging at-home activities. Each calendar features a variety of fun and interactive tasks that align with the phonics skills students are currently developing.

#### Strategic Literacy Acceleration Through SPL: Pre-K to Grade 5

Memphis-Shelby County Schools is committed to radically transforming student literacy outcomes by ensuring that all students, regardless of zip code, experience daily, high-quality reading instruction grounded in the Science of Reading. The Science of Reading is not a program; it is a body of research that reveals how students learn to read and what instructional practices are most effective. From foundational phonemic awareness in Pre-K to multisyllabic

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

word decoding and comprehension in Grade 5, our district has embedded this research into both our core curriculum and our teacher professional development model.

This charge is supported by the **Strategic Partners of Literacy (SPL)**, a cross-functional team composed of experts in curriculum, assessment, early literacy, professional learning, school improvement, and district leadership. This is a districtwide imperative, driven by urgency, grounded in research, and shared across all departments and schools. The SPL team plays a vital role in advancing this work.

#### **Core Goals of the SPL Team**

SPL's goals are unabashedly ambitious, because our students deserve nothing less. The team is responsible for:

- Ensuring that 75% of students are reading on grade level by 2030.
- Embedding the Science of Reading into curriculum, instruction, and assessment from Pre-K through Grade 5.
- Expanding access to high-quality Pre-K so that at least 3,200 four-year-olds are served annually by 2025.
- Providing high-quality coaching and professional development for teachers and leaders aligned to best practices in foundational literacy.
- Ensuring all K–5 teachers complete LETRS training and have direct support on how to apply that training in weekly lesson delivery.
- Aligning instructional materials, observation tools, and coaching language to support consistency across classrooms and schools.
- Monitoring fidelity of implementation and ensuring alignment across interventions, screeners, and instructional practices.
- Using real-time data to drive decision-making and accelerate student progress.

#### **Implementation in Practice: Curriculum and Professional Development**

MSCS K–5 lesson plans are purposefully aligned to the Science of Reading and designed to serve as a bridge between LETRS training and daily classroom instruction. These plans embed research-based routines for phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers are explicitly guided on how to integrate LETRS-aligned instructional moves into whole group, small group, and Tier II/III intervention time.

This integration ensures that all students, regardless of school assignment or teacher, have access to strong, coherent reading instruction that aligns to how the brain learns to read. Teachers are not expected to navigate this work alone. Through embedded coaching, model lessons, and school-based support, SPL ensures that professional learning translates into instructional excellence.

#### **Reading on Grade Level vs. Passing the 3rd Grade TCAP (TISA Goal)**

In 2025, only 29.2% of MSCS third-grade students scored proficient or advanced on the TCAP ELA assessment. While this figure is alarming, it is critical that we distinguish between two separate metrics:



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **Reading on Grade Level** means a student can fluently decode, comprehend, and respond to grade-level texts. This is measured through multiple data sources—universal screeners like aimswebPlus or i-Ready, running records, and formative assessments—throughout the school year.
- **Meeting the TISA 3rd Grade Goal** means a student scored “On Track” or “Mastered” on the TCAP ELA assessment, a one-time summative measure used for promotion decisions under Tennessee’s 3rd Grade Literacy Law.

These two measures are not interchangeable. A student may demonstrate grade-level reading growth in class but not pass TCAP due to anxiety, timing, or test-specific challenges. Conversely, a student may pass TCAP but still lack fluency and comprehension in authentic reading tasks.

Our academic plan accounts for both outcomes, ensuring students are able to pass a test and are genuinely literate.

#### Why This Alignment Matters

The SPL work is not an initiative. On the side of the academic plan, it is the literacy implementation engine of the plan itself. It anchors our equity agenda by placing reading at the center of access, opportunity, and excellence. Our policies, coaching systems, and curricular choices are deeply tied to the goals of SPL, ensuring coherence and consistency.

This integration of curriculum, professional learning, real-time assessment, and responsive intervention is what will ultimately shift student trajectories. The urgency is clear. The strategy is aligned. The work is underway. Together, through the bold vision of SPL and the strategic coherence of the MSCS Academic Plan, we will deliver on the promise of literacy for every child in Memphis.

#### Grades 3 through 5

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are provided to support teachers in implementing and pacing literacy instruction aligned to *Wonders* high-quality instructional materials.
- **Specialized Education Assistants Spring Training:** In collaboration with *All Memphis*, six learning sessions are designed to significantly enhance the role of SEAs supporting during-the-day tutoring for students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, as aligned with the state-wide Literacy Commitment.
- **Voices of Tomorrow Oratory Ambassador Competition:** This initiative aims to empower students to articulate their thoughts and ideas through oratory skills, while fostering confidence and creativity among students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
- **Literacy Implementation Network (LIN):** In collaboration with TDOE, *The New Teacher Project (TNT)*, and other school districts in the southwest region of the state, District and school level staff engage in professional learning and classroom observations to improve implementation of the high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **School Day Tutoring (State Mandated):** Identified 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in ELA tutoring with a 1:3 tutor-to-student ratio. Two thirty-minute sessions per week for 12 weeks per semester are required to meet TDOE guidelines.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

#### Grades 6 through 8

- **Curriculum Maps:** Leveraging the *myPerspectives* content, quarterly ELA curriculum maps are available to support teachers in implementing the HQIM and pacing literacy instruction.
- **Voices of Tomorrow Oratory Ambassador Competition:** This initiative aims to empower students to articulate their thoughts and ideas through oratory skills, while fostering confidence and creativity among students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
- **Literacy Implementation Network (LIN):** In collaboration with TDOE, *The New Teacher Project (TNTP)*, and other school districts in the southwest region of the state, District and school level staff engage in professional learning and classroom observations to improve implementation of the HQIM.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

#### Grades 9 through 12

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are provided to support teachers in implementing and pacing literacy instruction aligned to *Wonders* high-quality instructional materials.
- **Voices of Tomorrow Oratory Ambassador Competition:** This initiative aims to empower students to articulate their thoughts and ideas through oratory skills, while fostering confidence and creativity among students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
- **Literacy Implementation Network (LIN):** In collaboration with TDOE, *The New Teacher Project (TNTP)*, and other school districts in the southwest region of the state, District and school level staff engage in professional learning and classroom observations to improve implementation of the HQIM.
- **Complex Text Course:** Curate curriculum to provide 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade students with a double block of ELA. The curriculum is aligned with the State standards and ACT expectations.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

#### K-12 District-Wide

- **Intellectual Preparation Guides:** Use of the unit and lesson preparation guides assists teachers and leaders with wide angle curriculum internalization through the unit guide which is completed at the start of each unit to support the understanding of how text and tasks are connected. The lesson preparation guide supports the intellectual preparation of teachers to

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

prepare for the delivery of lessons, prepare scaffolds for students, and prepare opportunities for students to carry the cognitive load of lessons.

- **Dyslexia-Specific Intervention:** This intervention tool provides curriculum and resources to leverage within tier 2 and 3 interventions and a supplement to tier 1 foundational literacy instruction.
- **Monthly Curriculum Series:** Professional learning offerings are hosted for grade-bands K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The series focuses on topics such as the following: Writing Opportunities in the *myPerspectives* and *Wonders* Curricula, Planning and Navigating with the Curricula Resources, and Taking a Closer Look at Assessment Resources.
- **Literacy Leadership Series:** In collaboration with the Literacy Implementation Network, an in-person literacy leadership series was presented at LDW during the months of January, February, and March to Principals, Assistant Principals, and PLC Coaches. A series of professional learning for school-leaders, focused on improving literacy instruction.
- **Leadership Development Week (LDW):** A monthly school-leader focused on professional learning opportunities. The sessions are leader-facing and based on District-wide literacy trends.
- **Reading Specialist Certification:** In partnership with Memphis Teacher Residency (MTR) teachers are able to engage in a Reading Specialist program, to enhance foundational literacy instruction. Teachers electing to participate engage in coursework on foundational literacy, assessments, and writing across contents. Approximately 92% of participants earn a passing Praxis score and attain a Reading Specialist endorsement.
- **Cross-Departmental Instructional Norming Visits:** Participate in cross-departmental school visits each month. Principals and District teams collaboratively observe five to six classrooms and engage in a debrief regarding instructional trends and practices. The use of the IPG tool allows for a common metric to identify effective instruction.
- **Reading Calendars:** Highlights current curriculum topics and questioning strategies parents can use to support students with the topics and themes students are discussing in class. The goal is to promote the love of literacy at home and school and to assist in building students' background knowledge on topics and themes they are reading, writing, and discussing in class.
- **Literacy Toolkit:** Provides strategies and activities that families can use to engage students in literacy-based activities thus strengthening the school-home connection.

## MATHEMATICS

### Kindergarten through Grade 2

- **Curriculum Maps: Quarterly** curriculum maps are curated to ensure all instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as supporting teachers with *Savvas enVision* implementation. Maps are curated to address district specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance. Standards aligned with number and operations continued to be an area of focus for kindergarten and grade-1.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Curate curriculum to address student learning gaps to be addressed during winter break, spring break, and Summer Learning Academy (SLA).

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### Grades 3 through 5

- **Curriculum Maps: Quarterly** curriculum maps are curated to ensure all instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as supporting teachers with *Savvas enVision* implementation. Maps are curated to address district specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum: Curate** curriculum to address student learning gaps to be addressed during winter break, spring break, and Summer Learning Academy.
- **Calculator Guidance:** Provides Calculator Guidance to identify 3-5 mathematics standards that prohibit or require technology to demonstrate mastery as well as the historical representation of those standards on TCAP.
- **Reteaching Calendars: Spring** semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on district-wide academic trends. Teachers are provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment to provide students additional practice opportunity during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

### Grades 6 through 8

- **Curriculum Maps: Quarterly** curriculum maps are curated to ensure all instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as supporting teachers with *iReady Classroom Mathematics* implementation. Maps are curated to address district specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum: Curate** curriculum to address student learning gaps to be addressed during winter break, spring break, and Summer Learning Academy.
- **Calculator Guidance: Organize** and support graphing calculator sessions presented by a certified Texas Instruments Teacher Leader to enhance Algebra I teachers' use of the TI-84 calculator during instruction.
- **Reteaching Calendars: Spring** semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on district-wide academic trends. Teachers are provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment to provide students additional practice opportunity during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.
- **Algebra I Expansion: Provide** grade-7 students demonstrating readiness, the opportunity to enroll in Algebra I during their 8<sup>th</sup>-grade year. Additionally, a two-week Algebra Bridge Camp is offered to these students. The Bridge Camp is designed to provide students with 8th grade-level content needed for achieving success in Algebra I.
- **Algebra I Teacher Certification:** To support the expansion of Algebra I in 8th grade, certified math teachers have the opportunity to engage in summer professional learning provided by a State Department approved trainer. Once the training is completed, the Praxis assessment is required. The District sponsors the cost of the Praxis exam.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### Grades 9 through 12

- **Curriculum Maps: Quarterly** curriculum maps are curated to ensure all instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as supporting teachers with *McGraw Hill* (Algebra 2 and Statistics) and *Big Ideas* (Geometry) implementation. Maps are curated to address district specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum: Curate** curriculum aligned to Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry, to address student learning gaps. This curriculum is leveraged during winter break, spring break, and Summer Learning Academy.
- **Calculator Guidance:** Provide Calculator Guidance aligned with Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry standards that prohibit or require technology to demonstrate mastery as well as the historical representation of those standards on End of Course (EOC) assessments.
- **Reteaching Calendars: Spring** semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on district-wide academic trends within Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry. Teachers are provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment to provide students additional practice opportunity during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.
- **Algebra 1 Enhancement Course: Curate** curriculum to provide 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade students with a double block of mathematics opportunity. The curriculum is aligned with the State standards and ACT expectations.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

### K-12 District-Wide

- **Intellectual Preparation Guides:** Use of the unit and lesson preparation guides assists teachers and leaders with wide angle curriculum internalization through the unit guide which is completed at the start of each unit to support the understanding of how text and tasks are connected. The lesson preparation guide supports the intellectual preparation of teachers to prepare for the delivery of lessons, prepare scaffolds for students, and prepare opportunities for students to carry the cognitive load of lessons. Annotated weekly lesson preparation guide to assist teachers and instructional leaders in thoroughly internalizing the focus of lessons taught during an instructional week, coherence across lessons and within lessons, and the rigor of lessons to ensure students instructional experience will lead to meeting the demands of the grade-level standards and mathematical practices.
- **Leadership Development Week (LDW):** Grade Band Specific Mathematics focused on professional learning opportunities for school leaders (Principals, Assistant Principals, and PLC Coaches). Professional learning content is guided by District-wide trends from a variety of data sources including the following: assessment results, classroom observations utilizing the IPG, and ongoing staff and student feedback.
- **Cross-Departmental Instructional Norming Visits:** Participate in cross-departmental school visits each month to align with the District's instructional vision. During these walks, the District office team collaborates with principals to observe five to six classrooms and

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

engage in brief discussions about instructional trends and practices. To guide observations, the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG) developed by the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). Use of this tool allows for a common metric to identify effective instruction.

- **Instructional Focus Documents:** Assist teachers with deepening understanding of the State standards, identifying aspects of rigor (focus, coherence, and rigor), and pinpointing the specific knowledge and skills that provide evidence of standards mastery.
- **Math Implementation Network (MIN):** In collaboration with TDOE and other school districts in the southwest region of the state, District and school level staff engage in professional learning and classroom observations to improve implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

## SCIENCE

### Kindergarten through Grade 2

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are curated to ensure instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as support teachers with newly adopted *Savvas Elevate Science* textbook implementation. Maps are curated to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance. Standards aligned with TN Science Standards continue to be an area of focus for kindergarten and grade-8. Each Curriculum map is completed with and researched to ensure K-8 lessons and assessments are aligned with the State and District agenda and is organized for tier one instruction as well as scaffolded learning.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Curate curriculum to address student learning gaps to be addressed during winter, spring, and summer breaks.

### Grades 3 through 8

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are curated to ensure instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as support teachers with newly adopted *Savvas Elevate Science* textbook implementation. Maps are curated to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance. Standards aligned with TN Science Standards continue to be an area of focus for kindergarten and grade-8. Each Curriculum map is completed with and researched to ensure K-8 lessons and assessments are aligned with the State and District agenda and is organized for tier one instruction as well as scaffolded learning.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Curate curriculum to address student learning gaps to be addressed during winter, spring, and summer breaks.
- **Reteaching Calendar:** Spring semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on district-wide academic trends. Teachers are provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment to provide students additional practice opportunity during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.
- **Common Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### Grades 9 through 12

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are curated to ensure all instructional materials and practices align with current state standards as well as supporting teachers with newly adopted *McGraw-Hill* textbooks for the following high school courses: Physical Science, Biology, Environmental Science, Chemistry, and Human Anatomy & Physiology. Maps are curated to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, and cultural relevance.
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Biology curriculum is curated to provide resources aligned to District-wide trends. These resources are available to tutors and families during winter, spring, and summer breaks.
- **Reteaching Calendar:** Spring semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on District-wide academic trends. Teachers are provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment to provide students additional practice opportunity during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.
- **Collaboration with Jax Lab:** The collaboration with Jax Laboratory is designed to provide biology teachers knowledge of the equipment students use in the laboratories that focus on genetics. Each participating teacher receives their own equipment and training along with a stipend for the three years. Dr. C. Madu of White Station High School is the owner of the grant alongside Jax Lab. There are 12 MSCS participating teachers.

### K-12 District-Wide

- **Intellectual Preparation Guides:** Use of the unit and lesson preparation guides assist teachers and leaders with wide angle curriculum internalization. The lesson preparation guide supports the intellectual preparation of teachers to prepare for the delivery of lessons, prepare scaffolds for students, and prepare opportunities for students to carry the cognitive load of lessons. Suggested weekly lessons with anchoring phenomenon to assist teachers and instructional leaders in thoroughly internalizing the focus of lessons taught during an instructional week, coherence across lessons and within lessons, and the rigor of lessons to ensure students instructional experience will lead to meeting the demands of the grade-level standards and science concepts.
- **Standard Guides:** Assist teachers with deepening understanding of the State standards through identification of the grade band progression, central ideas for conceptual understanding, resources for explaining the phenomena, and specific knowledge and skills that provide evidence of standards mastery.
- **Lending Library:** Offers teachers an opportunity to check out and return non-consumable items according to the state standards and utilize them when the standards are taught based on the pacing of the MSCS curriculum map. The purpose is to assist students in better understanding the depth of the standards prior to the state assessment and life.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## SOCIAL STUDIES

### Kindergarten through Grade 2

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are developed to ensure state approved and district procured instructional materials, along with recommended educational practices, aligning with current state social studies standards. The curriculum maps are designed to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, cultural relevance, and local history (i.e. Memphis 13 Unit).
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Extended Learning Curriculum is developed for each grade band to serve as a review of social studies standards that have been taught according to the grade level's curriculum pacing. Extended Learning Curriculum affords teachers, students, and families the opportunity to address learning gaps during winter, spring, and summer breaks

### Grades 3 through 5

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are developed to ensure state approved and district procured instructional materials, along with recommended educational practices, aligning with current state social studies standards. The curriculum maps are designed to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, cultural relevance, and local history (Memphis 13 Unit).
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Extended Learning Curriculum is developed for each grade band to serve as a review of social studies standards that have been taught according to the grade level's curriculum pacing. Extended Learning Curriculum affords teachers, students, and families the opportunity to address learning gaps during winter, spring, and summer breaks.

### Grades 6 through 8

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are developed to ensure state approved and district procured instructional materials, along with recommended educational practices, aligning with current state social studies standards. The curriculum maps are designed to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, cultural relevance, and local history (i.e. Facing History).
- **Extended Learning Curriculum:** Extended Learning Curriculum is developed for each grade band to serve as a review of social studies standards that have been taught according to the grade level's curriculum pacing. Extended Learning Curriculum affords teachers, students, and families the opportunity to address learning gaps during winter, spring, and summer breaks
- **Reteaching Calendar:** Spring semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on the previous year's TCAP/EOC scores provided by the state for each grade level. The Reteach Calendars specifically focus on standards taught in the first semester to serve as a review. Teachers are provided with data which shows how students performed on each assessed standard. Teachers are also provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment. These items provide students with additional practice opportunities. This takes place during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

**Grades 9 through 12**

- **Curriculum Maps:** Quarterly curriculum maps are developed to ensure state approved and district procured instructional materials, along with recommended educational practices, aligning with current state social studies standards. The curriculum maps are designed to address District specific needs including the following: learning gaps, student engagement, cultural relevance, and local history (Facing History).
- **Reteaching Calendar:** Spring semester Reteaching Calendars are developed based on the previous year's TCAP/EOC scores provided by the state for each grade level. The Reteach Calendars specifically focus on standards taught in the first semester to serve as a review. Teachers are provided with data which shows how students performed on each assessed standard. Teachers are also provided with assessment items aligned with the State assessment. These items provide students with additional practice opportunities. This takes place during the 'Do Now' portion of the daily agenda.
- **Cumulative Formulative Assessments (CFAs):** CFAs are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Items are aligned with the state assessment item types.

**K-12 District-Wide**

- **Lesson Planning Template:** Lesson planning templates for each grade band are developed to assist teachers and leaders with curriculum internalization and implementation. The lesson planning template supports the intellectual preparation of teachers as they prepare for the delivery of lessons, prepare scaffolds for students, and prepare opportunities for students to carry the cognitive load of daily lessons. The lesson planning template serves as a model of how to incorporate information from the curriculum map, the adopted textbook, and various instructional strategies/protocols to form a cohesive lesson that gradually releases the cognitive load to students in a fashion that supports and encourages student learning and engagement.
- **Social Studies Strategies Appendix:** Provides research based instructional strategies proven to be successful in the Social Studies classroom, i.e. Harvard Visible Thinking Routines, Library of Congress document analysis forms. These strategies assist teachers in engaging students in the lesson, therefore increasing student retention of the content. Many of the strategies can be modified for students with learning and language barriers. Strategies are also highlighted in the curriculum maps. Writing strategies are included in the appendix to provide teachers with instructional strategies that encourage students to write using the lens of a historian. Such strategies include inquiry charts and interview activities, interpreting graphs, and additional graphic organizers.
- **Primary and Secondary Sources:** In addition to the textbook, additional primary and secondary sources are provided for teachers to use. Advisors research, develop, and curate grade and content appropriate sources. Each source is properly aligned (vetted by the team) with the standard it supports. The primary and secondary sources include images, written

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

documents, charts, graphs, audio/visual recordings etc. Not only are sources provided, but there are also activities included, i.e. open-ended questions, writing prompts.

- **Professional Learning:** Professional learning opportunities are both developed by advisors and outsourced to vendors and community partners. All professional development opportunities are grounded in research. The advisors analyze TCAP data from the previous year to determine specific content areas or skills in which teachers need enrichment and support. Advisors then either develop professional development sessions/courses or work with social studies partners to support teachers with social studies topics or skills that proved to be deficient on TCAP. Advisors provide in-person, virtual, after school, Saturday, and summer professional development opportunities for teachers to ensure accessibility to support throughout the school year.
- **Community & Partnership Engagement:** Community partnership and engagement is critical to the Social Studies department. The Social Studies team collaborates with community organizations, cultural institutions, universities, and other stakeholders to integrate local resources, serve as guest speakers, and to include experiential learning opportunities into social studies instruction, as well as provide professional development opportunities for teachers. These partnerships include, but are not limited to, the University of Memphis, Rhodes College, the National Civil Rights Museum, Museum of Science and History (Pink Palace Museum), TN Center for Civic Learning and Engagement, Center for Civic Education, Federal Reserve Bank of Memphis, Tennessee State library and Archives, Tennessee Council for the Social Studies, Tennessee Council for History Education, MTSU-Teaching with Primary Source Documents, Facing History and Ourselves, TN Geographic Alliance, Memphis 13 Foundation. Advisors have also developed partnerships with Social Studies leaders from school districts across the state of TN to focus on trends, laws, and professional development opportunities specific to social studies in Tennessee.

## MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT RESPONSE TO INSTRUCTION & INTERVENTION – ACADEMICS

### K-12 District-Wide Strategies

**Characteristics of Dyslexia: Students** are identified through administration of the universal reading screener. Additional literacy tasks are administered to determine if students are exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia. Identified students are provided daily small group instruction leveraging the dyslexia-specific intervention tool, Reading Horizons. This system ensures the District adheres to the 'Say Dylexia Bill' (TC 49-1-229).

### Response to Instruction & Intervention – Academics (RTI<sup>2</sup>-A)

While we are working to correct and strengthen Tier I instruction, the District recognizes that a robust system of academic supports must be in place for students who need additional time and intensity to master grade-level standards. Memphis-Shelby County Schools will fully implement a K–12 Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Academics (RTI<sup>2</sup>-A), aligned to state requirements and grounded in our belief that every child can learn at high levels when provided with timely, data-driven support.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### K–12 District-Wide Strategies

MSCS's RTI<sup>2</sup>-A system ensures that every student has equitable access to high-quality core instruction and, when needed, timely intervention that does not replace but rather strengthens Tier I. The system is designed as follows:

- **Tiered Framework for Intervention:** All students receive daily, high-quality core instruction (Tier I) aligned to state standards and district curriculum maps. Students demonstrating risk in reading, mathematics, or writing receive targeted small-group supports (Tier II) or individualized, intensive interventions (Tier III). Clear entry and exit criteria, supported by decision rules, ensure equitable access. For example, students exit Tier II after two consecutive cycles of progress above the 25th percentile.
- **Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring:** All K–8 students are universally screened three times annually in literacy and mathematics; high school students are screened based on risk indicators such as EOC results, ACT readiness, and course performance. Identified students receive biweekly or weekly progress monitoring, and intervention plans are adjusted every 4.5 weeks.
- **Data Teams and PLCs:** Each school maintains an RTI<sup>2</sup>-A team that reviews student-level data at least monthly, documenting decisions in the Individualized Learning Plan for Data (ILP-D). Data teams use universal screening and progress monitoring to design and exit interventions. PLCs embed RTI<sup>2</sup>-A into lesson planning, ensuring interventions complement Tier I.
- **Evidence-Based Intervention Resources:** The District provides intervention tools aligned to the Science of Reading, Tennessee Dyslexia requirements, and research-based math and writing practices. Dyslexia-specific interventions are provided daily to identified students in compliance with the Say Dyslexia Law (TC 49-1-229).
- **Fidelity of Implementation:** District and regional RTI<sup>2</sup> leadership teams conduct normed instructional walkthroughs, review ILP-D documentation, and provide coaching to school teams. Schools are expected to implement daily, uninterrupted intervention blocks that protect core instruction. District monitoring of fidelity occurs monthly, with targeted support provided to schools falling below thresholds.
- **Special Populations:** RTI<sup>2</sup>-A integrates with English Learner services by requiring teams to consider **WIDA ACCESS** data alongside academic screeners when determining risk and designing interventions. For students with disabilities, RTI<sup>2</sup>-A data is documented and used as part of the special education referral process, ensuring compliance with IDEA and preventing premature referrals.
- **Family Communication and Partnership:** Families are formally notified when their child enters Tier II or III through written communication and conferences. Parents are provided with progress updates every 4.5 weeks and resources to support learning at home. This expectation will be embedded into the district's Family Academic Partnership Protocol and linked to the Parent Portal.
- **Professional Learning:** MSCS requires annual RTI<sup>2</sup>-A training for interventionists, dyslexia-specific PD for literacy teachers, and calibration sessions for school RTI<sup>2</sup> teams. New teachers, assistant principals, and principals will receive induction training to ensure early alignment to RTI<sup>2</sup>-A expectations.

**What Success Looks Like**

When implemented with fidelity, MSCS's RTI<sup>2</sup>-A system will provide a consistent, K–12 framework to identify students early, deliver timely and effective supports, and monitor growth until mastery is achieved. Tier I instruction will strengthen as unfinished learning is addressed during dedicated intervention time. Students will demonstrate improved proficiency, including higher rates of literacy by Grade 3 and mathematics readiness by Grade 8, while high school students will experience stronger ACT performance, EOC pass rates, and credit accumulation. Families will experience transparency through clear communication and real-time progress monitoring, while educators benefit from a coherent, districtwide approach to interventions that reduces inequity and ensures every student is supported to meet grade-level expectations.

## Professional Learning to Drive Instructional Excellence

To meet the ambitious academic goals outlined in the MSCS 2025–2030 Academic Plan, professional learning must be reimagined as a systemwide lever for instructional transformation. The Comprehensive Professional Learning Plan for 2025–2026 is grounded in the belief that student achievement accelerates when educators engage in sustained, coherent, and job-embedded development tied directly to the instructional core. This plan moves beyond one-time sessions to build a culture of continuous growth for teachers, school leaders, and academic support teams. Rooted in high-impact instructional frameworks such as the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) and the 5E model, each session is designed to strengthen content knowledge, improve Tier I instruction, foster inclusive and equitable learning environments, and align professional learning to the real-time needs of students. Through strategic alignment with pacing, curriculum, and performance data, this plan ensures that professional learning is not an isolated support, but a driving force for academic coherence, equity, and excellence across all MSCS classrooms.

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look for	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
<b>July</b> District Learning Day – Lesson Planning for the ELA, Math, & Science Instructional Frameworks- GRR & 5Es	Content Knowledge	<p>Educators will learn to design and implement ELA and Math lessons that integrate the Gradual Release of Responsibility instructional framework to promote student independence and deep conceptual understanding.</p> <p>Educators will learn to design and implement Science lessons that integrate the 5Es instructional framework to promote student independence, inquiry, and deep</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GRR Look-for: Lessons include distinct phases-I Do (Modeling), We Do (Guided Practice), You Do Together (Collaborative Practice), and You Do Alone (Independent Practice)-with smooth transitions and intentional scaffolding.</li> <li>• GRR Look-for: Lesson plans clearly articulate learning objectives and how each phase of GRR supports mastery of those objectives.</li> <li>• GRR Look-for: Students gradually take on more responsibility for their learning, with</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students develop greater independence and ownership of their learning.</li> <li>2. Conceptual understanding deepens through scaffolded, inquiry-based instruction.</li> <li>3. Engagement and motivation increase, leading to improved academic outcomes.</li> </ol>	<p>Professional Learning &amp; Support/ Curriculum &amp; Instruction</p> <p>Teacher, ILT Leads, &amp; Academic Coordinators</p> <p>School administrator/ILT/district personnel</p>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		conceptual understanding.	<p>teachers stepping back as students demonstrate readiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5Es Look-for: Science lessons follow the Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate sequence, with each phase purposefully designed to build on the previous one.</li> <li>• 5Es Look-for: Students are actively engaged in inquiry, exploration, and problem-solving, with opportunities to construct and apply their understanding.</li> <li>• 5Es Look-for: Each phase of the 5Es is intentionally aligned to conceptual goals in science, with formative assessments embedded to monitor understanding and guide instruction.</li> </ul>		
<b>August</b> District Learning Day - Accelerating Student Learning: Standards-based Planning	Content Knowledge	Participants will engage in standards-analysis to plan tier 1 standards-based planning and identify curricular opportunities to implement just in time scaffolds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand strategies to add scaffolds during Tier 1 instruction.</li> <li>• Teachers design lessons that are tightly aligned to priority standards, demonstrating a clear understanding of essential learning outcomes through</li> </ul>	1. Students are more likely to meet or exceed grade-level expectations because instruction is tightly aligned to priority standards and focused on	Professional Learning & Support/ Curriculum & Instruction  Teacher, ILT Leads, & Academic Coordinators  School administrator/ILT/district personnel

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
			well-structured objectives and tasks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruction includes just-in-time scaffolds that support access to grade-level content, with supports like visuals or guided practice embedded based on student data.</li> <li>• Teachers use formative assessment to adjust instruction in real time, applying flexible grouping and targeted strategies to accelerate learning for all students.</li> </ul>	essential learning outcomes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Learning gaps are addressed without lowering rigor, as just-in-time scaffolds provide the necessary support for students to access and engage with grade-level content.</li> <li>3. Student progress accelerates over time, driven by responsive teaching practices that adapt to real-time data and meet learners where they are.</li> </ol>	
<b>September</b> Understanding the Complexity of the standards	Content Knowledge	As a result of this session, teachers will understand the layers of meaning in the standards the builds mastery of the standards by identifying what students should know and do to meet the demands of the standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the progression of the standards.</li> <li>• Understand how to use the standards to plan scaffolds and small group instruction.</li> <li>• Teachers deconstruct standards into clear, teachable components, demonstrating an understanding of the</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students engage with grade-level tasks and texts that reflect the full depth and rigor of the standards, leading to stronger academic performance.</li> <li>2. Learning experiences</li> </ol>	Professional Learning & Support/ Curriculum & Instruction  Teacher, ILT Leads, & Academic Coordinators  School administrator/ILT/district personnel

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
			<p>layered meaning and what students must know and do to achieve mastery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructional tasks and texts are purposefully aligned to the rigor and intent of the standards, ensuring students engage with grade-level content.</li> <li>• Scaffolding is strategically used to support access to complex content while maintaining the cognitive demands of the standards.</li> </ul>	<p>are more targeted and meaningful, helping students build the specific knowledge and skills needed for mastery.</p> <p>3. Scaffolding supports all learners in accessing complex content, narrowing achievement gaps and promoting equitable outcomes.</p>	
<b>September</b> Equity in the Classroom: Student Accountability & Engagement through Academic Monitoring	Culture & Climate  Best Practices	As a result of this session, participants will acquire the skills necessary to implement proactive monitoring techniques aimed at optimizing instructional time and effectively tracking daily student progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students demonstrate voice and ownership by actively participating, making choices in their learning, and reflecting on their progress through visible routines and artifacts.</li> <li>• Teachers use a structured lesson tracker or monitoring tool in real time to document student progress and guide instructional decisions.</li> <li>• Monitoring pathways and task mastery models are clearly planned and executed, with</li> </ul>	<p>1. Students become more engaged and accountable for their learning, as they are given opportunities to express their thinking, make choices, and track their own progress.</p> <p>2. Real-time feedback helps students correct misunderstandings immediately, leading to more efficient learning and stronger mastery of content.</p> <p>3. Instruction becomes more responsive and equitable, as teachers adjust lessons based on student data, ensuring all learners receive the support they need to succeed.</p>	<p>Professional Learning &amp; Support/ Curriculum &amp; Instruction</p> <p>Teacher, ILT Leads, &amp; Academic Coordinators</p> <p>School administrator/ILT/district personnel</p>



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
			<p>teachers purposefully circulating and checking for understanding aligned to learning goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers provide immediate, actionable feedback and make real-time instructional adjustments based on student responses and data.</li> </ul>		
<b>October</b> Word Power: Elevating Student Learning with the 30-30-30 Academic vocabulary Strategy	Culture & Climate; Best Practices	As a result of this session, participants will be able to implement the 30-30-30 academic vocabulary strategy to intentionally select, teach, and reinforce high-impact vocabulary that supports student comprehension and content mastery across disciplines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look-for: Teachers select a balanced set of vocabulary-30% foundational (Tier 1), 30% academic (Tier 2), and 30% content-specific (Tier 3)-aligned to lesson objectives and student needs.</li> <li>Look-for: Teachers use direct instruction strategies (e.g., modeling, visuals, student-friendly definitions) to teach vocabulary in context, not in isolation.</li> <li>Teachers provide direct instruction using student-friendly definitions, visuals, and contextual examples to help students understand and apply new words.</li> <li>Students consistently use targeted vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students gain a deeper understanding of both general academic and content-specific vocabulary, which enhances their ability to access complex texts and tasks—leading to stronger performance across subject areas.</li> <li>As students learn to decode and use vocabulary through explicit instruction and word-part analysis (prefixes, suffixes, roots), they become more confident, independent learners who can tackle unfamiliar words with greater ease.</li> </ol>	<p>Professional Learning &amp; Support/ Curriculum &amp; Instruction</p> <p>Teacher, ILT Leads, &amp; Academic Coordinators</p> <p>School administrator/ILT/district personnel</p>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
			<p>in speaking, writing, and collaborative tasks, with opportunities for review and application embedded throughout instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look-for: Teachers incorporate instruction on prefixes, suffixes, and root words to help students decode unfamiliar vocabulary and build word-learning strategies.</li> </ul>	<p>3. Teachers become more strategic in selecting and teaching vocabulary, ensuring that all students—especially those with language gaps—receive the support needed to engage with rigorous content and participate in academic discourse.</p>	
<b>November</b> Part II: Planning with the End in Mind: GRR and 5Es Instructional Frameworks	Content Knowledge	<p>As a result of this session, teachers will understand the importance of planning lessons with clear learning objectives and developing lessons that align with the desired outcome by exploring strategies for assessing student progress and adjusting instruction as needed.</p> <p>Tested subjects only</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the components and purpose of the content instructional frameworks.</li> <li>Evidence of planning for content specific frameworks aligned to the Direct Teaching Model (DTM) and/or textbook.</li> <li>Evidence of logically planned lesson that provides ownership of learning to the student.</li> <li>Evidence of intentional checks for understanding.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students gain clarity and direction by engaging in lessons that are purposefully aligned to clear learning objectives and outcomes.</li> <li>Students build independence and deeper understanding through scaffolded instruction that gradually shifts responsibility to them.</li> <li>Student learning is accelerated as</li> </ol>	<p>Professional Learning &amp; Support/ Curriculum &amp; Instruction</p> <p>Teacher, ILT Leads, &amp; Academic Coordinators</p> <p>School administrator/ILT/district personnel</p>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
				teachers use intentional checks for understanding to provide timely feedback and adjust instruction based on student needs.	
<b>January</b> Level Up Learning: Using Gamification to Boost Engagement and Achievement	Best Practices	As a result of this session, participants will be able to design and implement gamified learning experiences that foster student engagement, promote collaboration, and support academic growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers are using specific gamification strategies (e.g., points, badges, levels, challenges) aligned with learning objectives—not just for fun, but to drive academic outcomes.</li> <li>Lesson plans or classroom activities include clear connections between game mechanics and instructional goals.</li> <li>Students are actively participating, collaborating, and demonstrating ownership of their learning through structured, gamified tasks.</li> <li>Teachers collect and use student feedback, performance data, or engagement levels to refine their approach.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student engagement and ownership increase as learners actively participate in structured, gamified tasks that promote collaboration and motivation.</li> <li>Academic achievement improves when game elements are intentionally aligned with learning objectives, making instruction both rigorous and enjoyable.</li> <li>Teacher efficiency is enhanced through the use of performance</li> </ol>	Professional Learning & Support/ Curriculum & Instruction  Teacher, ILT Leads, & Academic Coordinators  School administrator/ILT/district personnel

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
				data and student feedback to refine instruction and streamline planning with purposeful, goal-driven gamification strategies.	
<b>February</b> Small-Group Instruction	Content Knowledge; Culture & Climate; Best Practices	As a result of this session, teachers will utilize curricular resources and student data to provide targeted instruction in small groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers use student data from assessments and classwork to form purposeful small groups and tailor instruction to address specific learning needs, including remediation and enrichment.</li> <li>Lesson plans reflect thoughtful integration of small group instruction within the instructional framework, with clear objectives, differentiated tasks, and strategies to support diverse learners.</li> <li>Classroom observations and student work show active participation in small groups, with ongoing progress monitoring and documented evidence of student</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small groups allow teachers to address specific misconceptions or skill deficits leading to more effective individual supports for students.</li> <li>Students are more likely to participate and take academic risks in smaller, supportive settings, which boosts confidence and motivation.</li> <li>High-performing students can be challenged with enrichment activities, preventing stagnation and promoting continuous growth.</li> <li>Small groups foster stronger teacher-student relationships and</li> </ol>	Professional Learning & Support/ Curriculum & Instruction  Teacher, ILT Leads, & Academic Coordinators  School administrator/ILT/district personnel

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
			growth and achievement over time.	peer collaboration contributing to a positive learning environment.	
<b>March</b> Lesson Equity through Academic Vocabulary	Content Knowledge; Best Practices	As a result of this session, teachers will explore strategies for intentionally incorporating academic vocabulary into instruction to promote equitable learning experiences through providing context and creating environments where all students can access and engage with complex language to drive learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand vocabulary strategies to make Tier 1 instruction accessible for all students.</li> <li>• Understand the importance of seeing, hearing, and using vocabulary in context to build meaning.</li> <li>• Evidence of planning active vocabulary usage in lesson execution.</li> <li>• Evidence of student discourse during lessons using content vocabulary.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teachers intentionally embed academic vocabulary strategies to ensure all students—regardless of background—can access, understand, and engage with complex content, fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments.</li> <li>2. Students build stronger conceptual understanding and communication skills by seeing, hearing, and using academic vocabulary in meaningful contexts, while teachers facilitate structured opportunities for discourse and application.</li> <li>3. Teachers enhance lesson design by integrating vocabulary objectives and strategies into</li> </ol>	Professional Learning & Support/ Curriculum & Instruction  Teacher, ILT Leads, & Academic Coordinators  School administrator/ILT/district personnel

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Teachers/ ILT Leads/ & Academic Coordinators					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
				daily instruction, leading to more purposeful teaching and measurable growth in student language use and academic performance.	
Indicators of Success					
⇒ Student Perception Survey yielding a positive response on survey topics – classroom engagement, classroom learning strategies, classroom rigorous expectations, classroom teacher-student relationships, pedagogical effectiveness. ⇒ Increase on student achievement for district common formative assessment from fall to winter and winter to spring. ⇒ Instructional practice walkthrough data indicating Yes or mostly on ratings for each of the instructional practice walkthroughs. ⇒ Level 3 or higher on TEM observation rating					

Strong school leadership is one of the most powerful levers for improving student achievement and sustaining instructional excellence. The 2025–2026 School Leadership Professional Learning Plan equips principals, assistant principals, vice principals, and PLC coaches with the tools, frameworks, and strategies to lead rigorous, equitable, and student-centered instruction. Each monthly session is intentionally aligned to the instructional models outlined in this academic plan, such as the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR), 5E Science, and standards-based Tier 1 instruction. In addition to deepening content knowledge, sessions also emphasize the leadership behaviors required to build inclusive school cultures, strengthen professional learning communities, and coach teachers for impact. By calibrating school leaders around common language, evidence-based walkthroughs, and data-informed decision-making, this plan ensures that instructional leadership is not left to chance, but cultivated, supported, and aligned to district-wide expectations for excellence.

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
<b>July</b> Session Title: Empowering Student Independence : Leveraging	<b>Content Knowledge</b>	<b>Leaders will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn how to support educators in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active Analysis of Lesson Models: Leaders are examining sample ELA, Math, and Science lessons to identify where and how the GRR and</li> </ul>	1. Instructional Coaching and Feedback Cycles: Leaders are conducting	Leadership Development Team

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
GRR and 5E Frameworks for Deeper Learning in ELA, Math, and Science		<p>designing and implementing ELA and Math lessons using the Gradual Release of Responsibility model to foster student independence and deep conceptual understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn how to support educators in designing and implementing Science lessons using the 5E Instructional Framework to promote inquiry-based learning and conceptual mastery.</li> <li>Develop strategies to coach and lead instructional shifts that align with research-based practices in literacy, numeracy, and science education.</li> <li>Analyze lesson examples and student work to identify effective integration of GRR and 5E models in</li> </ul>	<p>5E frameworks are embedded, discussion the impact on student learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Planning Conversations: Leaders are engaging in dialogue with peers to co-develop strategies for supporting teachers in lesson design, using guiding questions aligned to GRR and 5E phases.</li> </ul>	<p>classroom walkthroughs or coaching sessions focused on specific phases of GRR or 5E and provided targeted feedback aligned to those models.</p> <p>2. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) Integration: Leaders are facilitating or supporting PLCs where teachers collaboratively plan, implement, and reflect on lessons using GRR and 5E frameworks, using student work and data to guide instructional decisions.</p>	Regional Supervisors

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		classroom instruction.			
<b>August</b> Session Title: Accelerating Learning Through Standards-Based Planning: Equipping Leaders to Drive Tier I Instruction with Just – in- Time Supports	<b>Content Knowledge</b>	<b>Leaders will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in standards analysis to identify priority learning targets and plan rigorous, Tier 1 instruction aligned to grade-level expectations in ELA, Math, and Science.</li> <li>Identify curricular opportunities to embed just-in-time scaffolds that address unfinished learning without compromising access to grade-level content.</li> <li>Develop strategies to support teachers in designing lessons that balance acceleration with conceptual depth and student engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Standards Deconstruction and Prioritization:</b> Leaders are actively analyzing and unpacking standards to identify essential skills and concepts, demonstrating an understanding of how to prioritize content for Tier 1 instruction.</li> <li><b>Scaffold Mapping and Planning:</b> Leaders are identifying specifics points within the curriculum where just-in-time scaffolds can be embedded, ensuring access to grade-level content while addressing unfinished learning</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Collaborative Planning Support:</b> Leaders are facilitating or participating in planning meetings where teachers align instruction to prioritized standards and integrate scaffolds based on student data and learning needs.</li> <li><b>Instructional Monitoring and Feedback:</b> Leaders are conducting classroom observations or walkthroughs focused on evidence of standards-based instruction and the use of scaffolds, followed by actionable feedback and coaching.</li> </ol>	Leadership Development Team  Regional Supervisors



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use data and instructional tools to monitor the effectiveness of standards-based planning and scaffolding in improving student outcomes.</li> </ul>			
<b>September</b> Session Title: Unpacking the Standards: Leading with Clarity to Build Mastery in ELA, Math, and Science	<b>Content Knowledge</b>	<b>Leaders will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze the layered structure and cognitive demands of ELA, Math, and Science standards to uncover what students must know and be able to do.</li> <li>Support teachers in identifying the progression of learning within and across grade levels to ensure instruction builds toward mastery.</li> <li>Develop tools and strategies to guide teachers in translating standards into clear learning targets and aligned instructional practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Standards Deconstruction in Action:</b> Leaders are actively breaking down standards into knowledge, skills, and cognitive demands, using tools like verbs analysis, content identification, and depth of knowledge (DOK) levels.</li> <li><b>Cross-Grade and Cross-Content Connections:</b> Leaders are identifying how standards build across grade levels and disciplines, discussing vertical alignment and how foundational skills support future learning.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Facilitating Standards-Based Planning Conversations</b> Leaders are guiding teachers in PLCs or planning sessions to unpack standards, define clear learning targets, and align instruction and assessment to the full intent of the standards.</li> <li><b>Using Observation Tools Aligned to Standards Complexity</b> Leaders are conducting classroom walkthroughs using look-for</li> </ol>	Leaders hip Develo pment Team  Region al Supervi sors

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate collaborative conversations that promote shared understanding of rigor, depth, and coherence in standards-based instruction.</li> </ul>		tools that focus on whether instruction reflects the depth, rigor, and expectations of the standards, followed by coaching conversations.	
<b>October</b> Session Title: Equity in Action: Enhancing Student Engagement and Accountability Through Academic Monitoring	<b>Culture &amp; Climate</b>  <b>Best Practices</b>	<b>Leaders will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire the skills to implement proactive academic monitoring strategies that maximize instructional time and ensure all students are actively engaged in learning.</li> <li>Learn how to support teachers in using real-time data to track student progress, provide timely feedback, and adjust instruction to meet diverse learning needs.</li> <li>Explore equitable classroom practices that</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modeling of Proactive Monitoring Techniques: Leaders are practicing or observing modeled strategies such as circulating with purpose, checking for understanding, and using data trackers to monitor student engagement and progress in real time.</li> <li>Equity- Focused Reflection and Discussion: Leaders are engaging in conversations about how academic monitoring can uncover and address participation gaps, ensuring all students are seen, supported, and held to high expectations.</li> </ul>	1. Classroom Walkthroughs Focused on Monitoring Practices: Leaders are conducting observations that focus on how teachers are using proactive monitoring strategies (e.g., cold calling, tracking charts, conferencing) and providing feedback on equitable student engagement.  2. Data-Informed Instructional Adjustments: Leader are supporting teachers in using daily formative data from monitoring tools to adjust instruction, groupings, and supports—ensuring all	Leadership Development Team  Regional Supervisors

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		<p>promote student ownership, participation, and accountability across content areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop systems for observing and coaching teachers on effective monitoring techniques that foster inclusive and responsive instruction.</li> </ul>		students are progressing toward mastery.	
<b>November</b> Session Title: Elevating Comprehension and Content Mastery: Leading the 30-30-30 Academic Vocabulary Strategy Across Disciplines	<b>Culture &amp; Climate</b>  <b>Best Practices</b>	<b>Leaders will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the 30-30-30 academic vocabulary strategy to intentionally select, teach, and reinforce high-impact vocabulary that supports student comprehension and mastery in ELA, Math, Science, and other content areas.</li> <li>Support teachers in identifying Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary aligned to standards and instructional goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Modeling Vocabulary Instruction Techniques:</b> Leaders are participating in or observing modeled strategies for explicitly teaching and reinforcing vocabulary (e.g., word walls, student-friendly definitions, visual supports, and usage in context).</li> </ul>	1. Vocabulary Integration in Lesson Planning: Leaders are supporting teachers during planning sessions to embed the 30-30-30 vocabulary strategy into daily instruction, ensuring vocabulary is intentionally selected and revisited across lessons.  2. Monitoring and Feedback on Vocabulary Use: Leaders are conducting classroom walkthroughs or reviewing student work to observe how vocabulary is being taught, reinforced, and	Leadership Development Team  Regional Supervisors

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop systems for monitoring vocabulary instruction and ensuring consistent reinforcement across lessons and grade levels.</li> <li>Facilitate professional learning that promotes equitable access to academic language for all students, especially multilingual learners and those with unfinished learning.</li> </ul>		used by students, followed by feedback that promotes consistent and equitable vocabulary instruction.	
<b>December</b> Session Title: Level Up Learning: Using Gamification to Drive Engagement and Academic Success	<b>Best Practices</b>	<p>Leaders will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the principles of gamification and how they can be applied to classroom instruction to increase student motivation, participation, and achievement.</li> <li>Explore examples of gamified learning experiences across content areas and grade levels, including point systems, badges, leaderboards, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application of Gamification Elements: Leaders are identifying and discussing key gamification components—such as points, levels, badges, leaderboards, and choice-based challenges—and how they can be aligned with academic goals.</li> <li>Engagements Strategy Design: Leaders are actively designing or reviewing sample lesson plans that incorporate gamified elements, showing an understanding of how to balance fun with</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom Support for Gamified Instruction: Leaders are observing classrooms and providing feedback on the use of gamification strategies focusing on student engagement, participation, and alignment with learning objectives.</li> <li>Professional Learning and Resource Sharing: Leaders</li> </ol>	<p>Leadership Development Team</p> <p>Regional Supervisors</p>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look for	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		choice-based challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learn how to support teachers in designing and implementing gamified strategies that align with academic standards and learning goals.</li> <li>Develop a plan to monitor the impact of gamification on student engagement and academic outcomes through classroom observations and student feedback.</li> </ul>	rigor and standards-based instruction.	are facilitating or supporting ongoing professional development where teachers share gamified lesson ideas, reflect on student outcomes, and explore digital tools or platforms that enhance gamified learning.	
<b>January</b> Session Title: Targeted Teaching for Maximum Impact: Leading Effective Small-Group Instruction Across ELA, Math, and Science	<b>Content Knowledge</b>  <b>Culture &amp; Climate</b>	<b>Leaders will:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the role of small-group instruction in accelerating learning and differentiating support in Math, Science, and ELA classrooms.</li> <li>Learn how to support teachers in designing and facilitating purposeful small-group instruction that targets specific learning needs and promotes student discourse.</li> <li>Explore strategies for integrating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design of Purposeful Small Groups: Leaders are analyzing or co-creating small group lesson plans that are intentionally designed based on student data, with clear learning goals and differentiated tasks in Math, Science, and ELA.</li> <li>Integration of Writing in ELA Small Groups: Leaders are engaging in discussions or activities that focus on how writing can be used within small groups to deepen comprehension, support language development, and build analytical thinking.</li> </ul>	1. Instructional Walkthroughs Focused on Grouping and Differentiation: Leaders are conducting classroom observations to look for evidence of flexible grouping, targeted instruction, and student engagement in small-group settings, followed by coaching conversations.  2. Support for Planning and Data Use: Leaders are facilitating planning sessions where	Leadership Development Team  Regional Supervisors

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
		<p>writing into small-group instruction in ELA to deepen comprehension and develop communication skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop systems for observing, coaching, and providing feedback on small-group structures, routines, and instructional moves that drive student growth.</li> </ul>		<p>teachers use formative assessment data to group students, select appropriate tasks, and integrate writing and discourse strategies into small-group instruction.</p>	
<b>February Instructional leadership focus</b>	<b>Content Knowledge</b>  <b>Culture &amp; Climate</b>	<p>As a result of this session, school leaders will strengthen their capacity to lead high-quality instruction by using data, coaching strategies, and collaborative practices to support teacher growth and improve student learning outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of Data-Informed Instructional Support: Leaders regularly use student achievement and instructional data to guide coaching conversations, professional learning, and instructional decisions.</li> <li>Consistent Use of Instructional Frameworks: Leaders reference and apply a shared instructional framework (GRR/5Es) to observe classrooms, provide actionable feedback and align teaching practices across grade levels.</li> <li>Promotion of Collaborative Professional Learning: Leaders create and sustain structures for</li> </ul>	<p>1. Strengthened teacher capacity leads to more consistent, high-quality instruction, as leaders provide targeted feedback, model best practices, and support professional growth aligned to instructional goals.</p> <p>2. A culture of continuous improvement is cultivated, where teachers feel empowered, supported, and accountable for student learning through collaborative structures like PLCs and data-driven dialogue.</p>	<p>Leadership Development Team</p> <p>Regional Supervisors</p>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Professional Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person(s) Responsible
			teacher collaboration, such as PLCs or data teams, that focus on improving instructional practices and student outcomes.	3. Instructional leadership fosters a shared vision for teaching and learning, promoting trust, alignment, and coherence across classrooms, which positively impacts morale, retention, and student achievement.	
<b>March Data informed decision making</b>	<b>Data-Driven Decision Making</b>	As a result of this session, school leaders will enhance their ability to analyze and apply multiple sources of data to drive instructional decisions, allocate resources strategically, and improve student outcomes through informed leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic Use of Multiple Data Sources: Leaders consistently analyze and synthesize academic, behavioral, and attendance data to identify trends, inform instructional priorities and guide school improvement efforts.</li> <li>Data-Driven Collaboration and Action: Leaders facilitate regular, structured opportunities for staff to engage in data conversations that lead to targeted instructional adjustments and measurable student growth.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data - informed leadership enables timely, targeted interventions and instructional adjustments, leading to increased academic achievement and reduced learning gaps across student groups.</li> <li>2. Teachers refine their instructional practices by using data to identify student needs, monitor progress, and implement evidence-based strategies</li> </ol>	<p>Leadership Development Team</p> <p>Regional Supervisors</p>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ Academic Plan  
2025-2030

School Leaders: Principals/VPs/APs/PLC Coaches					
Session	Profession al Learning Focus	Anticipated Outcome(s)	Look fors	Implementation Connection	Person (s) Respon sible
				that support differentiated learning. 3. A shared commitment to using data fosters a collaborative, transparent culture where educators continuously reflect, learn, and take collective responsibility for student success.	



## Academic Vision and Instructional Theory of Action

*Memphis-Shelby County Schools will lead the nation in rigorous, equity-centered instruction, where every student, in every school, experiences excellent teaching, engaging content, and deep learning. Anchored in the Instructional Core and the cultural brilliance of Memphis, we will graduate students who are academically strong, artistically and athletically developed, and prepared to lead, create, and thrive in a changing world.*

This vision is not a slogan; it is a system-wide call to action. It confronts the unfinished work of public education in Memphis: persistent achievement gaps, uneven instructional quality, and chronic barriers to opportunity, particularly for Black, Brown, multilingual, and economically disadvantaged students. MSCS is not merely aspiring to improve; we are committed to transforming our instructional model so that student outcomes are no longer predictable by ZIP code, race, or income.

At the heart of this vision is the Instructional Core + Leadership, the dynamic intersection of teacher expertise, student engagement, high-quality content, and the leadership that activates and sustains them. When all four elements are strong, and tightly aligned, learning accelerates. When any one element falters, achievement stalls. This vision holds every system, school, and stakeholder accountable for strengthening the core in every classroom, every day.

### **Theory of Action (2025–2030):**

*If we align instruction to high-quality content, build teacher and leader capacity, and ensure that all students, especially those furthest from opportunity, consistently access rigorous, engaging learning environments, then student outcomes will rise.*

This academic vision does not exist in isolation, it drives the design of walkthrough tools, instructional calendars, coaching protocols, resource allocation, and performance management systems. It shapes every element of our academic infrastructure.

To actualize this vision, MSCS will:

- **Strengthen Teaching Practice**  
Equip educators with deep content knowledge, inclusive pedagogy, and real-time data tools to deliver instruction that is precise, culturally responsive, rigorous, and engaging.
- **Deepen Student Engagement**  
Design learning environments that foster curiosity, build identity, and connect rigorous academic content to students lived experiences, passions, and future aspirations.
- **Elevate Instructional Leadership**  
Develop school and district leaders who are equipped to coach, model, and monitor rigorous, high-quality instruction daily ensuring fidelity, feedback, and results across every campus.
- **Ensure Access to Rigorous Content and Curriculum**  
Guarantee that every student receives grade-level, standards-aligned, and culturally

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

affirming materials that promote inquiry, knowledge-building, and high expectations across all subjects.

This vision is bold by necessity. In a city shaped by struggle and brilliance, our schools must be engines of both justice and possibility. That means every child, regardless of background, deserves access to world-class teaching, high-quality learning, and the opportunity to become a leader.

Success will not be measured by intent, but by outcomes: increased early literacy rates, higher graduation rates, ACT scores above benchmark, and deeper student belonging. These are the metrics of transformation.

This vision is informed by nationally validated research and best practice, including TNTP's Opportunity Myth, the Council of Great City Schools' frameworks, Paul Bambrick-Santoyo's instructional leadership model, and the University of Virginia's 90-Day Planning Framework. Our charge is collective. Teachers, leaders, families, and civic partners must act in concert. Together, we will transform MSCS into a national model for instructional excellence.

*Greatness grows here. And now, it is systematized.*

## Executing the Instructional Core: Students, Teachers, Content, Leaders, and System

To achieve and sustain the district's 2030 academic goals, the instructional core must be executed with precision, coherence, and shared accountability across every layer of the system. This section defines what students, teachers, content, leaders, and the system must *do*—not just believe or intend—in order to drive rigorous, equitable, and measurable learning outcomes. Each arm is aligned to district frameworks and organized over time to ensure that academic behaviors are introduced, reinforced, and mastered through intentional practice, coaching, and progress monitoring. Together, these roles form the backbone of sustainable academic excellence.

### Implementation: Student Arm of the Instructional Core

To meet the district's ambitious 2030 academic goals, students must not only be present—they must be profoundly engaged in rigorous, but daily academic practices also that build mastery, independence, and interdisciplinary thinking. The student arm of the instructional core defines what students must *do* in the learning environment, not just what they must *receive* from instruction.

This list reflects the academic actions, habits of mind, and self-regulatory behaviors students must internalize through direct instruction, structured practice, timely feedback, and culturally responsive teaching. It is drawn from nationally validated walkthrough tools, aligned to high-impact instructional frameworks (5Es, Gradual Release of Responsibility), and intentionally tiered across time to reflect a progression of academic agency, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary rigor.

Each behavior below is observable, measurable, and coachable using aligned tools such as the Instructional Practice Guide (IPG), Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEM), and aggressive monitoring protocols. A student-facing version of this framework is also available to promote agency, ownership, and goal setting.

#### Foundational Rollout

Month/Year	Grade Band(s)	Clustered Student Action(s)	Success Looks Like
Aug 2025	K–12	Enter the learning environment prepared to focus immediately on rigorous, standards-based goals. Activate prior knowledge through content-rich warm-ups in first 5 minutes.	Students are on-task within 2 minutes, completing warm-ups that connect prior learning to new standards.
Sep 2025	3–12	Construct meaning from complex texts, multistep math tasks, or scientific phenomena using academic vocabulary. Analyze expert models (IPG 2A; TEM 3.1).	Students annotate, explain, and use Tier 2/3 vocabulary while identifying structures and strategies in exemplars.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Month/Year	Grade Band(s)	Clustered Student Action(s)	Success Looks Like
Oct 2025	K–12	Engage in scaffolded rehearsal via partner talk, sentence frames, modeled reasoning. Ask clarifying questions and paraphrase peer responses.	Students rehearse reasoning aloud and paraphrase peers with conceptual precision.
Nov 2025	K–12	Use anchor charts and classroom tools to self-monitor. Collaboratively evaluate multiple solutions, citing evidence (DOK 3–4).	Students independently reference classroom tools and justify responses with evidence.
Dec 2025	3–12	Complete independent tasks replicating state assessment rigor. Analyze literary, informational, and technical texts for author's intent, structure, rhetorical effect.	Students complete rigorous tasks with minimal scaffolds and explain how structure shapes meaning.
Jan 2026	6–12	Solve complex quantitative/scientific problems through modeling, hypothesis testing, revision. Engage in structured academic discourse (seminar, peer critique, debate).	Students test/revise models, cite evidence in academic talk, and respect diverse perspectives.
Feb 2026	3–12	Reflect on peer reasoning to identify logic, assumptions, or overlooked evidence. Monitor academic stamina using rubrics, self-checks, and strategic breaks.	Students critique reasoning and sustain focus using stamina tools.
Mar 2026	K–12	Consistently respond through cold call, written response, academic discussion (IPG 3A). Track and interpret academic data weekly via personal folders or dashboards.	Equity of voice evident in class; students track progress and adjust goals weekly.
Apr 2026	3–12	Revise academic work using teacher feedback, scoring guides, exemplar analysis. Evaluate how well work meets objectives and propose revisions/extensions.	Students independently improve drafts and propose logical next steps.
May 2026	K–12	Fully engage in Tier 2/Tier 3 supports with consistent strategy use. Use visual tools (trackers, organizers, anchor charts) to complete rigorous tasks.	Students apply supports independently, plan tasks with visual tools, and reflect on growth.

**Expansion & Mastery**

Year	Grade Band(s)	Clustered Student Action(s)	Success Looks Like
June 2026 – June 2027	3–12	Participate in protocols requiring public sharing of work and revision plans. Monitor stamina/endurance using self-generated tools (journals, pacing checklists). Self-assess daily, identify misconceptions, and implement corrective actions.	Students design their own stamina tools, present work to authentic audiences, and close gaps independently.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Year	Grade Band(s)	Clustered Student Action(s)	Success Looks Like
June 2027 – June 2028	6–12	Design/present interdisciplinary projects solving real-world problems with core knowledge + community insight. Synthesize content across subjects to identify transferable themes. Curate and revise a cumulative portfolio of academic work.	Students present projects to authentic audiences, make cross-disciplinary connections, and maintain mastery portfolios.
June 2028 – June 2029	6–12	Lead peer workshops/feedback groups using academic criteria. Interrogate how learning connects to historical, cultural, community contexts to disrupt inequity. Pose original academic inquiries and pursue extended research.	Students facilitate peer learning, critique inequities, and lead independent research projects.
June 2029 – 2030	9–12	Use AI tools, data platforms, and digital resources to accelerate/personalize learning. Publicly articulate academic identity and advocate for resources/opportunities. Apply academic knowledge to long-term goals (college, career, community). Lead interdisciplinary capstone experiences requiring sustained inquiry and solution design. Mentor younger peers in skills, discourse, project development. Analyze how power, bias, and access shape academic systems and propose responses.	Students self-advocate, apply learning to postsecondary/community transformation, lead capstones, mentor peers, and propose systemic equity solutions.

### Implementation: Teacher Arm of the Instructional Core

To meet the district's 2030 goals for academic excellence, equity, and sustainability, teachers must do more than deliver content, they must orchestrate an ecosystem of mastery, where every student builds identity, agency, and enduring academic skill. This section outlines the explicit, observable practices that teachers must internalize and execute daily in order to bring rigorous, inclusive, and future-ready instruction to life. Drawn from nationally validated instructional frameworks and calibrated to the TEAM rubric, these actions reflect what the most effective teachers do across classrooms, not as isolated events, but as a consistent culture of deep learning.

This list is not theoretical. It represents the integrated behaviors required to ensure that *centrally created lesson plans are executed with precision, that student outcomes improve equitably, and that systemwide excellence can be sustained across time, staff, and schools*. By aligning teaching practice to student actions, leadership expectations, and system supports, this teacher arm of the instructional core becomes a lever for long-term transformation, not just short-term gains.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Foundational Rollout**

Month/Year	Grade Band(s)	Clustered Teacher Action(s)	Success Looks Like
Aug 2025	K–12	Launch lessons with cognitively demanding, standards-aligned openings that activate prior knowledge, curiosity, and cultural identity. Co-create classroom norms/routines with students to foster belonging and emotional safety.	Students enter with focus, connect to content personally, and understand clear academic routines.
Sep 2025	K–12	Adapt centrally provided lesson plans to anticipate misconceptions, pacing, scaffolds, and groupings. Unpack grade-level standards and vertical progressions.	Teachers flexibly adjust lessons to ensure grade-level rigor, scaffolding only as needed.
Oct 2025	K–12	Participate in weekly intellectual preparation with peers (task rehearsal, student work analysis). Model thinking aloud, naming strategies/vocabulary explicitly.	Instructional clarity rises; teachers anticipate and plan for common misconceptions.
Nov 2025	3–12	Scaffold discourse with routines, stems, roles, and culturally responsive prompts. Cold call equitably and facilitate rich academic conversations (debates, seminars).	Students engage in structured discourse, multiple voices heard, rigorous reasoning sustained.
Dec 2025	K–12	Use strategic questioning to surface misconceptions, multiple pathways, and deeper analysis. Explicitly teach academic vocabulary, syntax, and transitions.	Students adopt disciplinary language and demonstrate nuanced understanding.
Jan 2026	6–12	Aggressively monitor student work using annotated exemplars/checklists. Deliver real-time micro-interventions and feedback to reframe/re-teach.	Teachers adjust in the moment; misconceptions addressed before they compound.
Feb 2026	3–12	Teach revision as meaning-making using exemplars, rubrics, peer critique, feedback cycles. Use anonymized work for public modeling and critique.	Students revise work with deeper clarity, identifying gaps independently.
Mar 2026	K–12	Co-create anchor charts and success criteria with students. Embed daily reflection prompts and goal-setting structures. Group/regroup students flexibly using cold call and work data.	Students internalize success criteria, reflect daily, and see grouping as dynamic and purposeful.
Apr 2026	3–12	Assign and monitor performance tasks requiring application, synthesis, cross-disciplinary reasoning. Align Tier 2/Tier 3 supports with Tier 1 rigor.	Students apply knowledge beyond recall; supports push students toward grade-level mastery.
May 2026	K–12	Host student-led conferences, exhibitions, portfolio defenses. Engage in weekly teacher-student data dialogues and solicit student feedback.	Students take ownership of learning, articulate progress, and co-design strategies for growth.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Expansion & Mastery**

Year	Grade Band(s)	Clustered Teacher Action(s)	Success Looks Like
June 2026 – June 2027	K–12	Conduct classroom equity audits (participation maps, feedback trackers, cold call data). Revise questioning, grouping, and instruction based on equity data. Analyze assessments for cultural relevance, rigor, accessibility.	Teachers adjust instruction to close access gaps; assessments affirm identity and challenge.
June 2027 – June 2028	3–12	Review/revise grading practices to reflect mastery and remove bias. Design identity-affirming assignments linked to community, family aspirations, and purpose. Embed joy, curiosity, and play in rigorous academic tasks.	Grades reflect growth/mastery; tasks affirm culture and foster joy.
June 2028 – June 2029	6–12	Embed future-ready digital literacy (ethical AI, multimedia, collaboration). Use tech tools for personalized feedback, extended access, and creative production.	Students demonstrate ethical tech use, personalized mastery, and creativity.
June 2029 – 2030	9–12	Mentor peers through co-planning, instructional rounds, and modeling exemplary routines. Engage families as academic partners in learning extensions. Curate knowledge artifacts into district knowledge banks. Contribute to cross-classroom calibration through walkthroughs and student work analysis. Protect planning time by advocating against low-leverage tasks. Reconnect weekly to purpose and legacy-building.	Teachers scale impact beyond their classroom, mentor peers, engage families, and leave a lasting instructional legacy.

**Implementation: Content Arm of the Instructional Core**

High-quality content is not simply aligned to standards; it is the intellectual architecture of the instructional core. It anchors what students learn, how teachers teach, and how leaders monitor for equity, rigor, and meaning. This section outlines the non-negotiable features of Tier 1 instructional materials and academic tasks required to meet the district's 2030 goals. Designed for execution, reflection, and continuous improvement, this content framework ensures that every unit, lesson, and assessment advances deep learning, affirms student identity, and prepares learners for postsecondary success and community impact.

**Foundational Rollout**

Date	Grade band	Content Actions	Success Criteria
Aug 2025	B–2	Align early literacy/math tasks to grade-level standards; embed play-based anchor tasks; co-construct anchor charts; integrate SEL and joyful learning.	Students engage daily in standards-based, joyful tasks with visible success criteria.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Date	Grade band	Content Actions	Success Criteria
Aug 2025	3–5	Align units to standards; launch/model/guided practice/independent practice sequence; integrate culturally responsive texts and interdisciplinary connections.	Daily lessons reflect rigor, clear sequencing, and culturally affirming content.
Aug 2025	6–8	Introduce discipline-specific instructional shifts (e.g., sourcing in SS, coherence in Math); embed annotated exemplars/rubrics.	Students complete tasks that require evidence, reasoning, and aligned responses.
Aug 2025	9–12	Link tasks to college- and career-aligned standards (ACT rubrics, CTE benchmarks); embed digital/AI-aligned learning tools.	Content mirrors college/career rigor; students use responsible tech practices.
Sept 2025	B–2	Provide scaffolds (sentence frames, manipulatives); embed formative checks and exit tickets; integrate tiered vocabulary routines.	Students demonstrate vocabulary growth and mastery of foundational concepts.
Sept 2025	3–5	Embed anchor tasks that progress from surface → deep → transfer; include cold call/turn & talk prompts.	Students apply knowledge across contexts; discourse shows rigor.
Sept 2025	6–8	Add performance tasks (debates, Socratic seminars, problem-solving); scaffold metacognition with trackers/checklists.	Students demonstrate critical thinking and reflect on learning.
Sept 2025	9–12	Integrate interdisciplinary projects and civic dilemmas; provide revision protocols with peer feedback.	Students revise and defend academic work before authentic audiences.
Oct 2025	All	Build PLC protocols around student work; embed re-teachable tasks; flag peer-modeling opportunities.	PLCs use student data to refine pacing; tasks are re-taught with improved accuracy.
Nov 2025	B–2	Design tasks with multiple representations (visual, oral, kinesthetic); embed playful, curiosity-driven learning.	Students engage through multiple modalities, showing deeper access to content.
Nov 2025	3–5	Integrate real-world connections; provide scaffolded entry points for Tier 2/3 supports without diluting rigor.	Students of all needs access grade-level content and succeed.
Nov 2025	6–8	Embed anti-bias audits in texts/tasks; provide “What This Task Is Not” clarifiers.	Content avoids bias, misalignment, and stereotypes.
Nov 2025	9–12	Add stretch tasks for early mastery; integrate authentic presentations/projects.	Students extend learning beyond grade level, producing advanced work.
Dec 2025	All	Embed pacing recommendations, misconceptions guidance, and aggressive monitoring cues.	Teachers anticipate errors; students receive targeted, real-time feedback.
Jan 2026	B–2	Embed reflection prompts and trackers for metacognition; co-construct reusable anchor charts.	Students reflect on progress and self-monitor early literacy/math growth.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Date	Grade band	Content Actions	Success Criteria
Jan 2026	3–5	Teach tiered vocabulary with repetition and academic language practice; scaffold independent revision.	Students use academic vocabulary fluently and independently revise work.
Jan 2026	6–8	Provide interdisciplinary synthesis tasks; embed SEL in content (e.g., empathy in literature).	Students demonstrate content knowledge while applying SEL skills.
Jan 2026	9–12	Link tasks to dual enrollment/CTE standards; integrate authentic audience defenses of work.	Students meet external performance benchmarks with confidence.
Feb 2026	All	Embed digital library for content tasks; integrate annotation/version control tools.	Teachers/students access updated, annotated content seamlessly.
Mar 2026	All	Use student work to refine future tasks; codify lesson structures for re-use.	Continuous improvement embedded in content cycles.
Apr 2026	All	Integrate student voice in content curation (surveys, pilots, co-authored tasks).	Content reflects student interests, identities, and feedback.
May 2026	All	Embed reflection prompts for equity/justice in content; connect tasks to liberation-centered outcomes.	Students see content as relevant, affirming, and power-shifting.

**Expansion and Mastery**

Date	Grade band	Content Actions	Success Criteria
June 2026– June 2027	All	Vertical articulation guidance embedded across grades; pacing guides aligned with flex weeks; content-focused PD delivered with walkthrough look-fors.	Instruction is coherent across grade levels; reteaching and projects fit pacing.
June 2027– June 2028	All	Content misalignment look-fors codified; mastery/rigor definitions unified; family content guides shared.	Leaders, teachers, and families use common language for mastery.
June 2028– June 2029	All	SEL-infused and bias-audited content scaled districtwide; reflection protocols embedded in PLCs.	All students experience affirming, rigorous, SEL-aligned content.
June 2029– May 2030	All	Instructional memory embedded: content retaught, scaled, improved; dynamic task banks refined annually.	By 2030, content is rigorous, equitable, vertically aligned, and sustainably codified.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Implementation: Leadership

Sustainable academic transformation requires more than vision, it demands relentless, skillful execution from school leaders who steward every component of the instructional core. This section defines the specific actions, systems, and dispositions leaders must internalize and model to ensure instructional quality, professional growth, equity, and coherence across time. Leadership here is not positional; it is instructional. These expectations integrate coaching, planning, progress monitoring, and system-building into a daily leadership cadence that moves schools from compliance to excellence, and from excellence to institutional memory.

### Foundational Rollout

Date	Leadership Actions	Success Criteria
Aug 2025	Set & communicate vision for instructional excellence (anchored in student, teacher, content arms); protect master schedule for Tier 1, planning, coaching, and intervention; establish non-negotiables for Tier 1 (GRR, IPG, TEAM, See It, Name It, Do It).	Staff understand clear, public instructional vision; master schedule protects learning; Tier 1 expectations are explicit and visible.
Sept 2025	Launch daily walkthroughs calibrated to district rubrics; track trends with heat maps; connect student look-fors to teacher feedback; initiate daily "Instructional Sprint Planning" (1 observation, 1 feedback, 1 reflection).	Leaders provide daily feedback grounded in trends; instructional adjustments occur in real time.
Sept 2025	Facilitate weekly ILT meetings focused on data, plans, walkthroughs, and coaching; launch leadership dashboards to track fidelity, walkthroughs, and coaching actions.	ILTs use evidence to guide support; dashboards provide visibility to staff and supervisors.
Oct 2025	Lead data meetings tied to reteaching/intervention decisions; monitor lesson plans weekly for rigor, standards alignment, and fidelity; tier teachers for differentiated support.	Re-teaching decisions directly reflect student outcomes; lesson plans improve; coaching is differentiated.
Oct 2025	Co-lead calibration labs with academic leaders; participate in micro-observation cycles; launch biweekly student feedback cycles on clarity/rigor/voice.	Teacher moves calibrated to standards; students report stronger clarity and engagement.
Nov 2025	Audit task quality & student work; monitor use of aggressive monitoring, questioning, cold calling, and discourse; require weekly feedback with practice/modeling follow-up.	Instruction reflects rigor and equity; teachers improve practice through direct feedback.
Nov 2025	Model feedback culture publicly; lead PD aligned to student needs and evidence; protect instructional focus during operational demands.	Teachers see feedback modeled; PD is responsive; instructional priorities stay intact.
Dec 2025	Launch distributed leadership (labs, content leads, vertical teams); develop Leadership Continuity Binders; begin structured leadership apprenticeships.	Teacher-leaders take ownership; leadership systems documented for continuity.
Jan 2026	Track alignment between plans, instruction, and student work; conduct adult culture pulse checks; review intervention data to ensure Tier 2/3 reinforces Tier 1.	Student work matches intended rigor; adult trust and collaboration increase; interventions align to Tier 1.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Date	Leadership Actions	Success Criteria
Jan 2026	Audit equity of instructional access by subgroup; prioritize racial equity, inclusion, and responsiveness in PD and hiring.	Data shows all students challenged and included; equity embedded in leadership decisions.
Feb 2026	Maintain leadership dashboard with real-time updates; conduct root cause analyses of underperformance tied to adult practice gaps; resolve disagreements using structured calibration protocols.	Leaders own root causes; disagreements resolved with evidence; dashboards guide improvement.
Mar 2026	Curate exemplar student work to anchor vision; celebrate instructional wins publicly; elevate innovations through "Adopt-Adapt-Amplify."	Exemplar work visible schoolwide; innovations scaled; culture celebrates instruction.
Apr 2026	Conduct "What We've Institutionalized" sessions; engage in meta-coaching cycles (leaders get coached on coaching quality); track staff feedback via Insight/Panorama or rapid check-ins.	Instructional practices stick; leaders improve coaching precision; staff feedback informs adjustments.
May 2026	Facilitate instructional forecasting sessions to anticipate pacing risks and misconceptions; conduct family/community engagement as two-way academic partnerships.	School anticipates challenges proactively; families become academic partners.

**Expansion and Mastery**

Date	Leadership Actions	Success Criteria
June 2026– June 2027	Establish leadership dashboards as standard practice; scale distributed leadership labs and apprenticeships; integrate calibration labs quarterly.	Instructional systems embedded; leaders distributed; calibration consistent.
June 2027– June 2028	Document walkthrough systems, coaching calendars, and protocols into continuity binders; scale student feedback cycles; norm equity audits across schools.	Leadership practices institutionalized; students influence rigor/clarity; equity audits prevent drift.
June 2028– June 2029	Build instructional knowledge system (video banks, exemplars); sustain meta-coaching cycles across principals/APs; codify forecasting sessions.	Institutional memory preserved; leaders improve feedback; schools anticipate risks consistently.
June 2029– May 2030	Create self-correcting leadership culture (adjust fast, document frequently, preserve memory); sustain onboarding/leadership transitions through anchored systems; link evaluation/coaching to student outcomes.	Leadership is adaptive, stable, equity-driven, and focused on student results.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Implementation: System

The success of any instructional transformation depends on the coherence, alignment, and responsiveness of the system that surrounds it. This section defines what the system must do, across departments, technologies, timelines, and partnerships, to ensure that rigorous, equitable, and high-impact instruction is not only implemented but sustained. These actions institutionalize excellence, eliminate fragmentation, and position the district to deliver on its academic promises for decades to come. Every function, from procurement to innovation, must orbit the instructional core with precision and purpose.

### Foundational Rollout

Date	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
<b>Aug 2025</b>	Establish districtwide instructional vision rooted in the instructional core. Align all departments/policies to instructional quality. Maintain non-negotiables for Tier 1 (GRR, IPG, aggressive monitoring, standards-aligned materials). Launch centralized instructional portal. Require all central leaders to spend time in schools.	All departments speak a common instructional language. Teachers and principals have clarity on expectations. District portal is live and used. Central leaders collect authentic insights from schools monthly.
<b>Sep 2025</b>	Deploy coaches, content leads, and mentors. Calibrate APs and coaches on See It, Name It, Do It. Monitor lesson planning, walkthroughs, and coaching logs via dashboards. Host first content-specific walkthrough.	Coaching is consistent and high-quality across schools. Dashboards show real-time planning and feedback trends. Walkthroughs surface aligned instructional data.
<b>Oct 2025</b>	Launch quarterly instructional forecasting cycles. Anchor PD to academic frameworks and walkthrough trends. Begin monthly “academic pulse checks.” Coordinate MTSS data streams across academics, behavior, and attendance.	Schools anticipate risks before gaps widen. PD feels relevant to classroom needs. MTSS interventions align with academics, reducing fragmentation.
<b>Nov 2025</b>	Publish department “impact maps” aligning work to the core. Host cross-school learning exchange. Conduct first equity audit (rigor, expectations, student voice). Require regional leaders to lead strategy meetings grounded in walkthrough data.	Every department shows its role in learning. Equity gaps are identified with action steps. Schools learn from peer innovations. Regional leaders lead with data, not anecdotes.
<b>Dec 2025</b>	Publish first “State of the Instructional Core” report. Establish Student Academic Advisory Council. Launch knowledge management archive. Monitor lag time between decisions and classroom implementation.	Transparent report shows progress and next steps. Student voice informs system decisions. Exemplars and adjustments are archived. Implementation lag shrinks.
<b>Jan 2026</b>	Launch institutes and learning labs with student performance tasks. Conduct districtwide Tier 1–3	Institutes spread best practices. Task audits confirm alignment to

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Date	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
	task audits. Plan for instructional resilience in leadership/policy shifts.	rigor. Continuity plans prevent disruption during transitions.
<b>Feb 2026</b>	Calibrate micro-observations. Require documented See It, Name It, Do It cycles. Integrate pacing, walkthrough, and performance metrics in dashboards. Review underperformance root causes.	Leaders give sharper feedback. Coaching cycles move teacher practice. Dashboards show clear connections between leader actions and student results.
<b>Mar 2026</b>	Host “What We’ve Institutionalized” review. Conduct second equity audit. Anticipate spring pacing/content gaps. Engage families through structured task reviews.	Sustained practices are codified. Equity progress is tracked. Families understand and contribute to student academic expectations.
<b>Apr 2026</b>	Monitor Tier 2/3 systems for instructional continuity. Align hiring, onboarding, and promotion to instructional priorities. Require monthly “implementation impact reports.” Host AI/tech community forums.	Tier 2/3 supports are seamless. HR reinforces instructional excellence. Departments report progress monthly. Parents feel included in tech/AI plans.
<b>May 2026</b>	Celebrate instructional wins. Conduct benchmarking review against national peers. Update tech integration roadmap. Archive spring system learning.	District compares favorably to peers. Bright spots are shared systemwide. Tech plan adapts to new needs. Lessons are captured for future planning.

**Expansion and Mastery**

Year	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
<b>June 2026 – June 2027</b>	Institutionalize State of the Core reports, forecasting cycles, and equity audits. Expand learning exchanges and “What We’ve Institutionalized” reviews. Launch AI literacy PD, ethical AI policy, and digital equity audits.	Instructional vision drives coherence across schools. AI is integrated responsibly. Schools share and sustain effective practices. Equity gaps shrink each cycle.
<b>June 2027 – June 2028</b>	Sustain pulse checks, resilience planning, and equity audits. Expand innovation classrooms and Instructional Tech Review Board. Launch AI dashboards for teachers. Build interagency protocols linking academics, health, and workforce.	Teachers use AI dashboards daily to guide instruction. Innovation classrooms spread practices. System and city agencies collaborate for student mobility.
<b>June 2028 – June 2029</b>	Scale AI-driven feedback tools and digital portfolios. Expand student advisory influence. Institutionalize global benchmarking. Align procurement and budgeting to instructional priorities.	Students track growth with AI-enhanced portfolios. District decisions prioritize instruction first. Memphis benchmarks competitively against global peers.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Year	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
<b>June 2029 – 2030</b>	Codify knowledge into “Instructional Constitution.” Publish legacy archives. Conduct systemwide equity review of access and belonging. Anchor board and community oversight in instructional metrics. Achieve AI-integrated instructional architecture.	District sustains improvement across leadership transitions. Equity and rigor are embedded in culture. AI strengthens, not replaces, teacher-led rigor and student thinking.

## Implementation: Family and Community Engagement

### Foundational Rollout

Date	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
<b>Aug 2025</b>	Launch family-friendly version of Academic Plan in multiple languages and formats (print, digital, audio)  Create and deploy Family Academic Partner Toolkit	Families understand the Academic Plan in clear, accessible ways and have concrete routines to support learning at home
<b>Sept 2025</b>	Train principals & family engagement liaisons in the “Academic Partnership Protocol”  Pilot <i>Instructional Insight Nights</i> at 25 schools	Leaders and liaisons confidently hold family-facing data conversations; families attend events on literacy and numeracy
<b>Oct 2025</b>	Establish quarterly Family Advisory Councils by region  Launch Academic Ambassadors program with stipend-supported parent leaders	Families provide input into district strategies; ambassadors begin peer-led workshops and feedback forums
<b>Nov 2025</b>	Build family feedback loop into Compstat by integrating survey response trends	Family voice is reflected in district monitoring systems, influencing coaching and school-level decisions
<b>Dec 2025</b>	Translate Tier I unit overviews & family-facing assessment calendars into Spanish, Arabic, and French	Families of EL students have equitable access to curriculum pacing and assessment expectations
<b>Jan 2026</b>	Launch centralized <i>Parent Portal 2.0</i> with real-time attendance, academic progress, and support referrals	Families access accurate, real-time data on their child’s learning and attendance
<b>Feb 2026</b>	Conduct districtwide listening tour on culturally responsive family engagement practices  Embed a family perspective reviewer into new academic initiative rollouts	Families see their cultural knowledge valued; all new rollouts are reviewed for family accessibility

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Date	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
<b>Mar 2026</b>	Expand <i>Instructional Insight Nights</i> districtwide with quarterly cadence tied to report cards  Develop school-based co-design teams (educators + families) for curriculum & showcases	Families partner in curriculum feedback; districtwide Insight Nights engage families as instructional partners
<b>Apr 2026</b>	Launch MSCS Parent-Led Learning Labs at 10 sites	Families co-lead data conversations and academic goal-setting protocols at model schools
<b>May 2026</b>	Codify Family Academic Partnership Protocol into every school's CIP  Integrate family engagement metrics into principal evaluation rubrics	Family engagement is institutionalized into school plans and leadership evaluations

**Expansion and Mastery**

Year	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
<b>2026–2027</b>	Develop micro-credential for family engagement leaders (parents & staff)  Require Title I plans to align family engagement to academic goals with disaggregated data use  Link early childhood programs to family transition pathways into K–2 instruction	Family leaders certified; engagement tied to accountability and funding; families supported in early learning transitions
<b>2027–2028</b>	Require annual Family Impact Statements at each school  Develop intergenerational learning programs (e.g., caregiver + child literacy)  Establish multilingual academic coaching sessions for EL families	Family engagement outcomes tracked; literacy grows across generations; EL families receive tailored support
<b>2028–2029</b>	Expand Student-Led Conferences to include family learning reflections & home strategies  Use CompStat dashboards to publicly report family engagement benchmarks	Families and students co-create learning goals; transparency builds accountability; communications become proactive

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Year	System Actions	What Success Looks Like
	Align districtwide family communications calendar with instructional pacing	
2029–2030	<p>Codify districtwide Family Partnership Framework (engagement, communication, cultural responsiveness)</p> <p>Launch <i>Families as Instructional Partners</i> certification</p> <p>Institutionalize Family Curriculum Co-Design cycles</p> <p>Create a Community Learning Network hub</p> <p>Publish 5-year family engagement impact report (disaggregated)</p> <p>Tie family feedback metrics to budgeting and resource allocations</p>	<p>District achieves systemic, sustained family engagement excellence; funding reflects family voice; engagement demonstrably linked to student growth</p>



## Student Agency Framework: Owning the Path to Excellence

### Introduction

In Memphis-Shelby County Schools, student agency is not a luxury, it's a necessity. Students must not only receive instruction; they must direct, critique, and extend it. This framework ensures that every learner develops the identity, habits, and voice to shape their academic journey and future trajectory.

### Core Definition

**Student Agency** is the capacity and commitment of students to act with purpose in their learning. It includes self-direction, goal setting, voice, reflection, and the ability to use knowledge to pursue meaning and justice in their lives and communities.

### Five Interconnected Domains of Agency

Domain	Definition	Evidence of Mastery
<b>Academic Ownership</b>	Students track, reflect on, and take responsibility for their academic progress.	Goal sheets, student data folders, revision logs, conferences with teachers, and improved performance tied to deliberate actions.
<b>Voice and Choice</b>	Students shape how they learn and demonstrate what they know.	Task menus, co-authored rubrics, feedback loops, student-designed projects, and classroom voting on discussion structures or routines.
<b>Identity and Belonging</b>	Students see themselves in the curriculum and feel psychologically safe to participate fully.	Cultural texts, multilingual anchors, peer-led celebrations, classroom agreements, and artifacts affirming student lived experiences.
<b>Metacognition and Reflection</b>	Students think about their thinking and learning.	Reflection journals, goal trackers, peer feedback logs, visible thinking routines, and classroom debriefs after complex tasks.
<b>Purpose and Future Orientation</b>	Students connect learning to their long-term aspirations and impact.	Capstone projects, digital portfolios, career-aligned artifacts, academic resumes, and interviews explaining the "why" behind their academic choices.

### Developmental Progressions (PK–12)

Grade Band	Agency Focus
<b>PK–2</b>	Set daily goals, use sentence frames for reflection ("Today I..."), track behavior and task completion using stickers or visuals, and share learning with peers and families.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Grade Band	Agency Focus
Grades 3–5	With assistance, lead weekly data chats, co-construct success criteria, complete choice-based performance tasks, and reflect orally or in writing.
Grades 6–8	Lead parent-teacher conferences, curate digital portfolios, write reflective essays, and complete inquiry projects tied to community questions.
Grades 9–12	Present capstones, facilitate data talks with underclassmen, mentor younger students, build postsecondary learning plans, and analyze systemic inequities using academic knowledge.

**Alignment to the Instructional Core**

Instructional Core Arm	Student Agency Embedded Practice
Students	Initiate academic discussions, track data weekly, engage in cold call + peer critique, revise using rubrics, lead capstone exhibitions.
Teachers	Embed voice in task design, use reflection prompts in daily lessons, build choice structures, track equity of participation.
Content	Includes authentic tasks with multiple pathways, identity-relevant themes, and performance-based options across disciplines.
Leaders	Monitor agency through walk-through rubrics, lead data dialogues with students, require quarterly portfolio reviews.
System	Integrates student dashboards, provides tech for digital portfolios, trains families on goal setting and feedback cycles.

**Equity Guardrails**

- Disaggregate student agency participation by race, disability, EL status, and economic disadvantage.
- Require every student subgroup to be proportionally represented in:
  - Capstone completions
  - Data conferences
  - Public academic exhibitions
  - Peer-to-peer mentorship roles
- Track “voice access” using cold call audits, rubric participation logs, and student-led task contributions.
- School leaders are required to audit participation quarterly and develop equity action plans where disparities emerge.

**System-Level Structures to Support Agency**

System Lever	Agency-Driven Action
Walkthrough Tools	Include “student ownership” indicators in every observation.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

System Lever	Agency-Driven Action
<b>Instructional Planning</b>	Require embedded student reflection + revision opportunities in lesson plans.
<b>Assessment</b>	Grade portfolios, revisions, and goal tracking alongside products.
<b>Professional Development</b>	Train teachers on metacognition, identity-affirming pedagogy, and the use of choice-based academic design.
<b>Technology Integration</b>	Provide platforms for digital portfolios, real-time progress monitoring, and reflection journals.
<b>Family Engagement</b>	Distribute Family Agency Guides and train families on using student dashboards to co-set goals and celebrate growth.
<b>Coaching Protocols</b>	Monitor the presence of voice, identity, and choice in teacher practice via student interviews and lesson study cycles.
<b>Cultural Competence</b>	Embed trauma-informed, identity-sustaining practices in teacher prep and walkthrough criteria.

**Progress Monitoring Tools**

Monitoring Tool	Cadence	Purpose
Student Data Conferences Log	Biweekly	Monitor ownership and reflection quality
Participation Map (Voice Equity Tracker)	Weekly	Track which students are thinking, speaking, and revising each lesson
Digital Portfolio Defense Rubric	Quarterly	Evaluate agency through self-selected and revised work
Agency Pulse Survey (Panorama add-on)	Biannual	Measure perception of agency by subgroup
Capstone Tracker (by subgroup + task type)	Annually	Ensure equitable completion and rigor across demographics

**Capstone Continuum (Grades 5, 8, 12)**

Grade	Capstone Focus	Artifact
Grade 5	Identity + Learning Journey	"This is Me" academic autobiography + student-led conference
Grade 8	Community Inquiry	Project + public exhibition on a real-world community challenge
Grade 12	Postsecondary Readiness + Civic Engagement	Defense of academic portfolio + purpose-aligned senior project

Each capstone is scored using a common rubric aligned to the five agency domains and anchored in culturally responsive assessment practices.

**Closing Insight**

In Memphis, brilliance is not something we find, it is something we *nurture*. Student agency is the compass that directs brilliance toward equity, purpose, and liberation. With this framework, MSCS makes a promise: every child will be seen, heard, challenged, and trusted to lead, not later, but now.

## Aligned Coaching and Support

To meet the ambitious 2030 goals outlined in the MSCS Academic Plan, Memphis-Shelby County Schools has established a multi-layered coaching and support system rooted in equity, precision, and responsiveness. This system ensures that teachers, principals, and schools receive differentiated, data-informed support aligned to actual needs, not a one-size-fits-all model.

At the heart of this system is the district's Theory of Action:

*If we align instruction to high-quality content, build teacher and leader capacity, and ensure that all students, especially those furthest from opportunity, consistently access rigorous, engaging learning environments, then student outcomes will rise.*

This belief drives every coaching structure, leadership protocol, and system of school support.

### **Autonomy and Alignment: A Responsive Model**

In MSCS, autonomy is recalibrated based on progress and equity needs. While all schools must meet districtwide academic non-negotiables, especially in early literacy, flexibility is granted in areas such as professional learning, scheduling, and instructional planning when foundational systems are strong.

#### **Tight (Districtwide Non-Negotiables)**

- Use of adopted core curriculum (Wonders, myPerspectives)
- Foundational K–2 literacy blocks
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 student interventions
- Subgroup data disaggregation and quarterly response cycles
- Participation in walkthroughs and coaching calibrations

#### **Adaptive (Responsive Flexibility Based on Support)**

- School-led vs. regionally led PD
- Master schedule design (flexibility when systems are strong)
- PLC frequency and structure (within MSCS expectations)
- Deployment of instructional coaching

### **Ongoing Coaching and Adjustment**

Teacher, principal, and school supports are revisited quarterly using multiple evidence sources (TEAM observations, TVAAS growth, Panorama and Insight surveys, benchmark assessments). This process adjusts the type, frequency, and intensity of coaching engagements, walkthrough cycles, and professional learning.

Examples:

- A teacher demonstrating consistent excellence may serve as a peer model and receive consultative coaching.
- A principal with strong leadership outcomes may fully lead site-based PD while opting into regional learning cycles.

## Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan 2025-2030

- A school showing early warning signs may receive direct coaching assignments and aligned PD from district teams.

Support decisions remain flexible but anchored in evidence, ensuring timely intervention or strategic release.

### **SMART Goals as Anchors**

ELA and Math SMART goals from Pre-K through Grade 12 serve as anchors for this system. Each includes a 2024 baseline, annual milestones, and 2030 targets, with subgroup performance monitored quarterly on performance dashboards. These goals:

- Drive coaching focus for teachers
- Shape leadership development for principals
- Guide school improvement planning

### **A System of Aligned Support**

The frameworks that follow include:

1. Teacher Coaching Supports
2. Principal Coaching Supports
3. School-Based Support Structures

Each framework includes clear indicators, aligned coaching expectations, and direct connections to SMART goals, walkthroughs, and instructional tools used districtwide. This model allows MSCS to:

- Celebrate and elevate effective educators and leaders
- Provide timely, targeted coaching where it is most needed
- Align every adult's work to rigorous, equitable student outcomes

Quarterly calibration ensures consistency across schools and regions. This is how MSCS operationalizes its commitment: equity is not a slogan; it is a structure.

## **Teacher Coaching Framework**

### **Excellence Is Engineered Through Support, Not Sorting**

Excellence is not an accident, it is designed through intentional coaching, transparent expectations, and responsive development. In Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), our Teacher Coaching Framework ensures every educator is supported through clear, equitable standards rooted in evidence and aligned to classroom needs. When teachers receive the right coaching at the right time, student learning accelerates.

MSCS educators are expected to demonstrate instructional excellence, professionalism, and a deep commitment to student outcomes across all domains of practice. To support this, every teacher receives regular, personalized professional development and coaching through school-, region-, and district-level structures. These sessions are aligned to core instructional frameworks, including See It, Name It, Do It, aggressive monitoring, data-driven instruction, questioning protocol, and high-impact literacy and numeracy strategies.

This framework replaces the former tiering model, which was based on a 100-point weighted scale across six domains. The revised model uses a more comprehensive 9-domain rubric scored on a 1–5 scale, allowing for precision, fairness, and transparency. The goal of this transition is to emphasize growth over ranking and to ensure that every teacher receives the type and intensity of support most aligned to their classroom needs.

### Collaborative Growth Planning

At the start of each quarter, every teacher meets with their principal, or a principal designee approved by the Regional Superintendent, to:

- Identify specific actions to strengthen practice or sustain their current support level.
- Define measurable growth goals (e.g., improved student work quality, refined questioning techniques, higher observation scores, improved attendance reliability, or stronger Panorama results).
- Agree on evidence to collect during the quarter (lesson plans, student work, walkthrough notes, coaching logs).

All coaching conversations and planning meetings must begin with student work samples, analyzed against standards and exemplars. Teachers also provide student-facing success criteria so students can self-assess their progress. Coaching steps must address both instructional moves and student-reported experiences, gathered from exit tickets or surveys, in addition to Panorama.

This ensures coaching support is personalized, evidence-driven, and transparent, with shared ownership of next steps.

### How Support Levels Are Determined

Teachers are reviewed quarterly (Q1, Q2, Q3) across nine domains, each receiving 1–5 points based on evidence:

- **5 points = Exemplary Performance**
- **4 points = Strong Performance**
- **3 points = Proficient/Consistent Performance**
- **2 points = Developing Performance**
- **1 point = Emerging Performance**

Total points range from 9–45, determining coaching frequency and instructional planning expectations.

**Domain Scoring Table**

Domain	Exemplary (5 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Emerging (1 pt)
<b>Classroom Instruction (TEM)</b>	4.5+ on observation rubrics	3.51–4.49	3.0–3.5	2.5–2.99	Below 2.5

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Domain	Exemplary (5 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Emerging (1 pt)
<b>Student Growth (TVAAS)</b>	Level 5 growth	Level 4 growth	Level 3 growth	Level 2 growth	Level 1 growth
<b>Professional Conduct</b>	Score 5 on Professionalism rubric	Score 4	Score 3	Score 2	Score 1
<b>Student Experience (Panorama &amp; feedback)</b>	≥10 percentage points above district average	6–9 percentage points above	Within ±5 percentage points of district average	6–9 percentage points below	≥10 percentage points below

*Note: No teacher may be rated Strong or Exemplary if subgroup achievement gaps widen across two consecutive quarters.*

#### Coaching Cadence (by Total Points)

- **Exemplary (37–45 pts)** – Consultative role; teacher may serve as peer coach, model lessons, or support school-wide professional learning. Fast-tracked into leadership pathways (AP candidate pool, demonstration classrooms).
- **Strong (28–36 pts)** – Monthly coaching and feedback; refinement focus only. May mentor peers or lead PLCs.
- **Proficient (19–27 pts)** – Coaching every other week; emphasis on consistency, planning, student work analysis.
- **Developing (13–18 pts)** – Weekly coaching sessions, including live modeling, targeted PD, structured growth plan. Must use district-provided plans with coach-approved modifications.
- **Emerging (9–12 pts)** – Multiple touchpoints per week; intensive coaching with direct oversight by school/regional leadership. Must use district-provided plans exactly until fidelity is demonstrated.

#### Coaching Support Levels & Lesson Plan Expectations

Support Level	Total Points	Coaching Frequency	Lesson Plan Expectation	Supports Provided
<b>Exemplary</b>	37–45	Consulting role	May use teacher-created plans aligned to district curriculum. Expected to mentor colleagues and model practice.	Peer mentorship, PLC leadership, demonstration lessons, curriculum consulting
<b>Strong</b>	28–36	Monthly	May use teacher-created plans with principal/designee pre-approval. Must include standards, exemplars, checks for understanding.	Collaborative planning, peer observation, targeted feedback



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Support Level	Total Points	Coaching Frequency	Lesson Plan Expectation	Supports Provided
<b>Proficient</b>	19–27	Every other week	May use teacher-created plans if fully aligned to district frameworks. Must demonstrate alignment in reviews.	Planning sessions, DDI cycles, structured feedback
<b>Developing</b>	13–18	Weekly	Must use district-provided plans in full. Modifications require coach approval until consistency is proven.	Side-by-side planning, live modeling, weekly walkthroughs, growth plan
<b>Emerging</b>	9–12	Multiple touchpoints per week	Must use district-provided plans exactly, with no modifications until improvement is evident.	High-frequency coaching, co-teaching, daily feedback cycles, HR-supported improvement plan

#### Teacher Reflection & Self-Assessment

Before each quarterly review, teachers submit:

- One instructional move that improved learning
- Student work showing growth
- A routine or practice to refine
- A short success statement for the next quarter

Teachers also complete a self-rating on the 9-domain rubric and compare it to their principal/coach rating. Reflection conversations explicitly address gaps between self- and leader-scoring, reinforcing ownership.

#### Integrity and Shared Responsibility

- Movement to lighter support requires  $\cong 9$  weeks of sustained improvement in at least two domains, supported by artifacts.
- Benchmarks include:
  - *Emerging*  $\rightarrow$  *Developing*:  $\geq 80\%$  fidelity to district plans observed in walkthroughs.
  - *Developing*  $\rightarrow$  *Proficient*: Evidence of consistent growth on formative assessments.
  - *Proficient*  $\rightarrow$  *Strong*:  $\geq 70\%$  of student work at/above standard across three checkpoints.
  - *Strong*  $\rightarrow$  *Exemplary*: Evidence of peer impact (mentorship, PLC improvement gains).
- No single data point drives decisions.
- Leaders schedule coaching and provide feedback.
- Teachers implement, reflect, and bring evidence.

#### Equity and Student Voice Safeguards

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- A classroom cannot be identified as Strong or Exemplary if students consistently report significantly below-average experiences in Panorama or if subgroup performance gaps widen over two consecutive quarters.
- The district conducts annual equity audits across content areas, grade levels, and schools. Data include subgroup outcomes, attendance, and discipline disproportionality alongside Panorama.

#### Systemwide Calibration and Research

- Quarterly CompSTAT reviews at school and regional levels.
- Monthly calibration sessions using walkthroughs, artifacts, and video footage.
- Biannual video norming sessions across principals, coaches, and regional superintendents to ensure scoring reliability.
- MSCS publishes an Annual Coaching Impact Report showing teacher growth, movement between support levels, and correlations with student outcomes.
- Partner universities validate rubric reliability and framework fidelity.

#### Progressive Discipline Protocol (if coaching implementation fails)

1. Oral Reprimand
2. Documented Counseling
3. Written Reprimand
4. Referral to Regional Superintendent
5. Referral to HR

Each stage includes clear expectations, action steps, and deadlines.

**RACI Chart: MSCS Teacher Coaching Framework**

Task / Component	Teacher	Principal	Principal Designee (Coach/AP)	Regional Superintendent	District Academic Office
Quarterly Domain Scoring	I	R/A	R	C	C
Quarterly Coaching Level Assignment	I	A	R	C	C
Collaborative Growth Planning Meeting	R	A	R	C	I
Lesson Plan Expectation (district vs teacher-created)	R	A	R (monitor)	C	I
Coaching Sessions (weekly/biweekly/monthly)	R	A	R	C	I
Exemplary Consulting Opportunities	R	A	C	I	I
Developing/Emerging Support Plans	R	A	R	C	C
Collection of Artifacts	R	A	R	C	I

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Task / Component	Teacher	Principal	Principal Designee (Coach/AP)	Regional Superintendent	District Academic Office
Movement Between Support Levels	R (provide evidence)	A	R	C	I
Equity & Student Voice Safeguard	I	A	R	C	C
Systemwide Calibration (CompSTAT, norming)	I	R	C	A	A
Progressive Discipline Protocol	I	A	R	C	C
Districtwide Framework Review & Updates	I	C	C	C	A

RACI is a responsibility-assignment framework that stands for:

- **R = Responsible** – The person or role that does the work to complete the task. (“Who is doing it?”)
- **A = Accountable** – The person who is ultimately answerable for the outcome and has decision-making authority. Only one person should be accountable for each task. (“Who owns it?”)
- **C = Consulted** – People who must be consulted before a decision or action is taken, usually because they have expertise or critical input. This is a two-way communication. (“Who do we need to talk to before we act?”)
- **I = Informed** – People who must be kept up to date on progress or decisions, but who are not directly responsible or consulted. This is one-way communication. (“Who needs to know after the fact?”)

In short: Responsible = Doer, Accountable = Owner, Consulted = Advisor, Informed = Updated.

## Principal Coaching Framework

### Leadership Is Coached, Not Sorted

In Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), leadership is not a title, it is a responsibility to sustain excellent teaching, strong culture, and equitable student outcomes. The Principal Coaching Framework ensures that every school leader is supported with clarity, coached with urgency, and developed through transparent structures that emphasize growth over ranking. This framework is grounded in the belief that when principals receive the right coaching at the right time, their teachers thrive and their students achieve.

### Collaborative Growth Planning

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

At the start of each quarter, every principal meets with their Regional Superintendent or Executive Director to:

- Identify leadership actions to strengthen or sustain.
- Define measurable growth goals (e.g., teacher retention, Insight culture scores, subgroup performance).
- Agree on evidence to collect during the quarter (walkthrough logs, teacher coaching records, PD calendars, student outcome data).

This ensures coaching is personalized, evidence-driven, and transparent.

### Coaching Domains and Scoring

Principals are reviewed quarterly across five domains; each scored on a 1–5 scale.

Domain	Exemplary (5 pts)	Strong (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Emerging (1 pt)
<b>Student Outcomes (CGI / TVAAS / Achievement Growth)</b>	Exceeds growth targets; Level 5 TVAAS	Meets most targets; Level 4	Maintains growth; Level 3	Inconsistent; Level 2	Declining growth; Level 1
<b>Instructional Leadership (TEAM / GRR / 5E)</b>	≥4.5 avg TEAM, consistent fidelity	3.51–4.49 avg TEAM	3.0–3.5 avg TEAM	2.5–2.99 avg TEAM	<2.5 avg TEAM
<b>School Culture &amp; Staff Voice (Insight Percentile Rank)</b>	≥80th percentile (exceptional culture)	60th–79th percentile	40th–59th percentile (district average ± slight variance)	20th–39th percentile	≤19th percentile
<b>Student Voice &amp; Equity (Panorama / Subgroup Outcomes)</b>	≥10 percentage points above district average + subgroup gaps closing	6–9 percentage points above district average	Within ±5 percentage points of district average	6–9 percentage points below district average	≥10 percentage points below district average OR subgroup gaps widening
<b>Professional Responsibilities (Timeliness, Compliance, Retention)</b>	100% deadlines met; proactive HR/talent management	95–99% deadlines met	90–94% deadlines met	80–89% deadlines met	<80% deadlines met

Total possible: 25 points (5 per domain). Range: 5–25.

### Coaching Cadence (by Total Points)

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **Exemplary (22–25 pts)** – Consultative role; principal may mentor peers, lead leadership labs, or pilot innovation initiatives.
- **Strong (18–21 pts)** – Monthly coaching; emphasis on refinement and strategic development.
- **Proficient (14–17 pts)** – Coaching every other week; focus on sustaining consistency and closing gaps.
- **Developing (10–13 pts)** – Weekly coaching; side-by-side planning, targeted growth plan, live modeling.
- **Emerging (5–9 pts)** – Multiple touchpoints per week; intensive coaching, co-leadership of walkthroughs, daily debriefs, HR-linked improvement plan.

### Leadership Coaching Expectations

All principals are expected to:

- Lead weekly Data-Driven Instruction (DDI) meetings using Bambrick-Santoyo protocols, with evidence of reteach planning.
- Conduct quarterly teacher coaching reviews aligned to the Teacher Coaching Framework.
- Implement GRR, and the 5E Model with fidelity in classrooms.
- Debrief walkthroughs within 48 hours, documenting:
  - Student talk vs. teacher talk ratio
  - Bloom's Taxonomy level of questions
  - Equity of voice and participation
  - Use of aligned tasks/materials

### Equity Safeguards

- No principal may be rated Strong or Exemplary if Insight (staff voice) or Panorama (student voice) scores fall significantly below benchmarks (below the 40th percentile for Insight;  $\geq 10$  percentage points below district average for Panorama).
- Regional equity audits are triggered if subgroup proficiency declines by  $>3\%$  over two consecutive quarters. Corrective leadership plans are submitted within 10 days.

### Calibration and Monitoring

- **Quarterly coaching reviews** (Sept, Dec, Mar, Jun).
- **CompSTAT reviews** monthly (school-level), quarterly (regional).
- **Video norming sessions** biannually for inter-rater reliability.
- Required evidence: walkthrough logs, coaching artifacts, Insight/Panorama trends, retention/attendance data.

### Leadership Reflection & Self-Assessment

Before each quarterly review, principals submit:

- One leadership move that improved teaching/learning.
- Evidence from staff or student culture (Insight, Panorama).
- A growth area to refine.
- A success statement for the next quarter.
- A self-rating on the 5 domains, compared to supervisor ratings.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

#### **Movement Protocol**

- Movement to lighter support requires  $\cong 9$  weeks of sustained growth in  $\geq 2$  domains.
- Documentation includes SMART goals, evidence of implementation, alignment to priorities.
- Appeals may be submitted via Leadership Coaching Portfolio within 10 business days, reviewed by the Leadership Talent Team.

#### **Talent Development & Succession**

- **Exemplary and Strong principals:** prioritized for innovation pilots, cross-functional leadership, and succession cohorts.
- **Proficient and Developing principals:** receive targeted PD and side-by-side regional coaching.
- **Emerging principals:** receive intensive improvement planning, with HR involvement if progress is not sustained.

#### **Systemwide Calibration and Voice**

- **Monthly calibration sessions** ensure consistent coaching expectations across regions.
- **Quarterly Leader Voice surveys** capture principal feedback on coaching effectiveness, informing leadership PD priorities.

**RACI Model: MSCS Principal Coaching Framework**

<b>Task / Component</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Regional Superintendent / Executive Director</b>	<b>Principal Coach (if assigned)</b>	<b>District Academic Office</b>	<b>Leadership Talent Team</b>
<b>Quarterly Domain Scoring (5 domains, 1–5 scale)</b>	I (receives rating)	R/A	C	C	C
<b>Quarterly Coaching Level Assignment</b>	I	A	R	C	C
<b>Collaborative Growth Planning Meeting</b>	R	A	R	C	I
<b>DDI Meetings (weekly, Bambrick protocols)</b>	R	A (ensures fidelity)	C (spot-check support)	I	I
<b>Quarterly Teacher Coaching Reviews</b>	R	A (verifies quality)	C	I	I

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

<b>Task / Component</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Regional Superintendent / Executive Director</b>	<b>Principal Coach (if assigned)</b>	<b>District Academic Office</b>	<b>Leadership Talent Team</b>
<b>(aligned to Teacher Framework)</b>					
<b>Walkthroughs &amp; Debriefs (48 hr turnaround)</b>	R	A (monitors)	C	I	I
<b>Insight / Panorama Equity Safeguard Monitoring</b>	R (responds with action)	A (enforces safeguard)	C	I	C
<b>Regional Equity Audit (triggered if subgroup outcomes decline)</b>	R (implements corrective plan)	A (approves plan)	C	C	I
<b>CompSTAT Reviews (monthly/quarterly)</b>	R (presents evidence)	A (facilitates)	C	C	I
<b>Video Norming Participation (biannual)</b>	R	A	C	C	I
<b>Leadership Reflection &amp; Self-Assessment Submission</b>	R	A (reviews)	C	I	I
<b>Movement Between Coaching Levels</b>	R (provides evidence)	A (decision-maker)	C	C	C
<b>Appeals Process (Leadership Coaching Portfolio)</b>	R (submits portfolio)	C	C	I	A (reviews portfolio, issues final decision)
<b>Talent Development &amp; Succession Planning</b>	R (engage in opportunities)	A (nomination / placement)	C	C	A (tracks succession data)

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Task / Component	Principal	Regional Superintendent / Executive Director	Principal Coach (if assigned)	District Academic Office	Leadership Talent Team
Leader Voice Survey Submission	R	A (ensures completion rate)	C	I	C
Systemwide Calibration Participation	R	A (ensures attendance/fidelity)	C	C	C

### Closing Commitment

This Principal Coaching Framework is not an evaluation tool, it is a growth system, aligned with the Teacher Coaching Framework, designed to ensure every school has a leader capable of sustaining excellent teaching, building strong culture, and driving equitable student achievement. Grounded in equity, powered by coaching, and measured by student success, this framework operationalizes MSCS's belief that excellence is engineered through support, not sorting.

## School Support Framework

In Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), school support is more than compliance, it is a shared commitment to equitable growth, cultural responsiveness, and academic excellence. Every school deserves differentiated support, autonomy, and oversight aligned to its unique strengths and challenges. The School Support Framework uses a comprehensive, data-driven approach to ensure that engagement, coaching, and improvement planning are tailored for sustainable impact.

### School Support Domains & Weights

Domain	Weight
School Index Score (CGI or override)	30%
TVAAS (Growth)	20%
Chronic Absenteeism	15%
Suspension Rate	15%
Panorama (Student Perception)	12%
Insight (Teacher Perception)	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: Reward Schools and those with an "A" letter grade may automatically receive full points in the School Index Score category.*



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**School Support Levels & Summary**

Level	Score Range	Profile	School Supports
Level 1	90–100	Model schools with exceptional growth, climate, and culture; high perception and engagement data	<p>Full autonomy in operations and programming</p> <p>Serve as model or mentor site</p> <p>Opt-in coaching</p> <p>Eligible for innovation pilots</p>
Level 2	75–89	Effective schools demonstrating consistent outcomes and positive trends across domains	<p>Monthly strategic visits</p> <p>Tailored PD and planning</p> <p>Moderate autonomy</p> <p>Included in networked improvement cycles</p>
Level 3	55–74	Developing schools with inconsistent results, subgroup gaps, or flagged early warning trends	<p>Biweekly walkthroughs</p> <p>Required School Improvement Plan</p> <p>90-day plan</p> <p>Targeted support in academics, HR, and climate</p> <p>Quarterly benchmarks and coaching</p>
Level 4	Below 55	Priority schools with urgent needs in growth, culture, and engagement; <b>CSI-identified</b> or persistently low performing	<p>Weekly monitoring</p> <p>Required Comprehensive Improvement Plan</p> <p>90-day plan</p> <p>District-led planning and PD</p> <p>Restructuring review if no progress in 90 days</p>

**School Support Review & Monitoring**

- **When:** Conducted annually using the most recent school year data

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **Who:** District accountability leads in collaboration with the Office of School Improvement and Regional Superintendents
- **How:** Based on final weighted composite score (0–100), calculated from verified data sources
- **Reclassification Criteria:** Schools may shift levels mid-year with evidence of sustained movement in  $\geq 2$  indicators over 12 instructional weeks

#### Equity Guardrails for School Support

- Schools serving  $\geq 75\%$  Economically Disadvantaged (ED), English Learner (EL), or SWD populations may not score below 5 points in chronic absenteeism or suspension if:
  - No  $\geq 5\%$  increase occurred, and
  - A written plan and active restorative or engagement strategy is in place

#### Application of School Support Level

Support level informs:

- Walkthrough frequency and district coaching cycles
- Required improvement planning (SIP or CSIP)
- Access to innovation, budget autonomy, and staffing flexibility
- Documentation and accountability cadence

#### Focused Literacy Accountability and Implementation Monitoring

To ensure the fidelity and impact of the district's core academic focus, literacy across content areas, MSCS will implement a focused literacy accountability structure embedded within its broader progress monitoring system. This structure aligns directly with the district's Theory of Action and grade-band implementation expectations. It provides a coherent mechanism to track the delivery, integrity, and outcomes of foundational literacy instruction and intervention services.

#### Minimum Implementation Expectations

All schools are expected to:

- Deliver Tier 1 ELA aligned to Wonders (elementary) or myPerspectives (secondary) with fidelity.
- Implement foundational oral language, phonics, and fluency instruction in grades K–2.
- Utilize Reading Prescriptions and i-Ready growth targets to guide small-group instruction.
- Deliver Tier 2 and 3 interventions with SEA tutor support.
- Disaggregate and monitor subgroup data (race, EL, SWD, ED) quarterly.

School teams will be assessed using a rubric that includes:

- Curriculum fidelity checks
- Foundational skills integration
- Intervention integrity
- Use of data (i-Ready, Reading Prescriptions)
- Evidence of leadership coaching and literacy-specific 90-Day Plans

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Artifacts collected include annotated walkthroughs, lesson plans, PD calendars, intervention logs, SEA service trackers, and subgroup data reviews. Monitoring will occur at biweekly, monthly, and quarterly intervals depending on school support level.

**Escalation Protocol**

If a school misses two or more literacy implementation benchmarks in a semester:

- The Regional Superintendent convenes a Literacy Implementation Review
- The school is required to submit a 30/60/90 Literacy Recovery Plan
- PD, SEA support, or staffing resources may be reassigned to support compliance

**Subgroup Equity Audit Trigger**

If subgroup proficiency (e.g., ELs, SWDs, Black male students) declines more than 3% in two consecutive quarters, a regional audit is triggered and a written corrective plan must be submitted within 10 business days.

This fully integrated approach ensures alignment between performance expectations, resource deployment, and autonomy, creating a coherent system where all schools can grow toward excellence within a shared framework of accountability and support.

**Support Interaction Protocols: Leader and School Mismatch**

In the event that a principal or teacher transitions into a school with a different support level than their own, Memphis-Shelby County Schools applies the following rules to ensure equity and development continuity.

**Transitions Between Roles and School Contexts**

Memphis-Shelby County Schools recognizes that strategic reassignments of principals and teachers, whether to accelerate growth or preserve excellence, require intentional support to ensure continuity, coherence, and equity. Transitions are not reset; they are opportunities to extend impact, scale effective practice, and deepen districtwide alignment to the Instructional Core. To that end, the following protocols apply when educators transition into school contexts with differing levels of need or support intensity.

**Principal Transitions**

When a principal is reassigned to a school with a higher or lower support level designation than their previous campus, their existing coaching designation remains in place for the entirety of the first school year. This protected period ensures leadership stability, allows time to implement systems, and provides space for culture building aligned to MSCS priorities.

Throughout the year, quarterly reviews anchored in student growth, school climate, and instructional fidelity (e.g., TVAAS, Insight, attendance, walkthroughs) will be used to monitor progress. Coaching levels may be recalibrated after one full year if sustained trends support a formal shift in designation. If the new school requires urgent support, the district will provide enhanced resources, including direct coaching, staffing support, and planning flexibility.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Principals placed in higher-performing schools are expected to preserve excellence across key indicators, including school letter grade, TVAAS levels, and stakeholder perception data. A decline in outcomes without clear documentation of context or intervention may trigger a leadership review during the next coaching cycle.

**Teacher Transitions**

When a teacher transitions into a school with a different support level designation, their current coaching designation remains in effect for at least one full semester to allow for context acclimation and instructional alignment. During this period, frontloaded support is provided, including access to curriculum-aligned materials, personalized coaching, and collaborative planning structures.

Midyear coaching reviews may be initiated if student outcome data, such as TEM, TVAAS, or Panorama, reflects a significant decline, and no mitigating circumstances or corrective actions are evident. Teachers who demonstrate strong instructional results in higher-need schools may be nominated for recognition or advancement.

Teachers with Empowered or Core support entering higher-performing campuses are held to increased expectations for maintaining instructional and cultural excellence. These educators begin with a 30-day alignment review and may be eligible for coaching designation adjustments after nine weeks of sustained, documented success across multiple domains. If performance causes negative shifts in school-level metrics, the principal may initiate additional supports or recommend reassignment.

## Talent and Retention Pathways: Growing, Elevating, and Keeping Excellence in Memphis

### Introduction

Memphis-Shelby County Schools recognizes that system transformation hinges not only on hiring talented educators—but on developing, retaining, and elevating them across time. This Talent and Retention Pathways framework ensures that our highest-impact educators are supported to stay, stretched to grow, and strategically placed to accelerate student achievement where it matters most. Grounded in equity and excellence, the framework links tiered development, differentiated leadership tracks, and clear advancement routes across the educator pipeline—from novice to master teacher, from assistant principal to principal coach.

### Theory of Action

If we align growth opportunities, leadership pathways, and professional development tracks to educator effectiveness, and reward excellence with responsibility and retention incentives, **then** we will build a sustainable, high-performing workforce that accelerates student outcomes across all schools—especially those serving our most marginalized communities.

**Components of the Talent and Retention Pathway**

Component	Description
<b>Tier-Based Growth Runways</b>	Clear quarterly expectations, development targets, and career ladders aligned to Tier 1–4 educator or leader placement (see MSCS Teacher and Principal Tier Frameworks).
<b>Differentiated PD Tracks</b>	Role- and tier-specific learning tracks (e.g., novice teacher induction, Tier 1 “masterclass” series, Tier 3 targeted content coaching) aligned to performance and potential.
<b>Residencies &amp; Pipelines</b>	Paid, performance-based residencies for teachers and principals of color, multilingual educators, and hard-to-staff content areas.
<b>Strategic Role Placement</b>	Talent identified for high-impact roles (e.g., mentor teachers, turnaround leaders, ILT chairs) based on prior outcomes, tier movement, and responsiveness to feedback.
<b>Recognition and Incentives</b>	Recognition systems (e.g., “Top 10% Value-Add,” “Family Favorite,” “Equity Leader”), paired with stipends, performance bonuses, and high-autonomy status for top tiers.
<b>Retention Predictive Analytics</b>	Use of teacher perception data, transfer trends, and exit interviews to identify retention risks and proactively target coaching, leadership support, or team climate fixes.
<b>Professional Branding Support</b>	LinkedIn optimization, resume coaching, district portfolio tools, and speaking opportunities to support high-performers' long-term career growth—within or beyond MSCS.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Educator Development Tracks by Tier**

Teacher Tier	Development Focus	Retention Strategy
<b>Tier 4</b> (Underperforming)	Intensive coaching, re-instruction protocols, and documented improvement plans.	Support-to-separation protocols after two quarters of no documented progress.
<b>Tier 3</b> (Developing)	Weekly coaching, classroom labs, and targeted walkthrough feedback tied to student performance data.	Team support, growth stipends, pathway to Tier 2 recognition through rapid gains.
<b>Tier 2</b> (Effective)	School-based leadership roles (e.g., ILT sub-leads, mentor teachers), peer observations, instructional rounds.	Retention bonuses for two-year effectiveness, early hiring priority.
<b>Tier 1</b> (Highly Effective)	Access to masterclass PD, paid modeling opportunities, policy advisory councils, and pilot classroom design authority.	Autonomy, public recognition, coaching pathways, and systemwide leadership roles.

**Principal Retention and Mobility Pathways**

Principal Tier	Leadership Development Strategy	Retention & Advancement Supports
<b>Tier 4</b>	Coaching from Regional Supt and HR, compliance-focused walkthroughs, progressive discipline, exit plan.	Exit aligned to HR policy unless significant improvement documented across two domains.
<b>Tier 3</b>	Weekly coaching, PD on instructional leadership, data use, and staff development with leadership mentor.	Opportunity to shift tiers with school-level turnaround benchmarks; entry into "Emerging Leaders" pool.
<b>Tier 2</b>	Coaching around coherence, tiered talent development, and leading walkthrough systems with precision.	Eligibility for turnaround leadership stipends or incentive-based placement at priority schools.
<b>Tier 1</b>	Cohort-based principal labs, system policy shaping, coaching certification, and succession pipeline design.	Full autonomy, principal fellowships, and eligibility for Regional or Executive Leadership pathways.

**Retention Metrics and Targets**

Indicator	2024 Baseline	2030 Target
Year-over-year retention of Tier 1 teachers	71%	≥ 90%
Year-over-year retention of Tier 1 principals	67%	≥ 90%
Tier 1–2 teachers in priority schools	47%	≥ 70%
Participation in formal pipeline programs	580 educators	≥ 1,500 educators/year
Educators of color in top two tiers	38%	≥ 60%
Median tenure of Tier 1 educators	3.8 years	≥ 6 years

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Alignment with Academic Plan Priorities**

This Talent and Retention Pathway directly supports:

- Instructional Core: Keeps high-performing educators in classrooms where they drive rigor, equity, and engagement.
- Walkthrough Systems: Ensures those providing coaching are models of Tier I instructional excellence.
- Equity of Access: Prioritizes leadership and retention in schools serving Black, Brown, EL, SWD, and ED student populations.
- Accountability Frameworks: Incentivizes measurable growth and responsiveness to feedback as part of tier movement.

**Closing Insight**

We cannot out-coach our way past instability. The only path to sustained excellence is strategic retention. MSCS commits not just to growing talent, but to keeping it. Because every student deserves not just a teacher, but the right teacher. And every school deserves a leader who's not just in the seat but built to last.

## Leadership Framework

This Leadership Framework outlines the core leadership competencies, performance indicators, and expected outcomes for all school-based leadership roles within Memphis-Shelby County Schools. It explicitly integrates the 5 A's (Academics, Arts, Athletics, Attendance, and Attitude) and emphasizes the critical importance of fostering equitable practices and high expectations for all students. This framework is informed by the work of Leithwood et al. (2006) and the Council of the Great City Schools (2012).

### Overarching Principles:

- **Equity-Centered Leadership:** Leaders actively work to dismantle systemic barriers, address biases, and create inclusive environments where all students have access to high-quality learning experiences and opportunities across the 5 A's.
- **Instructional Leadership Focus:** Leaders prioritize and support effective teaching and learning practices that lead to significant academic growth and achievement for all students.
- **Culture of High Expectations:** Leaders cultivate a school-wide belief that all students can achieve at high levels in all areas of the 5 A's, fostering a growth mindset among students and staff.
- **Collaborative Leadership:** Leaders build and empower collaborative teams, fostering shared responsibility for student success and school improvement.
- **Data-Informed Decision-Making:** Leaders utilize a variety of data sources to understand student needs, monitor progress in the 5 A's, and make informed decisions to improve outcomes and address inequities.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Leaders engage in ongoing reflection, learning, and adaptation to enhance their leadership practices and drive continuous school improvement.

### I. Core Leadership Competencies:

These overarching competencies are essential for effective leadership across all roles.

Competency	Description	Alignment with 5 A's & Equity
<b>Visionary Leadership</b>	Ability to develop, articulate, and collaboratively implement a clear and compelling vision for the school that prioritizes academic excellence, fosters a positive and inclusive school culture, champions the 5 A's, and advances equity for all students.	Directly linked to establishing school-wide priorities and goals for each of the 5 A's, ensuring the vision reflects a commitment to equitable access and high expectations in all areas.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

<b>Instructional Leadership</b>	Expertise in leading and supporting high-quality, evidence-based instruction that meets the diverse needs of all learners, promotes academic rigor, and fosters a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning.	Directly impacts <b>Academics</b> by ensuring effective teaching practices. Supports <b>Arts</b> integration into curriculum. Informs effective coaching in <b>Athletics</b> . Creates engaging learning environments that positively influence <b>Attendance</b> and <b>Attitude</b> . Ensures equitable access to high-quality instruction.
<b>Culture Building</b>	Ability to cultivate a positive, safe, and inclusive school culture that values diversity, promotes student well-being, fosters a sense of belonging, and supports excellence in the 5 A's.	Directly influences <b>Attitude</b> by shaping the social-emotional environment. Supports participation and positive experiences in <b>Arts</b> and <b>Athletics</b> . Creates a welcoming environment that encourages <b>Attendance</b> . A positive culture is foundational for academic success ( <b>Academics</b> ) and must be equitable for all students.
<b>Equity Leadership</b>	Commitment to understanding and addressing systemic inequities, advocating for the needs of all students (especially those historically marginalized), and implementing policies and practices that ensure equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes across the 5 A's.	Central to ensuring equitable access and participation in <b>Academics</b> , <b>Arts</b> , and <b>Athletics</b> . Addresses factors impacting equitable <b>Attendance</b> and fosters an inclusive and respectful <b>Attitude</b> for all students. This competency underpins all aspects of the framework.
<b>Collaborative Leadership</b>	Ability to build and empower effective teams, foster collaboration among staff, students, families, and the community, and distribute leadership to achieve school-wide goals related to the 5 A's and equity.	Essential for developing shared ownership and responsibility for success in the <b>Academics</b> , <b>Arts</b> , <b>Athletics</b> , <b>Attendance</b> , and <b>Attitude</b> . Facilitates the creation of equitable practices through diverse perspectives and shared decision-making.
<b>Management &amp; Operations</b>	Ability to effectively manage school resources (human, financial, and physical), operations, and systems to create a safe, efficient, and supportive environment conducive to learning and the success of the 5 A's.	Provides the necessary infrastructure and resources to support high-quality <b>Academics</b> , thriving <b>Arts</b> and <b>Athletics</b> programs, effective systems for promoting <b>Attendance</b> , and a positive school <b>Attitude</b> . Ensures equitable allocation of resources.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

<b>Communication</b>	Ability to communicate clearly, effectively, and respectfully with all stakeholders, building trust and fostering open dialogue around school goals, student progress in the 5 A's, and equity initiatives.	Crucial for engaging all stakeholders in supporting <b>Academics, Arts, Athletics, Attendance</b> , and a positive <b>Attitude</b> . Facilitates transparent communication about equity goals and progress.
<b>Professional Growth &amp; Learning</b>	Commitment to ongoing learning, reflection on practice, and seeking out professional development opportunities to enhance leadership skills related to instructional leadership, the 5 A's, equity, and school improvement.	Ensures leaders remain current with best practices in <b>Academics, Arts, Athletics, Attendance</b> , and fostering a positive <b>Attitude</b> , as well as the latest research on equitable leadership.

## II. Performance Indicators and Expected Outcomes (Examples - Specific to Role):

The following are examples of performance indicators and expected outcomes, which will be further defined and differentiated for each specific leadership role (Principal, Assistant Principal, PLCC, Instructional Facilitator, Instructional Leadership Team Member, Department Head, etc.).

### A. Academics:

- **Performance Indicators:**

- Implementation of rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum across all content areas.
- Use of effective, evidence-based instructional strategies that meet the diverse needs of learners.
- Regular monitoring of student academic progress through formative and summative assessments.
- Effective use of data (including disaggregated data) to inform instructional decisions and interventions that address equity gaps.
- Implementation of equitable grading practices and policies.

- **Expected Outcomes:**

- Measurable growth in student achievement data across all subgroups.
- Reduction in achievement gaps between student groups.
- Increased student engagement in learning.
- Improved student proficiency rates on benchmark assessments.
- Increased participation and success in advanced coursework for all eligible students, with equitable representation across subgroups.

### B. Arts:

- **Performance Indicators:**

- Availability of diverse and high-quality arts programs (visual, performing, etc.) that are accessible and inclusive for all students.
- Intentional integration of arts into the curriculum to enhance learning across disciplines.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- Establishment of partnerships with community arts organizations to enrich student experiences.
- Equitable allocation of resources and facilities for arts education.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
  - Increased student participation in arts programs, with equitable representation across all student groups.
  - Demonstrated student growth in artistic skills, creativity, and expression.
  - Positive impact of arts engagement on student academic performance, critical thinking, and collaboration.

**C. Athletics:**

- **Performance Indicators:**
  - Provision of a range of athletic opportunities that are inclusive, developmentally appropriate, and accessible to all interested students, regardless of background or ability.
  - Emphasis on sportsmanship, teamwork, healthy competition, and the holistic development of student-athletes.
  - Qualified and equity-minded coaching staff who promote positive attitudes and inclusive team environments.
  - Safe and well-maintained athletic facilities and equipment, equitably distributed.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
  - Increased student participation in athletic programs across all genders, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ability levels.
  - Positive impact of athletic participation on student physical health, social-emotional development, leadership skills, and school pride.
  - Equitable access to athletic opportunities and resources for all students.

**D. Attendance:**

- **Performance Indicators:**
  - Implementation of proactive, school-wide strategies to promote consistent and equitable student attendance.
  - Systematic monitoring of attendance patterns, with timely identification of students and subgroups with attendance challenges.
  - Implementation of culturally responsive and supportive interventions to address the root causes of absenteeism, with a focus on equity.
  - Strong collaboration with families, community resources, and support services to remove barriers to attendance.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
  - Improved average daily attendance rates for all student groups, with a reduction in disparities.
  - Significant reduction in chronic absenteeism rates, particularly for historically marginalized students.
  - Increased student engagement, academic success, and graduation rates linked to improved attendance.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**E. Attitude:**

- **Performance Indicators:**

- Cultivation of a positive, safe, inclusive, and equitable school climate that values respect, responsibility, empathy, and a growth mindset for all students and staff.
- Systematic implementation of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and restorative practices with fidelity and a focus on equity.
- Promotion of positive and culturally responsive student-staff relationships.
- Consistent and equitable implementation of school-wide expectations and discipline policies.

- **Expected Outcomes:**

- Improved student and staff perceptions of school climate, safety, and belonging, as measured by surveys and other feedback mechanisms.
- Reduction in disciplinary incidents and the elimination of disproportionate discipline practices for specific student subgroups.
- Increased student engagement in school activities, a stronger sense of community, and a positive school-wide attitude.
- Development of strong social-emotional skills in students and staff, fostering a more equitable and supportive learning environment.

**III. Role-Specific Application:**

This framework will be further operationalized by developing specific performance indicators and expected outcomes tailored to the unique responsibilities and contexts of each school-based leadership role:

- **Principals:** Accountable for the overall vision, implementation, and outcomes across all competencies and the 5 A's, with a strong emphasis on equity, high expectations, and fostering a positive school-wide culture.
- **Assistant Principals:** Support the principal in leading specific areas, often with a focus on instruction, student support, or school culture, actively contributing to the 5 A's and the implementation of equity initiatives.
- **Professional Learning Community Coaches (PLCC):** Facilitate teacher collaboration and professional growth focused on improving instruction and student outcomes in Academics, while also supporting the integration of the Arts, promoting positive Attitudes within PLCs, and ensuring equitable instructional practices.
- **Instructional Facilitators:** Provide direct support to teachers in implementing effective and equitable instructional strategies and using disaggregated data to improve student learning in Academics and address achievement gaps.
- **Instructional Leadership Team Members:** Collaborate with school leaders and staff to analyze data, identify instructional needs, and support the implementation of strategies to improve Academics and address equity, while also contributing to a positive school Attitude.
- **Department Heads:** Lead and support teachers within their content area to ensure high-quality and equitable instruction in Academics, promote integration with the Arts where relevant, and contribute to a positive Attitude and strong Attendance within the department.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**IV. Integration of Equity and High Expectations:**

Across all competencies, performance indicators, and expected outcomes, leaders will be expected to demonstrate:

- A deep understanding of systemic inequities and their impact on student outcomes and experiences in the 5 A's.
- The ability to analyze disaggregated data to identify and address disparities in access, opportunities, participation, and achievement across the 5 A's for all student subgroups.
- The implementation of culturally responsive and sustaining practices in instruction, curriculum, school culture, and all aspects of the 5 A's.
- The establishment and communication of high academic and behavioral expectations for all students, coupled with differentiated supports and resources to ensure every student can meet those expectations.
- Active advocacy for the needs of all students, particularly those historically marginalized, to ensure equitable access and opportunities in all areas of the 5 A's.

This Robust Leadership Framework serves as a foundational guide for leadership development, evaluation, and accountability within Memphis-Shelby County Schools. By clearly outlining expectations related to core leadership competencies, the 5 A's, and equitable practices, we aim to empower all school-based leaders to create thriving schools where every student can achieve academic success and flourish holistically across all dimensions of their development.

## Leadership Development

### **Comprehensive Leadership Development Implementation Plan: Building Strong Leadership to Drive Academic Success (June 2025 - June 2030)**

#### **Focus Area: Building Strong Leadership to Drive Academic Success**

This focus area empowers school and system leaders to drive instructional excellence, establish strong systems for early intervention, and sustain a culture of continuous improvement. Leaders ensure that curriculum implementation, professional development, and student outcomes are aligned to ambitious district goals through coaching, monitoring, and strategic action.

#### **Core Focus: Leadership**

The Leadership arm of the instructional core focuses on how principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches (instructional facilitators and professional learning community coaches (PLCC), and district leaders build instructional capacity, monitor implementation, and lead academic improvement. Effective leaders are visible in classrooms, proactive in removing barriers, and skilled in coaching to outcomes.

#### **Aligned Foci:**

- Strengthening Instructional Leadership Practices
- Monitoring Small Group and Intervention Systems
- Driving Data-Informed Instructional Adjustments
- Coaching Teachers and Building Distributed Leadership

#### **Overarching Goals (Across all timelines):**

- Develop a cadre of highly effective school leaders across all levels and school types.
- Ensure all leaders are equipped to drive instructional quality aligned with district priorities (GRR, 5E, PK-12 Literacy Plan).
- Establish robust coaching and feedback systems at all levels of leadership.
- Implement and monitor effective small group instruction and intervention systems.
- Foster a culture of data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement.
- Cultivate excellence in the 5 A's (Academics, Arts, Attitude, Attendance, Athletics) within each school.
- Promote equitable practices and high expectations for all students.
- Build distributed leadership capacity within schools.

#### **Timeline and Key Activities:**

##### **Phase 1: Foundation and Planning (June 2025 - June 2026)**

- **June - August 2025:**
  - **Comprehensive Needs Assessment:** Conduct a district-wide needs assessment to understand current leadership strengths and areas for growth related to instructional leadership, the 5 A's, and equity. This will involve surveys, focus groups, and analysis of existing school data.
  - **Leadership Framework Refinement:** Review and refine the **PROPOSED** Leadership Framework (**APPENDIX D**) based on the needs assessment and

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

alignment with the 5 A's and equity expectations. (*Leithwood et al., 2006; Council of the Great City Schools, 2012*)

- **Coaching Model Design & Pilot Planning:** Finalize the differentiated **PROPOSED** coaching model, outlining structures for individual, peer, group, and mentoring (**APPENDIX E**). Plan a small-scale pilot of the coaching model with volunteer leaders across different grade bands and school types. (*Joyce & Showers, 2002; The Wallace Foundation, 2014*)
- **Walkthrough Tool Finalization & Training Module Development:** Create and Finalize a focused and equity-centered walkthrough tools (collaboration between Regional Superintendent, Principal Coaches, and Chief of Academics) aligned with the district's instructional framework and the 5 A's. Develop initial training modules for leaders on conducting effective walkthroughs. (*Supovitz & Sirinides, 2009*)
- **September 2025 - May 2026:**
  - **Pilot Coaching Implementation:** Implement the pilot coaching program, providing support to participating leaders based on the differentiated model.
  - **Initial Walkthrough Tool Training:** Conduct initial training sessions for principals and assistant principals on the purpose and use of the walkthrough tools, emphasizing the "look-fors" related to academic priorities (GRR, 5E, Literacy Plan).
  - **Establish Clear Academic Priorities:** District and school leaders will collaborate to establish clear academic priorities and instructional focus for the year, aligned with the 100-Day Plan and district pacing guidance. (*Memphis-Shelby County Schools Internal Documents*)
  - **Develop "Look-Fors":** Anchor expectations in implementation "look-fors" for literacy blocks, math lessons, and student academic behaviors, explicitly integrating the 5 A's where applicable (e.g., engagement in arts-integrated lessons, student attitude during collaborative work). (*Relay Education Coach Model Principles*)
  - **Baseline Data Collection:** Collect baseline data on leadership practices, school culture (related to the 5 A's), and student outcomes to measure the impact of the implementation plan.

**Phase 2: Initial Implementation & Refinement (July 2026 - June 2027)**

- **July - August 2026:**
  - **Coaching Model Scale-Up & Coach Training:** Expand the coaching model based on the pilot feedback. Provide comprehensive training for a larger cohort of coaches (district leaders, mentor principals, academic coordinators) on the differentiated model, the 5 A's, and equity-focused coaching strategies.
  - **Walkthrough Protocol Roll-Out:** Officially roll out the walkthrough protocols to all school-based leadership teams (principals, assistant principals, instructional coaches (instructional facilitators and PLCCs), department heads). Provide ongoing training and support on their effective use, emphasizing the "See It, Name It, Do It" feedback model. (*Relay Education Coach Model Principles*)

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **Develop Coaching and Feedback Systems:** Train leaders on conducting weekly instructional walkthroughs focused on literacy and math instructional priorities and using the "See It, Name It, Do It" coaching model to deliver real-time, actionable feedback.
- **September 2026 - May 2027:**
  - **Full Coaching Implementation:** Implement the differentiated coaching model across all school-based leaders. Monitor coaching frequency and quality through coaching logs.
  - **Regular Walkthroughs & Feedback:** Leaders conduct weekly instructional walkthroughs, focusing on the established academic priorities and the 5 A's. Monitor follow-up through coaching logs and track progress on individual action steps.
  - **Monitor Small Group Instruction:** Leaders conduct at least two focused reviews per quarter on the quality of small-group instruction, observing rotations, differentiation, and student tasks.
  - **Initial Data Review & Adjustments:** Conduct initial data reviews (e.g., walkthrough data, coaching logs, early student outcome data) to identify trends and areas for adjustment in the implementation plan.

**Phase 3: Deepening Implementation & Systematization (July 2027 - June 2028)**

- **July - August 2027:**
  - **Advanced Coaching Training:** Provide advanced training for coaches on supporting leaders in addressing complex challenges related to equity and the integration of the 5 A's.
  - **Walkthrough Calibration & Refinement:** Conduct calibration sessions for leadership teams to ensure consistency in the use of walkthrough tools and the provision of feedback. Refine the tools based on user feedback and data analysis.
  - **Oversee Intervention Systems:** Train leaders on leading monthly intervention data reviews to track the progress of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students and ensuring intervention schedules are implemented with fidelity.
- **September 2027 - May 2028:**
  - **Deepened Coaching Focus:** Coaching conversations increasingly focus on the impact of leadership actions on student outcomes in the 5 A's and the advancement of equitable practices.
  - **Intentional Small Group Monitoring:** Leaders use CompStat Reports to identify patterns in grouping effectiveness and areas for reteach in small group instruction.
  - **Data-Driven Instructional Adjustments:** Leaders conduct monthly CompStat Reviews to analyze student mastery data and lead data-driven conversations that result in instructional shifts and PD adjustments.
  - **Foster Culture of Academic Joy & Rigor:** Leaders actively support schoolwide initiatives that promote academic engagement and celebrate student achievement across the 5 A's.
  - **Initial Steps Towards Distributed Leadership:** Begin to develop instructional leadership teams within schools.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Phase 4: Building Capacity & Sustainability (July 2028 - June 2029)**

- **July - August 2028:**
  - **Distributed Leadership Training:** Provide training and support for the development of instructional leadership teams (ILTs) and the distribution of leadership responsibilities.
  - **Systematization of Tools & Protocols:** Focus on creating and deploying essential tools and protocols (look-for guides, coaching logs, intervention trackers, etc.) to ensure consistency and sustainability. (*The Wallace Foundation, 2013*)
  - **Strategic Professional Development:** Align PD agendas with coaching trends, CompStat data, and curriculum implementation needs, focusing on areas identified as critical for improving the 5 A's and equity.
- **September 2028 - May 2029:**
  - **Empowered Instructional Leadership Teams:** Instructional leadership teams meet regularly to review instruction, student work, and coaching outcomes.
  - **Systematic Monitoring & Support:** Leaders systematically monitor the implementation of the 5 A's initiatives and provide targeted support to teachers and staff.
  - **Data-Informed PD:** Deliver strategic and responsive professional development based on ongoing data analysis.
  - **Build Distributed Leadership:** Assign assistant principals and coaches to lead cycles of co-observation, lesson internalization, and planning support.
  - **Refine Feedback Loops:** Establish and strengthen feedback loops with staff on the effectiveness of tools and district support.

**Phase 5: Continuous Improvement & Impact Measurement (July 2029 - June 2030)**

- **July - August 2029:**
  - **Leadership Development Pathway Focus:** Implement leadership development pathways aligned to the 100-Day Plan, with a focus on identifying and developing internal talent.
  - **Refine Systematization for Sustainability:** Further refine essential tools and protocols based on long-term use and feedback.
  - **Focus on Systematization for Sustainability:** Create and deploy essential tools (Instructional look-for guides, Coaching log templates, Small-group instruction documentation trackers, Tier 2/3 intervention schedule and progress trackers, etc.) to ensure consistent implementation and monitoring of the 5 A's and instructional quality.
- **September 2029 - June 2030:**
  - **Sustained Leadership Capacity:** A significant portion of future school leaders are identified and developed through internal pipeline programs.
  - **Data-Driven Continuous Improvement:** Utilize comprehensive data (student outcomes in the 5 A's, leadership practices, school culture indicators) to drive continuous improvement efforts at all levels.
  - **Impact Measurement & Reporting:** Analyze the overall impact of the Leadership Development Implementation Plan on student academic growth,

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

excellence in the 5 A's, and equitable outcomes. Report findings to stakeholders and use data to inform future iterations of the plan.

- **Family and Community Engagement:** Strengthen family and community engagement strategies to support the 5 A's and academic success.
- **Refine Feedback Loops:** Utilize staff feedback to continuously improve tools, resources, and district support.

**Evaluation Plan:**

The evaluation plan will utilize a mixed methods approach to assess the effectiveness of the Leadership Development Implementation Plan across all phases.

- **Data Sources:**
  - **Leadership Surveys:** Annual surveys to gather feedback on the relevance and impact of the leadership development activities, coaching, and walkthrough protocols.
  - **Coaching Logs:** Track the frequency, focus, and reported impact of coaching sessions.
  - **Walkthrough Data:** Analyze trends in observable practices related to the 5 A's and equitable instruction.
  - **Student Outcome Data:** Monitor student achievement data (disaggregated by subgroups), attendance rates, participation in arts and athletics, and measures of school climate/attitude.
  - **Staff Feedback Surveys:** Gather feedback on leadership support, clarity of expectations, and access to resources.
  - **Principal and Teacher Interviews & Focus Groups:** Gather qualitative data on experiences and perceptions of the leadership development initiatives.
  - **Instructional Leadership Team Meeting Minutes & Artifacts:** Review evidence of distributed leadership and its impact on instructional improvement.
- **Data Analysis:**
  - **Quantitative Analysis:** Analyze trends in student outcomes, attendance, participation rates, and survey data using descriptive and inferential statistics.
  - **Qualitative Analysis:** Analyze interview transcripts, focus group data, and open-ended survey responses to identify key themes and patterns related to the implementation and impact of the plan.
  - **Correlation Analysis:** Examine the relationships between leadership practices (as evidenced by walkthrough data and coaching logs) and student outcomes in the 5 A's.
- **Reporting:** Annual reports will be generated to share progress, key findings, and recommendations with district leadership and stakeholders.

By focusing on clear expectations, aligned coaching structures, and effective walkthrough protocols, this Comprehensive Leadership Development Implementation Plan aims to build strong leadership at all levels within Memphis-Shelby County Schools, ultimately driving academic success and fostering excellence in the 5 A's for all students through equitable practices and a culture of continuous improvement.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

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- **Memphis-Shelby County Schools Internal Documents:** (References to the 100-Day Plan and district pacing guidance, with the understanding that these are internal and not publicly cited research).

## Differentiated Leadership Coaching Model

This differentiated coaching model is designed to provide tailored support to school-based leaders based on their experience level, grade band/school type, school improvement goals, and specific needs related to the 5 A's (Academics, Arts, Athletics, Attendance, and Attitude) and equity. It integrates the research of Joyce & Showers (2002) on the impact of coaching, the principles for effective principal development outlined by The Wallace Foundation (2014), and incorporates key elements of the structured approach found in the Relay Education Coach Model.

### Core Principles of the Model:

- **Personalized Support:** Coaching is individualized to address the specific context, needs, and goals of each leader.
- **Data-Driven:** Coaching conversations and focus areas are informed by multiple data sources, including student achievement data (disaggregated by subgroups), indicators related to the 5 A's, staff and student feedback, and walkthrough observations, with a specific focus on identifying and addressing inequities (Hamilton et al., 2009).
- **Action-Oriented:** Coaching emphasizes the development of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) action steps that leaders can implement to drive improvement in the 5 A's and equity.
- **Collaborative Partnership:** The coaching relationship is built on trust, respect, and shared responsibility for the leader's professional growth and the school's progress.
- **Focus on Impact:** The ultimate goal of coaching is to enhance leader effectiveness, leading to positive and equitable impacts on teaching practices, school culture, the 5 A's, and student outcomes (Bryk et al., 2010).
- **Alignment with Leadership Framework:** Coaching is directly aligned with the Robust Leadership Framework, ensuring consistency in expectations and development across all leadership roles.

### Coaching Structures:

This model utilizes a range of coaching structures to provide differentiated support:

#### 1. Individual Coaching:

- **Target Audience:** All school-based leaders, with varying levels of intensity and focus based on identified needs and goals.
- **Description:** One-on-one, focused support provided by a trained coach (e.g., district leader, mentor principal, external coach). Sessions are typically scheduled regularly and center on the leader's specific goals related to instructional leadership, the 5 A's, equity, and school improvement.
- **Differentiation Strategies:**
  - **Experience Level:** Novice leaders may receive more direct guidance, modeling, and support in foundational areas, while experienced leaders may engage in coaching focused on refining advanced skills, leading systemic change, and addressing complex equity challenges.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- **Grade Band/School Type:** Coaching content and strategies are tailored to the unique contexts of leading across different grade levels (e.g., early literacy in K-2, adolescent engagement in 9-12) and school types (e.g., charter school autonomy, post-secondary specialized programs) in relation to fostering excellence in the 5 A's and equitable practices within those specific environments.
  - **School Improvement Goals:** Coaching is directly aligned with the school's improvement plan, focusing on leadership actions that will drive progress towards specific, measurable goals in academics, culture, and the 5 A's, with an explicit focus on addressing equity gaps identified in the plan.
  - **Specific Needs (5 A's & Equity):** Coaching addresses individual leader needs identified through self-assessment, 360 feedback, and analysis of school-level data related to specific areas of the 5 A's (e.g., increasing participation in arts for underrepresented students, improving attendance rates for specific subgroups) and the implementation of equitable policies and practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019).
  - **Relay Education Alignment:** Incorporates elements such as clear, actionable feedback ("See It, Name It, Do It"), iterative practice of leadership skills, and a focus on high-leverage actions that lead to rapid improvement in specific areas related to the 5 A's and equity.
2. **Peer Coaching:**
- **Target Audience:** Leaders with similar roles or facing comparable challenges related to the 5 A's and equity.
  - **Description:** Leaders are strategically paired or grouped to provide mutual support, share effective strategies, offer constructive feedback, and collaboratively problem-solve issues related to their leadership practice in the context of the 5 A's and equity. Structured protocols and guiding frameworks are provided to ensure focus and productivity.
  - **Differentiation Strategies:**
    - **Role Alignment:** Pairing leaders in similar roles (e.g., elementary principals with elementary principals) to facilitate the sharing of context-specific strategies for promoting the 5 A's and addressing equity within their specific school environments.
    - **Strength-Based Pairing:** Intentionally pairing leaders with complementary strengths (e.g., a leader with a strong track record in arts integration coaching a leader focused on improving equitable attendance practices) to foster cross-pollination of effective approaches to the 5 A's and equity.
    - **Voluntary Participation with Strategic Matching:** Encouraging voluntary participation while strategically matching leaders based on identified growth areas and expertise related to the 5 A's and equity.
  - **Wallace Foundation Alignment:** Supports the development of leadership networks and the cultivation of distributed leadership by fostering collaborative

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

learning and the sharing of effective practices among peers (The Wallace Foundation, 2014).

3. **Group Coaching:**

- **Target Audience:** Leaders with shared professional learning goals or facing common systemic challenges related to the 5 A's or equity.
- **Description:** A trained coach facilitates a small group of leaders through a structured process to explore specific topics related to the 5 A's and equity, share experiences, collaboratively analyze data, problem-solve common challenges, and develop collective understanding and strategies for school-wide improvement.
- **Differentiation Strategies:**
  - **Topic-Based Groups:** Forming groups around specific areas of the 5 A's (e.g., enhancing academic rigor with an equity lens, fostering a positive and inclusive school attitude) or specific equity initiatives (e.g., implementing culturally responsive discipline practices).
  - **Role-Based Cohorts:** Grouping leaders in similar roles (e.g., all high school assistant principals) to address common challenges and share role-specific strategies for promoting the 5 A's and advancing equity within their specific leadership responsibilities.
  - **Action Learning Sets:** Utilizing a structured process where leaders present real-world challenges related to the 5 A's and equity and receive collective feedback, support, and diverse perspectives in developing innovative and equitable solutions.

4. **Mentoring:**

- **Target Audience:** New or less experienced leaders.
- **Description:** Pairing novice leaders with experienced and successful mentors who can provide guidance, support, share insights based on their experience in promoting the 5 A's and equity, and model effective leadership practices. Mentoring relationships often involve regular meetings, observations, and reflective conversations.
- **Differentiation Strategies:**
  - **Role-Specific Mentors with Equity Focus:** Matching new principals with experienced principals who have a demonstrated track record of success in fostering excellence in the 5 A's and advancing equitable outcomes in similar school contexts.
  - **Expertise-Based Mentors:** Matching mentees with mentors who possess specific expertise in areas identified as growth needs, such as implementing inclusive arts programs, improving equitable attendance practices, or fostering a positive and equitable school climate.
  - **Focus on Systemic Understanding of Equity:** Mentoring includes guidance on navigating district policies and procedures related to equity and the 5 A's, as well as developing a deeper understanding of systemic barriers and how to address them through leadership.
- **Wallace Foundation Alignment:** Emphasizes the critical role of providing sustained guidance and support to novice leaders to ensure their success and

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

retention, particularly in navigating the complexities of promoting equity and the 5 A's (The Wallace Foundation, 2014).

**Coach Selection and Development:**

- **Rigorous Selection:** Coaches will be selected based on their demonstrated leadership effectiveness, deep understanding of instructional leadership and the 5 A's, unwavering commitment to equity, strong coaching skills (active listening, effective questioning, providing constructive feedback), and ability to build trusting relationships.
- **Comprehensive Training:** Coaches will receive ongoing, high-quality training on effective coaching methodologies aligned with the Relay Education Coach Model (e.g., observation protocols, feedback techniques, action planning), the Leadership Framework, the 5 A's, principles of educational equity, data analysis with an equity lens, and facilitation skills for group and peer coaching.
- **Regular Professional Development:** Coaches will participate in regular professional development to enhance their coaching skills, stay current with research-based best practices in leadership development, the 5 A's, and equity, and collaborate with other coaches to share learning and refine their practice.
- **Ongoing Evaluation and Support for Coaches:** The effectiveness of the coaching model and individual coaches will be regularly evaluated through feedback from coached leaders, data on leader growth and school improvement related to the 5 A's and equity, and coach reflection. Coaches will also receive ongoing support and professional development to ensure their continued growth and effectiveness.

**Implementation and Monitoring:**

- **Needs Assessment:** Regularly assess leader needs and preferences for coaching support through surveys, feedback mechanisms, and analysis of school-level data related to the 5 A's and equity.
- **Strategic Matching Process:** Implement a thoughtful and data-informed process for matching leaders with the most appropriate coaches and coaching structures based on their individual needs, school context, and specific goals related to the 5 A's and equity.
- **Clear Expectations and Protocols:** Clearly communicate the purpose, expectations, and protocols for each coaching structure to both coaches and coached leaders.
- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Systematically collect and analyze data on coaching activities, leader growth (using indicators from the Leadership Framework), and impact on school-level data related to the 5 A's and equity (disaggregated by student subgroups).
- **Regular Review and Adjustment:** Continuously review the effectiveness of the differentiated coaching model based on data and feedback from all stakeholders, making necessary adjustments to ensure it is effectively meeting the diverse needs of school leaders and driving positive and equitable outcomes for students.

By implementing this robust and differentiated coaching model, Memphis-Shelby County Schools will empower its leaders with the tailored support necessary to excel in driving instructional quality, fostering excellence in the 5 A's, and most importantly, advancing equitable opportunities and outcomes for every student.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

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## Glossary

**Accountability Framework:** A system that uses data across multiple indicators (e.g., growth, proficiency, attendance) to determine support levels and evaluate school, leader, and teacher effectiveness.

**Acceleration (Academic Acceleration):** Providing students with access to grade-level content with just-in-time support rather than remediation, aiming to close learning gaps while keeping expectations high.

**Aggressive Monitoring:** A strategy where teachers actively circulate during independent work time using trackers to monitor student performance and deliver immediate feedback.

**Anchor Task:** A challenging, standards-aligned problem or activity used at the beginning of a lesson to introduce key concepts and foster deep thinking.

**Annotation:** A reading comprehension strategy where students mark the text with symbols or notes to identify important ideas, unfamiliar vocabulary, and questions.

**Appendix:** A supplementary section at the end of a document where tools, rubrics, protocols, and supporting materials are located.

**Behavioral Tiering System:** A framework that classifies student behavior and responses into levels (tiers), each with corresponding interventions and supports.

**Benchmark Assessment:** Interim assessments given periodically throughout the year to track student progress toward mastery of grade-level standards.

**Bloom's Taxonomy:** A hierarchical model that classifies thinking according to six cognitive levels, from lower-order to higher-order thinking skills: Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create.

**CAO (Chief Academic Officer):** The district leader responsible for overseeing instructional strategy, curriculum, and academic outcomes.

**CGI (College and Career Growth Index):** A growth-focused composite score that reflects how well a school is preparing students for postsecondary success.

**Charter School:** A publicly funded school that operates independently of the district under a performance contract or "charter."

**Cold Calling:** A practice where the teacher calls on students randomly or strategically (rather than volunteers) to increase engagement and equity.

**Community Solutions Challenge:** A districtwide competition where students solve real-world problems through interdisciplinary research and presentation, aligned to civic and academic goals.

**Compstat (Comprehensive Status and Strategy Review):** A data-driven accountability and monitoring tool used by MSCS to track school performance across key indicators in regular cycles.

**Content Arm of the Instructional Core:** The intellectual demand and materials used in the classroom that define what is being taught.

**Core Actions:** Observable teacher and student behaviors that align with rigorous instruction and are outlined in walkthrough and observation tools.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Instruction that reflects and affirms students' identities, backgrounds, and experiences to make learning more relevant and inclusive.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Cut Scores:** The numerical thresholds used to determine performance levels on standardized assessments (e.g., proficient vs. below basic).

**Data Conversation Protocol:** A structured process used in meetings (e.g., SEA, Compstat) to analyze student performance and identify next steps.

**Data-Driven Instruction (DDI):** Instruction that is continually shaped by the analysis of student data from formative and summative assessments.

**Differentiated Support:** Tailored coaching, instruction, or intervention designed to meet the specific needs of different students or staff based on tier or data.

**ELA (English Language Arts):** The academic subject that includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

**EL (English Learner):** A student whose primary language is not English and who is developing proficiency in English as an additional language.

**Engagement (Student Engagement):** The level of interest, attention, and active participation students demonstrate during learning experiences.

**Equity of Voice:** Ensuring all students, regardless of background or ability, have access to and participate in academic discourse.

**Exit Ticket:** A short task given at the end of a lesson to assess student understanding of the objective and inform next-day instruction.

**Fidelity of Implementation:** The degree to which a strategy, program, or framework is executed as intended.

**Formative Assessment:** Ongoing, low-stakes assessment used during instruction to gauge student learning and adjust teaching.

**Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR):** An instructional model that moves from teacher modeling ("I Do") to guided practice ("We Do") to independent student work ("You Do").

**High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM):** Curriculum and resources that are aligned to rigorous academic standards and have been validated to improve outcomes.

**Insight Survey:** A research-based survey tool that measures staff perceptions of leadership, culture, and instructional support within schools.

**Instructional Core:** A model highlighting the relationship between the teacher, the student, and the content—and the importance of improving all three to impact learning.

**Instructional Leader:** Any school or district leader responsible for supporting and improving teaching and learning practices.

**Instructional Walkthrough:** A short, focused classroom visit to collect evidence on instructional practices and provide feedback.

**Instructional Talk Moves:** Specific teacher discourse strategies used to encourage deep thinking and student-to-student discussion.

**Instructional Tiering:** The process of categorizing students or educators into tiers based on performance data to tailor support levels.

**IPG (Instructional Practice Guide):** A standards-aligned observation tool used to assess lesson quality, rigor, and student thinking.

**Literacy Intervention:** A targeted support program aimed at building reading, writing, or language skills for students performing below grade level.

**MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports):** A framework for providing varying levels of academic, behavioral, and emotional support based on student need.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**On-Track Status:** A data-based determination of whether students are progressing toward academic goals, typically in attendance, coursework, or testing.

**Panorama:** A platform used to gather perception data from students, families, and staff on topics like school climate, belonging, and engagement.

**Permit Teacher:** A teacher working under a temporary state-issued credential due to not yet meeting full licensure requirements.

**PLC (Professional Learning Community):** A structured, collaborative team of educators who use student data to reflect on and improve instructional practice.

**Principal Coach:** A district leader who supports principal development through coaching, calibration, and strategy alignment.

**Progress Monitoring:** Frequent data collection and review to assess whether students or systems are improving over time.

**RAG (Read, Annotate, Gist):** A close-reading routine where students read a text, mark key ideas (annotate), and summarize it briefly (gist).

**Readiness (Kindergarten/College/Career):** The degree to which students are prepared to successfully engage in the next level of academic or life transition.

**Reward School:** A designation given by the state of Tennessee to schools demonstrating high performance or significant improvement.

**RTP<sup>2</sup> (Response to Instruction and Intervention):** Tennessee's multi-tiered approach for providing early, systematic support to struggling students.

**Rubric:** A scoring tool that defines criteria and levels of quality for evaluating performance on a task or objective.

**School Index Score:** A composite accountability metric combining achievement, growth, attendance, and subgroup performance.

**SEA (Strategic Early Action):** A system of academic checkpoints and response protocols used in MSCS to identify and address learning needs before failure patterns emerge.

**Small Group Instruction:** A differentiated instructional method where the teacher works with a subset of students to target specific learning needs.

**Stakeholder:** Any individual or group invested in student outcomes—includes students, families, educators, district staff, and the community.

**Standardized Assessment:** A uniform test administered and scored in the same way for all students to measure academic performance.

**Student Talk Ratio:** The proportion of time students speak during a lesson compared to the teacher, used as a measure of engagement and rigor.

**Subgroup Performance:** Academic outcomes for specific groups of students, including those identified by race, language, ability, or economic status.

**Summative Assessment:** A final evaluation of student learning, typically at the end of a unit, quarter, or year.

**Talent Strategy:** A district-wide plan for recruiting, developing, retaining, and supporting educators and leaders.

**Teacher Tiering Framework:** A system that classifies teachers into effectiveness tiers based on multiple indicators such as evaluation, attendance, and responsiveness to feedback.

**TEM (Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model):** The statewide teacher evaluation model used in MSCS that incorporates observations and other performance measures.

**Tier I Instruction:** High-quality, grade-level instruction intended for all students.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Tier II / Tier III Interventions:** Targeted (Tier II) and intensive (Tier III) academic or behavioral supports provided to students based on need.

**Tier Movement:** A formal process by which a student, teacher, or school is reassigned to a different level of support or accountability based on data trends.

**Walkthrough Tool:** A structured form or rubric used by leaders to document observations during instructional walkthroughs.

**Whole Child Framework:** An approach that emphasizes meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and physical needs.

## Appendix A: ELA Walkthrough Tool

### Rating Definitions

- **1 – Not Observed:** This element was not evident during the walkthrough.
- **2 – Beginning:** Attempted but incomplete, inconsistent, or unclear in execution.
- **3 – In Progress:** Clearly underway with some evidence of effectiveness but lacks consistency or full rigor.
- **4 – With Fidelity:** Fully present, aligned to expectations, rigorous, and effective in promoting student learning.

Instructional Phase	Look-For	1	2	3	4
<b>Do Now</b> (TEM: A1, B3) (IPG: 1A)	Task is aligned to objective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students are on-task immediately	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Standard/objective is posted and referenced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Standard assessed matches standard taught	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Do Now Breakdown</b> (TEM: A2) (IPG: 1B)	Strategic acronym or breakdown model is used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students apply model to understand/test-like question	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Hook</b> (TEM: A1, B3) (IPG: 1C)	Real-world connection is clear and linked to standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students can articulate relevance of learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>I Do</b> (TEM: A1) (IPG: 1D)	Teacher models strategy with precise academic language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Steps of the process are broken down explicitly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Questioning protocol (ask → wait → cold call) is used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All students are equitably engaged in cold call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Direct instruction does not exceed 10% of total lesson time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CFU After I Do</b> (TEM: A2) (IPG: 2A)	Aligned to Bloom's: Knowledge/Recall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Cold call used and hands raised tracked as data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Questioning protocol (ask → wait → cold call) is used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All students are equitably engaged in cold call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>We Do</b> (TEM: A3, A4) (IPG: 2B)	Students practice each modeled step with teacher guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aggressive Monitoring Tracker is visible and in use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aggressive Monitoring in action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Instructional Phase	Look-For	1	2	3	4
	AM feedback is immediate, corrective, and tier-informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Teacher adjusts grouping/support based on CFU data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Questioning protocol (ask → wait → cold call) is used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All students are equitably engaged in cold call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students collaborate and use academic language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CFU After We Do</b> (TEM: A3, A4) (IPG: 2C)	Task reflects all combined steps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tier placements (T1, T2, T3) evident and based on CFU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Teacher adjusts grouping/support based on CFU data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Questioning protocol (ask → wait → cold call) is used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All students are equitably engaged in cold call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>You Do Together</b> (TEM: A3, A4) (IPG: 2D)	Students engage in tiered, interactive (non-written) tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tier 3: RAG; Tier 2: skill repair; Tier 1: standard game	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Movement between tiers based on mastery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students collaborate and use academic language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>CFU After You Do Together</b> (TEM: A4) (IPG: 2E)	Aligned to Bloom's: Synthesis/Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Student thinking is verbalized and justified	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Questioning protocol (ask → wait → cold call) is used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All students are equitably engaged in cold call	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>You Do Alone</b> (TEM: A4) (IPG: 3A)	Written task is standard-aligned and rigorous	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Teacher collects work and uses results to plan reteach or grouping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students complete task independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Closure</b> (TEM: A1) (IPG: 3B)	Students—not teacher—articulate what they learned and why	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Links back to learning objective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students synthesize or evaluate their learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students collaborate and use academic language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Exit Ticket</b>	Timed, TCAP/EOC-like item administered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Instructional Phase	Look-For	1	2	3	4
(TEM: A4) (IPG: 3C)					
	Students complete independently under test conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Standard assessed matches standard taught	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Technology supports data collection and feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Overall Indicators

Element	Rating (1–4)
Planning Evidence: Tiered tasks, AM, CFUs, Bloom's questions are pre-planned	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Technology integration is evident in one or more instructional phases	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Tier Differentiation Clear and Effective	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Questioning Protocol Fidelity (ask → wait → cold call)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Joy, Student Voice, and Ownership	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Standard/Objectives Alignment Across Phases	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Lesson Pacing Enables Full GRR Cycle	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Technology supports monitoring, feedback, and learning	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

### Scoring Summary

Total Indicators Scored: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points Possible: \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_ (Total Points ÷ Total Indicators)

### Implementation Fidelity Rating:

- ☐ 3.5–4.0: With Fidelity
- ☐ 2.5–3.4: In Progress
- ☐ 1.5–2.4: Beginning
- ☐ Below 1.5: Not Observed

### End-of-Lesson Reflection Questions

1. What do 100% of all students know?
2. What are 100% of the students able to do?
3. What's your evidence?

## Appendix B: Math Walkthrough Tool

### Rating Definitions:

- 1 – Not Observed: Absent during walkthrough  
 2 – Beginning: Attempted but inconsistently or ineffectively  
 3 – In Progress: Evident with partial effectiveness  
 4 – With Fidelity: Fully aligned, rigorous, and effective

Instructional Phase (TEM / IPG)	Look-Fors	1	2	3	4
Do Now (T1, T7 / IPG 1a)	Standard-aligned and rigorous task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students engage independently on entry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do Now Breakdown (T1, T2 / IPG 1a)	Teacher models test strategy (e.g., acronym)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students apply breakdown technique	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Explore (T1, T3, T4 / IPG 1a, 2a)	Hands-on, real-world, identity-affirming task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students engage in conceptual discovery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Connections to prior or future standards are clearly established	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I Do (T1, T2, T4 / IPG 2a, 2b)	Teacher models using academic language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Questioning protocol used (ask → wait → cold call)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	All students are engaged in Q&A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Math vocabulary is introduced and reinforced in context	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CFU After I Do (T5, T6 / IPG 2d)	Bloom's Level: Knowledge/Recall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Teacher uses data to address misconceptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We Do (T2, T3, T6 / IPG 2a)	Teacher guides through each step	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aggressive Monitoring (AM) evident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	AM feedback is immediate and data-informed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Math vocabulary is reinforced during modeling and practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CFU After We Do (T6, T5 / IPG 2d, 3a)	Bloom's Level: Application/Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Student tiers assigned from CFU results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You Do Together (T3, T4, T5 / IPG 2b, 2c)	Tiered interactive task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Instructional Phase (TEM / IPG)	Look-Fors	1	2	3	4
	Tier 3: Manipulatives/modeling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tier 2: Procedural practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tier 1: Word problem/game task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Movement between tiers is evident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students articulate their task, tier, and reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students collaborate and use academic language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CFU After YDT (T5, T6 / IPG 2d, 3a)	Bloom's Level: Synthesis/Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students explain their math reasoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Equity of voice is evident—students across tiers and demographics are cold-called, prompted, or affirmed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You Do Alone (T1, T6 / IPG 1a, 3a)	Written, rigorous, standard-aligned task	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students complete independently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Closure (T1, T5 / IPG 2c)	Students reflect and summarize what they learned	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students—not teacher—own the summary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Links back to objective or standard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Students synthesize or evaluate their learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Joy and student voice are evident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exit Ticket (T1, T6, T7 / IPG 2d, 3a)	Test-style question, timed and independent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Data collected to plan next steps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Teacher adjusts future plans based on CFU and exit ticket trends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Overall Indicators**

Element	Rating (1–4)
Lesson aligns to standard throughout	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Aggressive monitoring used to adjust instruction	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Tiered activities used with movement evident	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Questioning protocol used with fidelity	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
CFUs at all phases inform teaching decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Technology integrated where appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Student collaboration and use of academic language	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Element	Rating (1–4)
Joy, student voice, and ownership evident	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Alignment to Bloom's Taxonomy observed and evident	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Scoring Summary**

- Total Indicators Scored: \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Points Possible: \_\_\_\_\_
- Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fidelity Rating:**

- ☐ 3.5–4.0: With Fidelity
- ☐ 2.5–3.4: In Progress
- ☐ 1.5–2.4: Beginning
- ☐ Below 1.5: Not Observed

**End-of-Observation Questions:**

1. What do 100% of students know?
2. What can 100% of students do?
3. What is your evidence?

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Appendix C: Science Walkthrough Tool

### Rating Definitions

- 1 – Not Observed: Not evident during walkthrough  
 2 – Beginning: Attempted but inconsistently or ineffectively  
 3 – In Progress: Evident with partial effectiveness  
 4 – With Fidelity: Fully aligned, rigorous, and effective

		1	2	3	4
<b>Do Now</b>	Standards-aligned prompt activates prior knowledge				
	Students are engaged immediately on entry				
	Objective is posted and referenced				
	Standard taught matches standard assessed				
<b>Do Now Breakdown</b>	Strategic model (e.g., acronym, graphic organizer, formula) is used to unpack science concept				
	Students apply model to a test-like or real-world science scenario				
<b>Engage</b>	Real-world, identity-affirming hook activates curiosity				
	Standards/objective visibly posted and referenced				
	Students articulate relevance and purpose of lesson				
	Essential question or phenomenon is explored				
<b>Explore</b>	Students engage in hands-on investigation or modeling				
	Task promotes collaboration and academic discussion				
	Tools/materials are used safely and purposefully				
	Connections to prior knowledge and real-world applications evident				
	Aggressive Monitoring: Teacher circulates with a tracker to collect real-time data and provide immediate, targeted feedback				
	Bloom's Level: Application / Analysis				
<b>Explain</b>	Teacher models reasoning and clarifies academic vocabulary				
	Conceptual understanding is developed with questioning protocol (ask → wait → cold call)				
	Students explain findings using academic language				
	Visuals, graphs, or models are used to synthesize ideas				
	Aggressive Monitoring: Teacher monitors verbal responses and cold calls, noting patterns of misconception				
	Bloom's Level: Understanding / Analyzing				
<b>Elaborate</b>	Students apply concepts in novel, real-world contexts				
	Tiered tasks target varying mastery levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tier 3: Scaffolded modeling or guided lab write-up</li> </ul>				

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 2: Collaborative protocol or data analysis</li> <li>• Tier 1: Student-led extension inquiry or challenge task</li> </ul>				
	Discourse includes evidence-based claims and reasoning				
	Strategic groupings support peer explanation and ownership				
	Bloom's Level: Evaluate / Create				
<b>Evaluate</b>	Exit tickets or performance assessments reflect rigorous standards				
	Students self-assess or reflect on mastery				
	Teacher uses data for responsive planning				
	Student work aligns to objective and includes explanatory thinking				
	Aggressive Monitoring evident in review of student artifacts and misconceptions addressed in-the-moment				
	Bloom's Level: Synthesis / Evaluation				

#### Overall Indicators

- Lesson aligns to posted standard and objective
- Hands-on investigation and inquiry evident:
- Aggressive monitoring during collaborative work:
- Questioning protocol used with consistency:
- Tiered tasks present in Elaborate or Evaluate:
- Academic vocabulary reinforced in all phases:
- Joy, student voice, and equity of participation:
- Technology supports monitoring, feedback, and learning:
- Teacher planning evident (tiering, AM, CFUs, Bloom's):
- Lesson pacing enables full 5E cycle:
- Student collaboration and academic language use evident:

#### Scoring Summary

Total Indicators Scored: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Points Possible: \_\_\_\_\_

Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Fidelity Rating:

- ☒ 3.5–4.0: With Fidelity
- ☒ 2.5–3.4: In Progress
- ☒ 1.5–2.4: Beginning
- ☒ Below 1.5: Not Observed

#### End-of-Lesson Reflection Questions

- What do 100% of students know by the end of the lesson?

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- What can 100% of students do?
- What is your evidence of conceptual understanding?
- How did students demonstrate mastery across tiers?
- What instructional decisions were adjusted based on data?

## Appendix D: Pre-K Culture & Climate Walkthrough Tool

### Rating Definitions

- 1 – Not Observed or Detrimental
- 2 – Beginning: Attempted inconsistently, lacks warmth or clarity
- 3 – In Progress: Evident, moderately consistent and supportive
- 4 – With Fidelity: Consistently warm, developmentally appropriate, and effective

### 1. Standards and Expectations – Positive Interactions

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Student-to-student interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher and student interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher assistant and student interactions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 2. Active Supervision

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Number of students present	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of adults present	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sign-in attendance matches the Face to Child Chart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom ratio met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff focus on students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. Regard for Student Perspectives

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Shows flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allows student choice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourages student responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allows movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Demonstrates awareness of all students and their needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 4. Positive Climate

Indicator	1	2	3	4
Models correct behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Builds a sense of community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promotes word consciousness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supports children to deescalate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Indicator****1 2 3 4**Shows evidence that students are willingly compliant and ritually engaged ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐**5. Behavior Management****Indicator****1 2 3 4**Clear behavior expectations ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Clear routines and procedures ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Proper redirection given ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Redirection is explicit ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Active supervision strategies are evident ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐**6. Student Behavior****Indicator****1 2 3 4**Frequent compliance ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Understands the routines and procedures ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Follows redirection ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐**Reset Break Given to a Staff Member?** ☐ Yes ☐ No**7. Productivity****Indicator****1 2 3 4**Few disruptions ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Pacing is aligned appropriately ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Classroom ready for learning ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Transitions are brief ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐Clear instructions ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐**8. Negative Climate***(Checklist only – do not score)*

Check all observed undesirable behaviors:

- ☐ Negative affect
- ☐ Yelling
- ☐ Irritability
- ☐ Threats
- ☐ Anger
- ☐ Physical control
- ☐ Harsh voice
- ☐ Harsh punishment

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

- ☐ Peer aggression
- ☐ Sarcastic voice/statements
- ☐ Physical punishment
- ☐ Very rigid
- ☐ Disconnected or escalating negativity

**Comments / Notes:**

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**Areas of Concern (Check All That Apply):**

- ☐ Interactions
- ☐ Student Responses
- ☐ Regard for Student Perspective
- ☐ Positive Climate
- ☐ Behavior Management
- ☐ Student Behavior
- ☐ Productivity
- ☐ Negative Climate

**Family Engagement Specialist Present?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Acting as Substitute?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Observer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

## Appendix E: Foundations Walkthrough Tool

### Rating Scale Definitions:

- **1 – Not Observed:** This element was not evident during the walkthrough.
- **2 – Beginning:** Attempted but incomplete, inconsistent, or unclear in execution.
- **3 – In Progress:** Clearly underway with some evidence of effectiveness but lacks consistency or full rigor.
- **4 – With Fidelity:** Fully present, aligned to expectations, rigorous, and effective in promoting student learning.

Indicator	Descriptors	1	2	3	4
<b>Whole Group Instruction</b> <b>Explicit Phonological/Phonemic Awareness Instruction</b>	Teacher models orally segmenting, blending, manipulating, categorizing phonemes				
	Guided student practice with phonemes				
	Collaborative student practice with phonemes				
	Independent student practice with phonemes				
<b>Explicit Phonics Instruction</b>	Teacher models phoneme-grapheme correspondence				
	Guided student practice in reading/writing				
	Collaborative practice				
	Independent practice				
<b>Spelling Instruction</b>	Teacher models letter-sound correspondence to spell				
	Students apply spelling knowledge				
<b>Structural Analysis</b>	Teacher models word part breakdown				
	Guided practice in structural analysis				
	Collaborative practice				
	Independent practice				
<b>High-Frequency Words (HFW) Instruction</b>	Teacher models reading, spelling, writing HFWs				
	Guided practice				
	Collaborative practice				
	Independent practice				
<b>Explicit Grammar Instruction</b>	Practice applying grammar in speech				
	Practice applying grammar in reading				
	Practice applying grammar in writing				
<b>Working with Decodable Readers</b>	Teacher models fluent reading				
	Student choral/echo/whisper reading				
	Literal comprehension responses				
	HFW review				
	Phonics skill review				
	Partner reading for fluency				
<b>Comprehension</b>	Teacher introduces strategy/skill				
	Teacher models strategy/skill				
	Student strategy application				
	Word solving for meaning (e.g., chunking, decoding)				

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

	Literal/inferential comprehension				
	Vocabulary application				
	Close reading engagement				
	Writing to demonstrate comprehension				
	Scaffolds and corrective feedback provided				
<b>Small Group Instruction Text Reading Lesson</b>	Teacher models fluent reading				
	Word solving strategies				
	Student oral reading				
	Literal comprehension				
	Vocabulary practice				
	Close reading				
	Writing application of foundational skills				
<b>Skills-Focused Lesson</b>	Corrective feedback provided				
	Explicit skill introduction				
	Modeled application				
	Student application				
<b>Literacy Workstations or Centers</b>	Corrective feedback				
	Varied task assignment				
	Task alignment to taught skills				
	Station skill/strategy variety				
	Engagement + early finisher options				
<b>Environment &amp; Instructional Practices</b>	Teacher circulation for support				
	Full 120-minute block allocated				
	Standards/Objectives alignment				
	Multi-sensory engagement				
	Progress Monitoring/CFUs evident				
	Tools/resources aligned to curriculum				

**Debrief Prompts (Open Response)**

- What decoding (FS1) opportunities did the teacher use?
- What encoding (FS2) strategies were evident?
- How were base words, roots, affixes (FS3) used for meaning making?

**Scoring Summary**

- Total Indicators Scored: \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Points Possible: \_\_\_\_\_
- Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_ (Total ÷ Indicators)

**Implementation Fidelity Rating:**

- ☐ 3.5–4.0: With Fidelity
- ☐ 2.5–3.4: In Progress
- ☐ 1.5–2.4: Beginning
- ☐ Below 1.5: Not Observed

**End-of-Lesson Reflection Questions**

4. What do 100% of all students know?
5. What are 100% of the students able to do?
6. What's your evidence?

## Appendix F – GRR

In ELA, Math, Social Studies, and other core content areas (excluding Science), the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model isn't a checklist, it's a lived instructional rhythm where students think early, speak often, and demonstrate mastery in every phase. Teacher moves are intentional. Student actions are visible. Feedback is constant. Learning is not left to chance. When implemented with fidelity, GRR creates classrooms where instruction is equitable, rigorous, and adaptive by design. Checks for Understanding (CFUs) aren't occasional, they are embedded into the DNA of the lesson, transforming teaching from performance into precision.

The strength of GRR lies in its research foundation. Fisher and Frey (2008) assert that the gradual release of cognitive responsibility, from teacher modeling to collaborative learning to independent application, yields significant gains in both engagement and achievement. Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (1978) highlights the importance of scaffolded support that fades as students internalize skills. Furthermore, Black and Wiliam (1998) identify embedded formative assessment, like the CFUs woven throughout GRR, as one of the most effective strategies for improving learning outcomes. In top-tier classrooms, GRR is not just a framework, it is the architecture of instructional excellence.

### Do Now

The lesson begins with the Do Now, a high-cognitive, standard-aligned task that students begin immediately upon entering the room. In all content areas, ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science, students are expected to begin work within the first thirty seconds, engaging silently and independently using notebooks or designated trackers. Teachers ensure that the objective is visible and that the task is rigorous and aligned to the day's standard.

As students complete the task, the teacher silently scans the room, collecting non-verbal data: Who is writing? Who is stuck? Who is demonstrating prior knowledge? This silent sweep is the first Check for Understanding (CFU) of the lesson. When executed with fidelity, this phase activates academic thinking from the moment students enter and provides the teacher with a real-time diagnostic before instruction begins.

Research supports this structure across disciplines. Lemov (2010) emphasizes that "Do Nows" maximize learning time and prime cognitive readiness. Marzano (2003) found that early academic engagement shapes the psychological tone for effort, while Black and Wiliam (1998) affirm that initial evidence-gathering enhances instructional precision. Whether the Do Now focuses on text analysis in ELA, number fluency in Math, primary sources in Social Studies, or hypothesis framing in science, its purpose remains consistent: to launch purposeful, data-informed instruction.

### Do Now Breakdown

Immediately following, the teacher transitions to the Do Now Breakdown and introduces the Q-RES protocol, a strategic scaffold that teaches students how to deconstruct complex, test-aligned questions with clarity and confidence. This structured approach is used across all subjects. In Math and Social Studies, the protocol is adapted to fit numerical reasoning and evidence-based

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

historical thinking. In Science, it is embedded within the 5E model as a component of the “Explain” or “Evaluate” phases.

Students begin by identifying what the question is asking (Q), underlining the key skill and academic demand. They then reread the prompt with a specific purpose (R), locating text, numeric, or graphical evidence. Through cold calls and partner shares, teachers surface strategic thinking: What’s the key detail in this diagram? How do we know which operation is required? What made this source more credible? Students then eliminate distractors (E) and select and justify the best answer (S) using academic language. This becomes the second CFU, verbal, intentional, and high leverage.

Districtwide, campuses may design their own acronyms for this process, but all must include the four Q-RES elements: question analysis, purposeful reading or scanning, elimination of distractors, and evidence-based justification. This strategy builds transferable academic stamina across disciplines. Research by Paris and Winograd (1990) and Vaughn, Wanzek, and Fletcher (2020) confirms that when students are explicitly taught how to approach complex questions, they develop metacognitive strength and strategic confidence.

By embedding the Do Now and Q-RES into the opening of every lesson, regardless of content, Memphis-Shelby County Schools ensure that academic thinking starts on time, every time, for every student.

### **Hook**

The Hook follows the Do Now Breakdown, functioning as an emotional and intellectual bridge into the day’s standard, not the story, topic, or formula itself. This phase is designed to awaken curiosity and activate students lived experiences, making the upcoming skill feel immediately relevant and accessible.

In ELA and Social Studies, the teacher might present a real-world scenario, common situation, or provocative question that embodies the core skill. For example, if students are learning to analyze tone, the teacher might ask, “How can you tell when someone’s being sarcastic, even if they don’t say it directly?” This prompts students to connect the academic concept to familiar, real-life interactions. Students respond orally or in writing, and the teacher uses these responses as a CFU—not for content mastery, but for cognitive readiness.

### **Explore**

In Math, this phase is known as the Explore. Instead of beginning with direct instruction, students engage in a hands-on task or problem that mirrors a real-world application of the day’s concept. They might build, measure, sort, or model, surfacing intuitive understandings before formalizing them with academic language. This is their moment to see themselves in the math, to recognize how mathematical reasoning shows up in their daily lives and communities. Explore tasks are intentionally designed to foster productive struggle and spark mathematical discourse among peers.

Across all content areas, the goal is the same: to activate prior knowledge and frame the new learning within a meaningful context. Teachers listen for conceptual clarity and engagement, adjusting scaffolds as needed to ensure all students are ready to move into the I Do phase.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Research from Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) underscores the importance of activating prior knowledge to enhance comprehension and problem-solving. Likewise, Hattie (2009) identifies both relevance and prior knowledge activation as high-impact strategies for improving engagement and long-term retention.

When implemented with fidelity, the Hook, or Explore, ensures that students don't just encounter a standard; they enter into it with curiosity, connection, and confidence.

### **I Do**

The I Do marks the teacher's opportunity to model the strategy with clarity and precision. In all content areas, this phase is delivered as a think-aloud, during which the teacher verbalizes their reasoning, annotates a shared text or problem, and uses precise academic language to make the invisible thinking process visible.

In Math, the I Do think-aloud intentionally balances conceptual understanding (why the math works) with procedural fluency (how to solve it). The teacher explains each step while connecting it to the underlying mathematical principles. This dual emphasis helps students avoid rote memorization and instead fosters deeper comprehension of mathematical logic and structure.

Throughout the I Do in any subject, the teacher breaks the process into manageable steps, pausing at key moments to embed Checks for Understanding (CFUs). Using cold calls, turn-and-talks, or written responses, the teacher keeps students cognitively engaged. Questions such as "Why did I highlight that word?" or "What do I mean when I say the tone is sarcastic, how do I know?" ensure that students are actively processing, not passively watching.

Student responses, whether verbal, written, or annotated, offer the teacher real-time insight into what students are grasping and where misunderstandings may be forming. The teacher adjusts the pace, language, or depth of modeling, accordingly, demonstrating instructional agility and attentiveness.

Importantly, this phase is brief by design. Research from Fisher and Frey (2014) stresses that the didactic portion of a lesson, when students are not actively co-engaged, should comprise no more than 10% of total class time. This brevity ensures that modeling launches students into the work, rather than dominating the lesson.

Rosenshine (2012) reinforces this approach, noting that students learn best when instruction quickly shifts from demonstration to active processing. When done with fidelity, the I Do becomes less about performing for students and more about equipping them with the thinking tools needed for collaborative and independent application.

### **CFU after the I Do**

Immediately following the modeling is the CFU After I Do, which functions as the first true checkpoint for conceptual understanding.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

The teacher poses a short, aligned task or question that mirrors the modeled strategy, often situated at Bloom's knowledge or comprehension level. This quick CFU provides early evidence of whether students can begin transferring the skill with accuracy.

Using the questioning protocol, the teacher ensures broad participation and records student responses using a tracker, clipboard, or rubric. Students are expected to explain their thinking using the same structure or reasoning that was just modeled.

This formative moment is critical. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), formative assessments closely aligned to the learning objective allow teachers to make real-time decisions that directly enhance outcomes. Likewise, Sadler (1989) contends that formative feedback must be delivered during learning, not after, in order to close the gap between current and desired performance.

When implemented with precision, this CFU acts as a gatekeeper. It determines whether students are ready for guided practice, or if more modeling is needed. Either way, the teacher is no longer guessing, they are planning forward with purpose.

### **We Do**

The We Do phase marks the transition from teacher-led modeling to collaborative student application. In this phase, the teacher and students jointly apply the strategy using a new passage, task, or problem. While the teacher provides guidance, the cognitive load shifts toward students, who are expected to actively engage, contribute ideas, and begin demonstrating independence with academic skill.

Aggressive Monitoring begins immediately. With clipboard in hand and coded tracker ready, the teacher circulates the room, capturing live evidence of student thinking. Every five to six minutes, instruction pauses for a verbal Check for Understanding (CFU): "Let's cold call, what step should come next?" or "Explain your reasoning, how do we know this character's motive changed?" These CFUs surface student thinking and allow the teacher to respond in the moment, reteaching, regrouping, or revising instruction as needed.

This phase aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development, which emphasizes learning just beyond a student's independent capacity, and with Wiliam and Leahy's (2015) work on real-time formative feedback. The We Do transforms instruction from static delivery to responsive teaching grounded in evidence.

### **CFU after the We Do**

Following this shared practice, the CFU After We Do provide a structured, individual opportunity to demonstrate understanding. Students complete a short task that mirrors the full strategy from the I Do and We Do. The teacher observes completeness, accuracy, and conceptual clarity, embedding cold calls and reviewing student products to determine next steps.

This is where tiering occurs. In ELA, students demonstrating strong, independent application of the strategy with academic language and clarity are placed in Tier 1, where they may engage in

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

enrichment, synthesis games, or extension writing tasks. Students who grasp parts of the strategy but show misconceptions or incomplete reasoning are placed in Tier 2; they receive targeted mini-lessons or scaffolded collaborative support. Those requiring significant help with decoding, comprehension, or task initiation are placed in Tier 3, where they work directly with the teacher through the RAG protocol—Read, Annotate, Gist—to rebuild foundational literacy skills aligned to the lesson.

In Math, tiering focuses on both conceptual reasoning and procedural fluency. A Tier 1 Math student not only solves the problem accurately but also explains the “why” behind their process using mathematical language. Tier 2 students may execute procedures correctly but struggle to explain the underlying concept, or vice versa. Tier 3 students demonstrate confusion in identifying the correct operation, misapply steps, or show evidence of fundamental misunderstanding, requiring reteaching with visual models, manipulatives, or scaffolded examples.

This structured, evidence-based approach to differentiation is supported by Fuchs and Fuchs (1986), who showed that when teachers use real-time data to adjust instruction, student achievement accelerates. Tomlinson (2001) affirms that differentiation rooted in formative assessment is essential for equity, ensuring every student receives the level of challenge and support needed to grow.

When implemented with fidelity, the CFU After We Do becomes more than a checkpoint, it is the catalyst for responsive, differentiated instruction that honors where each student is and guides them toward mastery.

#### **You Do Together**

The You Do Together phase shifts the lesson from teacher-directed instruction to collaborative student work. At this point, students are grouped into performance-based tiers and engage in differentiated, standards-aligned tasks. Each tier is structured to provide the right level of challenge and support, allowing students to deepen their understanding through peer interaction and strategic practice.

In ELA, Tier 1 students engage in enrichment activities such as synthesis games, collaborative writing challenges, or evidence-based debates. These students have demonstrated near-mastery and are now working to extend their thinking. Tier 2 students focus on refining discrete skills, often through structured annotation tasks, discussion prompts, or scaffolded partner work. Tier 3 students engage in intensive support with the teacher, typically using the RAG strategy (Read, Annotate, Gist) to rebuild foundational comprehension and analysis skills.

In Math, tiering is designed to balance conceptual reasoning with procedural fluency. Tier 1 students solve complex, often multistep problems and must explain their reasoning aloud or in writing. These tasks often reach DOK Levels 3 and 4. Tier 2 students practice key procedures or engage in problem sets that require guided application of mathematical concepts. Tier 3 students receive targeted support to address specific misconceptions, working on visual models, manipulatives, or broken-down examples with teacher support.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

This phase is not only intellectual but also physical. Students are expected to move, manipulate materials, and engage their bodies in learning. Whether labeling, sorting, debating, or building, this kinesthetic engagement strengthens neural pathways and enhances memory, a principle supported by Tate's *Worksheets Don't Grow Dendrites* (2010). To maximize this impact, teachers should gamify the You Do Together at least once per week. Options include content-based escape rooms, Kahoot! quizzes, Jeopardy!-style reviews, scavenger hunts for textual evidence, or relay races that require students to solve problems at different stations.

Regardless of subject, format, or grouping, the goal remains the same: academic stamina built through structured collaboration, accountable discourse, and active engagement. During this phase, Checks for Understanding (CFUs) are embedded into the tasks themselves. Teachers look for evidence that students are applying strategies correctly, justifying their choices, and building on peer ideas. These embedded checkpoints help the teacher determine when students are ready to move up a tier or require reteaching.

#### **CFU after the You Do Together**

After the collaborative work, the CFU After You Do Together brings the class back together for whole-group academic discourse. This is a high-leverage, oral CFU where the teacher poses rigorous, open-ended questions aligned to Bloom's synthesis or evaluation levels. The questioning protocol is used to ensure equity and engagement, and students are prompted to respond with evidence, reasoning, and academic language.

Students are expected to speak in full sentences and use accountable talk stems such as, "I disagree because..." or "Another way to look at it is..." Whether in ELA or Math, this moment affirms student thinking and builds a culture of respectful challenge and intellectual precision. The teacher listens to clarity, logical progression, and metacognitive awareness, marking students who are ready to move forward or who need further support.

This phase is grounded in research by Michaels, O'Connor, and Resnick (2008), who found that structured academic discourse fosters deep comprehension and promotes transfer of learning. Hattie's (2009) analysis of high-impact strategies also ranks classroom discussion (effect size: 0.82) and self-verbalization (effect size: 0.79) among the most powerful tools for cognitive growth. When implemented with fidelity, the CFU After You Do Together reveals more than mastery, it confirms that students can articulate, defend, and transfer their thinking with clarity and academic rigor.

#### **You Do Alone**

The You Do Alone phase signals full cognitive release. Students are now expected to apply the day's strategy independently, without hints, scaffolds, or assistance. In ELA, this typically takes the form of a standard-aligned writing task or constructed response that reflects the modeled approach. The teacher circulates quietly, checking for focus but not intervening. Student responses are collected, not for a grade, but for formative analysis to inform grouping and reteaching the next day.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

In Math, the You Do Alone centers on deep problem-solving. Students tackle rigorous DOK Level 3 and 4 questions that push beyond procedural recall and into conceptual reasoning and application. Each response must be accompanied by a complete sentence explaining how the student arrived at the answer. This explanation, whether written or verbalized, ensures students are not just solving, but thinking, justifying, and transferring skills. This step is crucial for identifying true mastery versus surface-level correctness.

To simulate assessment conditions, the time allotted for Math You Do Alone tasks must mirror the pacing of TCAP and EOC exams. Students typically get 1.5 to 2 minutes per selected response item and 7 to 10 minutes for constructed response prompts. This timing practice builds assessment readiness, pacing control, and academic endurance.

This phase is grounded in research. Graham and Perin (2007) found that independent writing significantly enhances comprehension and retention when tied to explicit instruction. In Math, requiring students to articulate their reasoning aligns with findings by Silver, Ghouseini, Gosen, Charalambous, & Font Strawhun (2005), who emphasize that mathematical explanation deepens understanding and highlights student misconceptions. Black and Wiliam (1998) also affirm that using written responses as formative data, rather than simply summative artifacts, produces some of the strongest learning gains.

#### **Closure**

Next, the Closure phase brings the learning full circle. The teacher poses reflective, open-ended questions such as, “What did we learn today, and why does it matter?” or “How did this strategy help us solve a problem or analyze a character more deeply?” Students respond aloud or in writing, using academic language and directly referencing the objective. The teacher conducts a final CFU by cold calling two to three students to synthesize their learning aloud.

This reflection is backed by research. Marzano (2001) identifies summarizing as a top-tier strategy for long-term retention, while Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) emphasize that students learn best when prompted to make meaning and connect ideas across lessons. In both ELA and Math, this moment helps students internalize not just what they learned, but why it matters.

#### **Exit Ticket**

Finally, the Exit Ticket provides a timed, final data point. The teacher administers a TCAP/EOC-aligned question under silent, independent conditions. Students are expected to complete the item using the day’s strategy and must write a complete sentence explaining how they arrived at the answer. This reinforces metacognition and clarity of thinking.

The time allotted for Exit Tickets must reflect state testing conditions. For selected response items, students should spend no more than 1.5 to 2 minutes. The constructed responses should take 7 to 10 minutes. This calibration isn’t just logistical, it’s instructional. According to Marzano (2017) and Smith & Stahl (2010), students who routinely practice under timed conditions show improved fluency, stamina, and confidence in high-stakes assessments.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

When implemented with fidelity, the Exit Ticket is not just an endcap. It confirms what the teacher has learned from CFUs throughout the lesson and provides clean, timely evidence to drive tomorrow's plan, with clarity, not guesswork.

## Appendix G – 5Es

In science classrooms across Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), students are not reciting facts; they are constructing meaning, testing claims, and defending ideas with evidence. The 5E Instructional Model; Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate, is not a list of activities. It is the cognitive arc of scientific reasoning, intentionally sequenced to build conceptual mastery, transfer, and independence. Like the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model in ELA, Math, and Social Studies, the 5E framework shifts the cognitive load from teacher to student through embedded feedback, tiered scaffolds, and academically grounded talk. It is not about covering content, it is about developing thinkers who reason, speak, and write like scientists. Each phase is anchored to Tennessee's 3D Science Standards, which include Disciplinary Core Ideas (DCIs), Science and Engineering Practices (SEPs), and Crosscutting Concepts (CCCs), ensuring full alignment to grade-level expectations and EOC rigor.

### Engage

The Engage phase is designed to spark curiosity and provoke meaningful questions, while surfacing misconceptions and activating prior knowledge. A compelling phenomenon: a striking video, image, or real-world event, is presented without explanation. Students are prompted to observe, wonder, and predict. These predictions are not casual; they are assessed through silent scanning, cold calls, and structured pair shares. This becomes the first Check for Understanding (CFU), allowing teachers to identify misconceptions and assess academic readiness. As Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) demonstrated, schema activation strengthens the acquisition of new knowledge, while Loewenstein (1994) found that curiosity fosters sustained cognitive engagement. Engage shifts the cognitive work from passive reception to active anticipation and should be observable through student questions, puzzled looks, and audible excitement. Leaders should see students generating their own questions, referencing prior knowledge, and speaking with academic curiosity.

### Explore

Explore is the investigative phase that places students at the center of meaning-making. Students engage with data, models, or simulations aligned to the standard before receiving any explanation. Students draw inferences, document patterns, and revise thinking based on peer discourse and material evidence. Teachers facilitate this phase using aggressive monitoring and coded trackers: a check (✓) denotes accurate reasoning, a question mark (?) indicates partial understanding, and an X (X) signals misconceptions or procedural confusion. Every five to seven minutes, a verbal CFU is embedded: "What patterns are you seeing?" or "What might explain this outcome?" Access is tiered: Tier 1 students investigate independently; Tier 2 use scaffolds such as sentence frames; Tier 3 engages in structured investigations with direct coaching. Hmelo-Silver et al. (2007) found that guided inquiry, not unstructured exploration, best supports conceptual retention. Leaders observing Explore should see students manipulating data, arguing from evidence, and documenting findings, never sitting idle or waiting for instruction.

### Explain

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

The Explain phase shifts the role of the teacher back to the instructional lead, where scientific reasoning becomes visible and shared language is built. Before transitioning, teachers review tracker data to confirm 80% of students are ready. The teacher then models the construction of explanations using student-generated data. This think-aloud includes annotation, cold calls, and sentence stems such as, “This pattern suggests...” or “Our model changed because...” Fisher and Frey (2014) emphasize that short, explicit modeling enables immediate student uptake. Students then produce their own explanations using the CER (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning) protocol. This protocol aligns with writing standards, deepening interdisciplinary skills. Teachers monitor responses in real time using rubrics to assess vocabulary, accuracy, and independence. Leaders should see visual anchors, CER rubrics, and high student talk-to-teacher talk ratios. The teacher leads here, but with intention and modeling, not lecture.

### **Elaborate**

The Elaborate phase pushes students into academic independence through application, transfer, and self-directed reasoning. After a post-Explain CFU, teachers use data to form new groups and launch tasks that require students to generalize or innovate based on prior learning. Novel tasks might include analyzing unfamiliar data, redesigning models, or designing investigations. This phase intentionally increases the cognitive lift on the student.

Gamification is required weekly during Elaborate: science escape rooms, relay puzzles, or evidence-based scavenger hunts serve as rigorous platforms for synthesis. Teachers use CFUs to determine the next steps in real time. Tate (2010) and Hattie (2009) confirm that novelty, collaboration, and immediate feedback improve retention. This is not an optional play, it requires cognitive practice. Leaders observing should see high energy, intellectual struggle, and students justifying claims to one another using precise vocabulary. Teacher language might include, “Show your model,” “Prove your variable,” or “Defend your next step.”

### **Evaluate**

The Evaluate phase is a controlled cognitive checkpoint, allowing students to demonstrate mastery and teachers to assess instructional impact. Only students who meet tracker and verbal readiness criteria may enter this phase. They complete independent, time-bound tasks calibrated to TCAP and EOC rigor, such as CER responses, data analysis tasks, or MCQs with justification. Graham and Perin (2007) and Marzano (2017) support short, frequent performance-based assessments to build fluency and cognitive resilience.

There is no reteach during Evaluate. Teachers circulate, score, and code responses to inform the next day’s grouping. Leaders should see silent stamina, coded trackers, and teacher notes identifying students for re-teach. At the close, teachers may conduct a cold-call reflection: “How has your claim evolved?” or “Why is this model stronger than our first?” Evaluate does not simply mark the end of the lesson, it prepares students for the beginning of tomorrow.

In MSCS, the 5E Model is more than a planning tool. It is a lived instructional choreography that advances inquiry, equity, and excellence. Each phase contributes to shifting the cognitive load, surfacing student thinking, and building academic independence. Students are not passive recipients of knowledge; they are modelers, skeptics, and builders of scientific understanding.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

Leaders must ensure fidelity to the sequence, the monitoring, and the rigor embedded in each phase. When implemented with precision, the 5E Model prepares students not only to pass tests, but to think like scientists, speak with evidence, and solve the problems that matter.

## Appendix H – See It, Name It, Do It

### See It, Name It, Do It – Coaching Model Overview

**Overview** The See It, Name It, Do It coaching model, as outlined in *Leverage Leadership 2.0* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, is a structured, action-based approach to instructional coaching. It focuses on developing teacher skill through clarity, feedback, and immediate practice. The model is used to create high-impact changes in instructional quality by ensuring teachers understand what success looks like and how to reach it.

#### SEE IT

*Purpose:* Build a clear mental model of what "great" looks like.

*Coach Role:* Use precise, concrete examples to help the teacher visualize the desired instructional practice.

- Model the target skill using live demonstration or exemplar video.
- Focus on one bite-sized, high-leverage teaching move.
- Guide the teacher to notice key actions and student impact.

*Example:* “Let’s watch how Ms. Rivera uses ‘Cold Call’ to keep students engaged and check for understanding. Notice how she sets it up and follows through.”

#### NAME IT

*Purpose:* Clearly identify the skill gap and the specific action the teacher needs to take.

*Coach Role:* Deliver precise, actionable feedback linked to student outcomes.

- Diagnose the root cause of ineffective practice.
- State the skill the teacher should use, in clear and specific terms.
- Connect the action to improved student learning.

*Example:* “The reason we’re working on ‘Cold Call’ is that it will raise engagement and let you assess every student in real time.”

#### DO IT

*Purpose:* Build automaticity through practice.

*Coach Role:* Guide the teacher through rehearsal with real-time feedback.

- Teacher rehearses the new move immediately.
- Coach gives feedback and redirects as needed.
- Practice continues until the teacher demonstrates confidence and readiness.
- Ideally, the teacher uses the skill in class the same day.

*Example:* “Let’s practice your Cold Call right now. Start with the transition from the mini-lesson to the first question. I’ll play the student.”

#### Summary Table

Step	Key Question	Coach Action
SEE IT	What does success look like?	Model or show exemplar
NAME IT	What’s the next skill?	Deliver precise, actionable feedback
DO IT	How will we master it?	Practice with feedback until fluent

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Core Principles**

- *Clarity over coverage*: Focus on one skill at a time.
- *Practice makes permanent*: Rehearsal builds habits.
- *Instruction drives coaching*: Root coaching in student outcomes.
- *Short-cycle feedback*: Follow up weekly and adjust quickly.

**Implementation Guidance**

- Coaching sessions occur weekly and last 15–30 minutes.
- Each session targets one measurable action step.
- Progress should be tracked using a coaching tracker or dashboard.
- Feedback must result in immediate practice and classroom application.

This model anchors MSCS's coaching framework and aligns with our broader theory of action to improve instruction through consistent, data-informed adult learning.

## Appendix I – Weekly Data Meeting

### Weekly Data Meeting

**Overview** The Weekly Data Meeting, as outlined in *Leverage Leadership 2.0* by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, is a high-leverage, teacher-led planning structure designed to ensure that data is actively used to adjust instruction. It moves schools beyond compliance-driven data reviews to action-oriented discussions that result in immediate changes to teaching. These meetings are the engine of responsive instruction, providing a predictable, tight routine for analyzing student work and planning reteach strategies that improve mastery.

**Core Purpose** To analyze student work from recent assessments and collaboratively design targeted reteach plans that close learning gaps and reinforce mastery.

#### Meeting Structure

Meetings should occur **weekly**, last **60 minutes or less**, and follow this structured format:

1. **Assessment Review (5–10 minutes)**
  - Examine student work from a recent Common Formative Assessment (CFA), exit ticket, or quiz.
  - Use exemplars and scoring guides to calibrate accuracy.
2. **Error Analysis (10–15 minutes)**
  - Identify common trends and misunderstandings.
  - Group errors into conceptual vs. procedural gaps.
3. **Root Cause Discussion (10 minutes)**
  - Ask: *Why did students make these errors?* Focus on instruction, not student deficits.
  - Reference lesson delivery, question stems, or misconceptions.
4. **Reteach Planning (20–25 minutes)**
  - Choose 1–2 most common gaps to address.
  - Plan a targeted mini lesson using a concrete strategy.
  - Determine materials, models, and questions to be used.
  - Assign who will teach it and when.
5. **Exit Check & Action Review (5–10 minutes)**
  - Confirm reteach implementation timeline.
  - Assign follow-up checks (e.g., next week's CFA or student work review).
  - Capture plans in a tracker or meeting template.

#### Roles in the Meeting

- **Facilitator:** Often the instructional coach, teacher leader, or AP; ensures structure and timing.
- **Teachers:** Bring student work, own the analysis, and lead the planning.
- **Principal or Principal Coach:** May observe or support but should not dominate; their role is to build capacity and ensure quality.



Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

**Essential Tools**

- CFA results and sample student work
- Exemplar student responses and rubrics
- Weekly Data Meeting Template or Tracker
- Standards-aligned lesson materials
- Reteach plan log

**Key Principles**

- **Instruction, not blame:** Focus on how teaching can shift to meet student needs.
- **Short cycle, high frequency:** Weekly analysis is more effective than waiting for interim assessments.
- **Collective problem-solving:** All teachers contribute; decisions are not top-down.
- **Tight feedback loops:** Student progress is revisited weekly; reteach is non-negotiable.

**District Non-Negotiables for Weekly Data Meetings** (Suggested for MSCS Implementation)

- Must occur **weekly** for all tested subjects.
- Should follow the 5-step structure outlined above.
- Student work and exemplar comparisons must be part of every meeting.
- Reteach plans must be implemented and revisited within one week.
- Meeting notes must be documented in a shared tracker reviewed by instructional leaders.

The Weekly Data Meeting is a foundational component of data-driven instruction. It turns assessments into action and builds a culture where student outcomes guide instructional choices in real time.

## Appendix J – CompStat and SDIS

### COMPSTAT and SDIS Accountability Models

#### COMPSTAT (Comparative Statistics)

Originating in the New York Police Department in the 1990s, COMPSTAT was designed as a performance management system to promote accountability using real-time data to inform decision-making. The approach emphasized data transparency, regular progress monitoring, and structured follow-up to drive continuous improvement.

In education, the COMPSTAT model has been adapted as a district- and school-level accountability framework to ensure that leaders and departments monitor key metrics, identify trends, and implement responsive strategies. Within Memphis-Shelby County Schools,

COMPSTAT has evolved into a structured school performance dialogue process that supports transparent, data-driven leadership decisions and aligns to system-wide academic, operational, and equity goals.

#### SDIS (Self-Directed Improvement System™)

Developed as a companion to COMPSTAT, the Self-Directed Improvement System (SDIS™) is a leadership framework that builds the capacity of schools to own their performance outcomes. It centers around a cycle of inquiry, aligned action, and reflection rooted in data and grounded in the belief that the individuals closest to the challenge are best positioned to solve it—when provided with timely, transparent, and disaggregated data.

Together, COMPSTAT and SDIS™ represent Memphis-Shelby County Schools' dual approach to accountability: centralized expectations with localized, empowered execution.

#### COMPSTAT Structure

Each COMPSTAT session includes a standardized set of performance domains for schools and departments to report out on, including:

- School Demographics
- Academic and Testing Data (including Bottom 25%)
- Formative Assessments
- Grade Distribution
- Extended Day and Enrichment
- Next Level Readiness
- Attendance and Discipline Data
- Staff Demographics and Trends

These sessions are scheduled regularly and structured to:

- Compare progress across campuses and time periods
- Elevate what's working and flag urgent needs
- Drive district support based on school-identified root causes
- Promote transparent leadership practices across zones

Memphis-Shelby County Schools' Academic Plan  
2025-2030

### **SDIS™ Process and Expectations**

Each school uses the SDIS framework to build and present their improvement plan. The SDIS model includes a sequence of steps that guide school leaders through a problem-solving cycle.

#### **Step-by-Step Breakdown (Based on District Slide Expectations):**

1. **Goal Setting**
  - Schools identify a specific, measurable, time-bound target.
  - This includes both the overall **Goal Statement** and an **Objective** linked to proficiency or growth.
2. **Baseline and Realtime Data**
  - Schools enter current baseline data, ongoing progress monitoring data, and disaggregated subgroup analysis to assess status.
3. **Feedback – “Why?”**
  - Principals and leadership teams reflect on the root causes for why goals are or are not being met.
  - This includes insight from formative data, staff interviews, and observations.
4. **Strategy – “What’s Your Plan?”**
  - Teams develop one or more evidence-based strategies directly tied to the identified root cause(s).
  - Strategies must include instructional, cultural, and systems-level changes.
5. **Execution – “Who Does What?”**
  - A clear execution plan outlines:
    - **Responsible person(s)**
    - **Actions to be taken**
    - **Deadlines**
  - Accountability checkpoints are built in at this stage.
6. **Next Steps**
  - Concrete next steps are documented and tied to timelines and reporting checkpoints.
  - These often feed into COMPSTAT report-out sessions and coaching cycles.
7. **What’s Working / What’s Not Working**
  - Each SDIS update includes reflective data and evidence on successes and barriers.
  - This informs ongoing adjustments to the plan and next phase prioritization.

### **Integration into District Accountability**

COMPSTAT and SDIS are used in tandem throughout the school year. COMPSTAT allows for horizontal alignment and performance comparisons across schools, while SDIS allows for deep vertical alignment within each school’s leadership team. Together, they:

- Promote ownership of results at the school level
- Encourage transparent dialogue about performance
- Center disaggregated data in improvement planning
- Ensure follow-through on targeted interventions and goals

These tools are essential components of Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ transformation framework and aligned to the district’s broader accountability, coaching, and continuous improvement structures.